MEETING MINUTES
PARKS, RECREATION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD
Thursday, October 17, 2019
6:00pm
Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Ave., Room 2402

Members Present: T. Long, J. Greenberg, E. DeStefano, D. Michelin, E. Moran, D. Barreto, P. Gregory

Members Absent: J. Bryan, D. Featherson

Staff Present: L. Hemingway, K. Hawk, R. Dollins, L. Woodson, K. Brown

Others Present: R. Bush

DECLARATION OF QUORUM
With a quorum present, E. DeStefano called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 19
Action: The motion to accept the minutes was approved.

PUBLIC COMMENTS
At the September Board meeting it was reported that staff was directed perform a public survey / assessment of where we could potentially have a dog park in Evanston. R. Bush suggested that the City not spend time and money to do a survey because we’re just going to get a lot of people saying "yes, let’s get a dog park, but don’t put it in my neighborhood”. Instead, he thinks the City should just focus on the four parks that will probably fit a dog park: Ingraham, Lovelace, James, and Clark Square Park.

NEW BOARD MEMBER – Patricia Gregory
P. Gregory introduced herself and said she is very excited to be on the Board. She’s a lifelong resident of Evanston who has worked in District 65 since 1998. She’s currently a physical education teacher at Lincoln School.

COLLABORATION WITH DISTRICT 65 ON PHYSICAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM TO INCLUDE ICE SKATING
This item was suggested by Board President E. Destefano. L. Hemingway said it’s a wonderful idea that he will follow up on in terms of trying to create a partnership with District 65 to allow the various schools to have an opportunity to come over for field trips/ice time and work through their physical education department to see if this is something we can build a sustainable program for in 2020.
STAFF UPDATES
Special Recreation Program Coordinators R. Dollins and L. Woodson, and Community Services Manager K. Brown, all gave an overview of their job responsibilities and the different programs offered in their division.

A bicycle repair station was donated by the Chris Kegal Foundation and installed in Twiggs Park, in memory of Chris Kegel who opened the Wheel & Sprocket bicycle store in Evanston shortly before he was diagnosed with inoperable cancer. Since Chris’ passing, Noel, his son and president of Wheel & Sprocket, and Eric, the store manager, have worked hard to make Evanston bicycling better.

The current lakefront vendor (Krave) will not return next summer. Staff is currently working with the Economic Development Department to determine how to proceed with new vending for the lakefront. The Board will be kept informed.

The Army Corps of Engineers conducted a technical assistance site visit at various locations along the Evanston lakefront and prepared a report. The report says there is nothing of an emergency, but there are issues of concern. Staff will evaluate and determine next steps to putting a plan in place.

Staff received a notice that we are a finalist for a Coastal Grant for the Ecology Center’s canoe launch feasibility study for the north shore channel. The official notice of award will be sent out mid-November.

Capital Improvement Projects –
L. Hemingway shared a copy of the Beck Park discussion presentation given at Alderman Simmon’s Ward meeting on October 9th. Some of the ideas that were shared at the meeting included an extension of the bike path, doggie bags/trash stations, picnic shelter, green space, quiet space for seniors, native plantings that promote our ecosystem, updated and culturally relevant playground, sprayground, and/or skate parks, and more. Next step, staff will use the feedback from the meeting to develop a request for proposals to hire designers (landscape architect, engineer, etc).

City Owned Properties Real Estate Assets and Evaluation –
The City has issued a request for proposals for City’s Real Estate Assets and Evaluation. We are seeking proposals from experienced consultants to help evaluate the value of the city’s holdings relative to their utilization and to make a recommendation to the City Council about their potential use.

Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan –
On October 24th the City will issue a request for proposals for a Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan to be used as a tool in planning for future parks and recreation improvements and programmatic implementation. L. Hemingway shared a list of vendors who will receive the request in addition to its being posted on other public formats. The Board will receive a copy of the request on October 24 and is encouraged to let staff know of any firms they think should be added to the list.

Robert Crown Operation Plan –
Building B & C (ice operations) will be open to the public January 6, 2020. Building A (all other operations) will be open to the public January 27, 2020. Demolition of the existing building & new turf field construction begins Spring 2020. The athletic fields will open and project completed by July 2020.
Potential Dog Park Survey / Assessment -
L. Hemingway shared the criteria staff used to evaluate and rank the parks in Evanston for a potential dog park. Criteria included acreage, 50ft buffer from residence, available water source, off-street parking, permeable soils, shade, etc. The list of ranked parks will be presented to City Council and the next step will be gathering input from the public on the top ten ranked parks. There was a question on the possibility of using something similar to the portable soccer pitch as a dog park while we’re waiting on a permanent solution. L. Hemingway said he will look into this.

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD
The Board congratulated L. Hemingway on receiving recognition of service award from the Ethnic Minority Society of the National Parks and Recreation Association.

ADJOURNMENT
The meeting ended at 7:15pm. The next scheduled meeting is 6pm on November 21, 2019 at the Levy Center.