



SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS OF PALATINE PARK DISTRICT at the Palatine Park
District Community Center, Multi-Purpose Room
250 East Wood Street in Palatine
December 11, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.



The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by President Sammons

Commissioners Present

Greg Sammons, President
Joe Petricca, Vice President
Terry Ruff, Treasurer
Jennifer Rogers
Susan Gould

Commissioners Absent

Staff Present

Ben Rea, Executive Director
Phil Costello, Superintendent of Finance
Michelle Eckelberry, Supt. of Dist. Services & Projects
Dayell Houzenga, Asst. Supt. of Dist. Services & Projects
Sonia Austin, Assistant Superintendent of Finance
Lisa Allie, Park Board Secretary/Executive Assistant
Steve Nagle, Superintendent of Facilities

Donelda Danz, Superintendent of Recreation
Jim Holder, Superintendent of Parks & Planning
Josh Ludolph, Asst. Superintendent of Facilities
Colleen Palmer, Asst. Superintendent of Recreation
Amy Vito, Asst. Supt. of Parks & Planning
Todd Ranum, Athletic Coordinator
Patrick Griffin, Aquatics Manager

Visitors Present

None

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Ruff moved and Commissioner Gould seconded that the agenda be approved. By a voice vote, the agenda for the Special Meeting of November 11, 2023, was approved as presented.

AYE: Joe Petricca, Jennifer Rogers, Susan Gould, Terry Ruff, Greg Sammons

NAY: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried.

Meeting Purpose

Executive Director Rea started the meeting by reminding everyone that nothing in the presentation is set in stone, it's still conceptual at this point. He also explained that we are not looking for a vote tonight, just some direction from the board as to how we move forward. Executive Director Rea turned the meeting over to Superintendent Nagle to present some building concepts and Superintendent Costello who will speak on the financing options.

Presentation Highlights

Superintendent Nagle gave an overview of the Space Needs meeting this past March where review of the original Space Needs plan and purpose was discussed. In addition to looking at the district's physical structures, efficiencies of spaces, programs, and challenges.

Superintendent Nagle reviewed criteria from the Perkins & Will original recommendations from December 2016: focus on usable space at Birchwood and improvements at Community Center to address current inefficiencies, relocating the Administration Offices at Community Center, closing Parkside Preschool with addition of similar space at Community Center and Family Aquatic Center renovation.

Highlights from the review and discussion of the Birchwood concept follows:

- Superintendent Nagle explained that the plan looked at this past spring/summer with Perkins & Will is based off the \$46MIL price tag for both Birchwood and Community Center.
- Superintendent Nagle stated that this model would add approximately 13,000 plus square feet to Birchwood and makes it a destination, in response to a question from Commissioner Gould. Commissioner Ruff likes the modern building design. Commissioner Gould feels the only negative is that it's located on the far south end of the district.
- Commissioner Rogers asked about parking; Superintendent Nagle agreed that would be a concern to address. Commissioner Gould stated she's heard complaints that the parking lot is so far from the building. Commissioner Sammons asked about any plans for a different entrance off Illinois and added that increased traffic could cause some problems. Superintendent Nagle said that a traffic study had not been considered since Illinois is set back. Commissioner Ruff added that a covered walkway to get people out of the weather might help the long walk.
- Commissioner Gould mentioned a potential conflict between gymnastics and swim meets. Superintendent Nagle answered Commissioner questions about the gymnastics area at Birchwood: the square footage is about the same, but the layout and flow would be better. Gymnastic meets would be in the gym if additional space is needed. The new space would include a spring floor, as that is needed for proper competition. An upper-level viewing area would be included.

Highlights from the review and discussion of the Community Center concept follows:

- Commissioner Gould doesn't think the residents living on Mozart will be happy with the main entrance being moved to their street. Discussion ensued about safety issues with the current exit, new parking lot layout, a traffic study, number, and location of other entrances.
- Discussion of Community Center renovations continued: Commissioner Ruff thinks having the new entrance closer to Wood Street makes sense; we need to move Administration out of Community, get Birchwood built then we can look at other things; these are old buildings and only so much we can do, so we need to take what we can get out of them. Assistant Superintendent Ludolph added that the programming space is not conducive and that is a big fix we are looking to make.
- Superintendent Nagle answered Commissioner questions: We've been working with Perkins & Will from the beginning, but we will put out an RFP when we are ready to move forward with an architect; the expanded fitness center would be a build out to the east parking lot; the facilities offices and Multi-Purpose room would be reimaged into additional programming space as the Facilities department would move with the Administration office; recommended working on Birchwood and Community Center first with Falcon being addressed at the next phase.
- Superintendent Costello reviewed the previously distributed financial planning model which he says was designed to be flexible no matter what is decided. He continued to explain how timing of the projects will affect our need to get additional debt bonds or utilize the reserves to fund this project. Superintendent Costello also mentioned the price of bonds coming down to 4.0-4.5%. That becomes prohibitive when we look at all the other commodities that go into our budget; it all comes into play, and he tried to import that into the planning model. He feels that this is the time to do something as he expects the interest rates to go down in the next 6 months.
- Superintendent Costello stated that the second thing is for the board to assign some of our fund balances to this project; this will help protect the agency from tax appeals. The final item would be to avoid a tax referendum if possible, but this may become an option depending on what the board decides.
- Superintendent Costello also reviewed the cost recovery plan that staff has been working on, how it relates to what Steve touched on with adding programs and the effect on our debt issuance and operating cost. In closing he stated that the point was not to go through the slides, but to provide them with alternatives that we can pivot on.

- Superintendent Nagle helped answer questions from the Commissioners; he explained that the \$22 MIL estimate was from the original space needs proposal, pre-covid and inflation; it was very scaled back. The concepts presented tonight are based on today's figures of \$46 MIL, but do not include the new administration office, that cost would have to come off the top.
- Discussion about the different plans took place; Superintendent Nagle suggested that the Commissioners look at the different plan options which show the impact of the districts financing. He compared the financial differences of the \$46MIL plan with the more affordable \$22MIL plan and recommended a middle option. This would strike a balance of what the district can do to protect itself financially, have some capital to operate, protect our fund balance policy and allow a \$4MIL placeholder for the Family Aquatic Center.
- Commissioner Ruff speculated on making improvements at Community Center now to include the relocation of Administration with the build out and moving gymnastics to Birchwood at another time to keep us at a comfortable number. Superintendent Nagle said that the money put aside for consulting next year would address phasing options and what makes sense for various phases at the target price the district is comfortable with. In addition, having guidance on a target range would help us to come up with an appropriate design.
- Commissioner Gould is concerned that if we go with \$22 MIL now that we'll be back in 5 years needing to do more at a higher cost; in the long run that might not be fiscally responsible. She doesn't like to see us be overly conservative now that we have reserves when we might not have that same opportunity or means to do it later. Although \$46MIL is a lot; we need to look at the middle ground and other funding options.
- Superintendent Costello said that right now we cannot make \$46MIL happen; perhaps if we stagger it, we could possibly get there, but it won't be easy.
- Executive Director Rea suggested that go with the middle range of \$30-\$36 MIL and take into consideration that some of the numbers provided are conservative; the long-term numbers might be better than what we are showing. We also need to look at legislative dollars and other grant opportunities. We need to remain fluid enough that we have dollars available to take care of the other facilities, properties and the park needs. It's not just about the buildings; we need to take care of what we have. Director Rea continued with the proposal of doing this in phases to improve the space at Community Center as well meeting the needs of Birchwood. There are opportunities here to accomplish quite a bit for \$30 MIL; will need detailed cost and plans to move forward.

Next Steps

Superintendent Nagle asked the Board to confirm that they would like us to continue with the next steps at a target cost of \$30MIL; he also requested that consultation money be added to next year's capital. The board agreed and discussion continued about improvements at Family Aquatic Center, future projects, and a new Comprehensive Plan.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Park Board on this date Commissioner Gould moved that the special meeting be adjourned. Commissioner Petricca seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by a roll call vote.

AYE: Joe Petricca, Susan Gould, Terry Ruff, Jennifer Rogers, Greg Sammons

NAY: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Allie
Park Board Secretary

Attest:

Approved:

Lisa Allie
Secretary

Greg Sammons
President

<u>2024 Park Board Meetings</u>		
January 9, 2024	May 14, 2024	September 10, 2024
January 23, 2024	May 28, 2024	September 24, 2024
February 13, 2024	June 11, 2024	October 22, 2024
February 27, 2024	June 25, 2024	November 12, 2024
March 12, 2024	July 9, 2024	November 26, 2024
March 26, 2024	July 23, 2024	December 10, 2024
April 9, 2024	August 13, 2024	
April 23, 2024	August 27, 2024	