

**MINUTES OF THE DECENNIAL COMMITTEE MEETING
OF THE PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE, ILLINOIS
536 EAST AVENUE, LA GRANGE, ILLINOIS**

FEBRUARY 12, 2024

President Opyd called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

COMMITTEE

MEMBERS PRESENT: President Opyd, Commissioner Chvatal, Commissioner Vear, Todd Vancleave, William Lanspeary

ABSENT: Eric Wierab
Commissioner Posey, Commissioner Lacey

STAFF PRESENT: Executive Director Jenny Bechtold
Director of Parks Maintenance Eric Krueger
Direction of Recreation Kevin Miller
Recording Secretary Linda Muth

OTHERS PRESENT: None

President Opyd announced the committee meeting at 5:30 P.M.

Communications, Presentations & Declarations

Public Comments/Participation (Board Manual Section #152)

None

Approval of Committee Minutes

President Opyd asked for a motion to approve the Decennial Committee meeting minutes from November 13, 2023. The motion was so moved by Commissioner Chvatal, seconded by Representative Lanspeary, and passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioner Chvatal, Rep. Lanspeary, Commissioner Vear,
Rep. Vancleave, President Opyd

NAYES: None

ABSENT: Commissioners Lacey and Posey

Action Items

None

Board Business

New Business

Old Business

Discussion of Draft Report for Decennial Committee on Efficiency

Director Bechtold stated that the first draft of the report was reviewed back in November and we have since received feedback on unfunded mandates. She referenced the revised report and stated that page 23 has the most updates in addition to page 24 beginning with item E. She added that it is difficult to put a dollar amount on unfunded mandates because they are constantly issued. If the Cook County paid leave act goes through, which dictates that all part-time staff must receive 1 hour of paid leave for every 40 hours worked, it will cost us \$20,000 annually. This number is based on an evaluation of last year's budget, and it would increase every year. An amendment to the bill exempting park districts is being considered right now, and we hope it goes our way. Jenny stated she attended the Cook County board meeting and spoke to them about our part-time staff. For many individuals it is their first job, and we offer them the flexibility to work when they can. As the mandate is written, they can take time off at any time with no notice. If our camp counselors tell us they are not coming in for the last week of camp we would have to shut down programs. The County is meeting on February 28th to consider the amendment, and it will be decided by their board on February 29th.

Director Bechtold explained that the unfunded prevailing wage requirement forces us to pay higher wages to laborers and is a big strain on our budget, but there is no way around it. Minimum wage is also constantly rising. The requirement for a competitive bidding process for projects over \$30,000 also results in costs to do bids and limits who we can work with. The mandated annual audit and financial report costs \$14,000 with a \$500 increase each year per our current contract and could rise higher. We must maintain files and the local records act requires us to apply for approval and a certificate of destruction to destroy old records. Last year we spent \$2,000 for a company to shred documents, which does not include staff costs. We have destroyed almost 400 boxes of documents over the last two years.

Director Bechtold stated that IAPD is an advocate for park districts and they lobby for us, watch bills, and protect us from many unpaid mandates. They were able to get the State of Illinois to exempt park districts and schools from the Decennial requirements but Cook County created its own mandate. IAPD created the report template for districts to use for their Decennial report.

President Opyd commented that some of the language in the report is too opinionated and it feels like a lobbying document. He would like to strike section B, paragraph 2, which suggests a political position on background checks and strike a sentence from the third paragraph in section A which states that we have to drop everything for FOIA requests. He is happy to hear what our residents think. He added that he has no problem with competitive bidding which adds value on larger projects.

Rep. Lanspeary asked for details on the \$30,000 bidding requirement and how

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many projects require this. Director Bechtold answered that it is dictated by park district code and was increased in the last year or so to \$30,000 from \$25,000. The frequency of bids depends on where we are. There are co-op groups that work to secure the lowest prices and are already approved, which enables us to omit bidding and know we are getting the best price possible.

Rep. Lanspeary asked about the cost to shred documents and whether it could be done in-house. Director Bechtold stated that we could look at that and the cost to purchase a larger shredder. Commissioner Vear asked if the certification is free. Jenny stated that outsourcing includes the certification of destruction at no extra fee. We also contact multiple vendors for the best pricing.

Director Bechtold asked if there was consensus to strike “burden to have to drop everything” and section B, paragraph 2 on page 23. Rep. Lanspeary questioned whether the language in the report is a message to the state. Jenny stated that this section was expanded for the second draft and everything else remained the same. She did not receive any updates from the committee.

There was consensus to remove the sections discussed. Director Bechtold stated that the final report will be approved at the next meeting.

Public Comments

None

Committee Comments

Rep. Vancleave asked if the Park District was looking to add any green spaces. Director Bechtold stated that La Grange is landlocked which makes it very difficult, in addition to the cost to purchase land. There is a lot on Bluff for sale for 7 million dollars, which is our entire budget. There were some homes across from Denning Park that reached out to us, but they were a million dollars. It is difficult to purchase new land when we have 16 million dollars in deferred maintenance. The CMP indicated that residents want us to take care of what we already have.

Commissioner Vear stated that when we investigated a potential donated parcel two years ago we found the cost to remediate the land was quite expensive and we were not able to accept the donation. We purchased Denning land two decades ago and purchased Spring Park in the 90’s through a referendum. If there is a good opportunity we definitely investigate it. President Opyd added that the Board investigates and explores opportunities but has not found anything. Jenny stated that we always remind people that we take donations. Rep. Vancleave stated that the Bluff land would be amazing to have to connect to this building. Director Bechtold reported that it was investigated, and we are always looking.

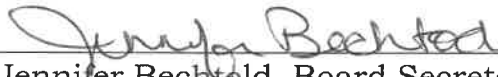
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Adjournment

President Opyd asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion was so moved by Commissioner Vear at 5:50 P.M., seconded by Commissioner Chvatal, and passed unanimously by Voice Vote.

Handwritten signature of Brian Opyd in cursive script.

Brian Opyd, President

Handwritten signature of Jennifer Bechtold in cursive script.

Jennifer Bechtold, Board Secretary

Approved March 11, 2024