

**Glen Ellyn Park District  
Board of Commissioners  
Meeting  
April 5, 2022  
185 Spring Avenue**

**I. Call to Order**

President Durham called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

**II. Roll Call of Commissioners**

Upon roll call, those answering present were Commissioners Cornell, Ward, Weber, Stortz, Bischoff, Nephew, and President Durham. Commissioner Bischoff participated remotely.

Staff members present were Executive Director Harris, Superintendent of Finance & Personnel Cinquegrani, Superintendent of Planning and Natural Resources Troia, Superintendent of Recreation and Facilities Miller, Manager of Marketing and Communications O’Kray, and Executive Assistant Klein.

**III. Pledge of Allegiance**

President Durham led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**IV. Changes to the Agenda**

None

**V. Public Participation**

None

**VI. Voucher List of Bills**

Commissioner Cornell moved, seconded by Commissioner Ward, to approve the Voucher List of Bills totaling \$206,532.52.

*Roll Call: Aye: Commissioners Cornell, Ward, Weber, Stortz, Bischoff, Nephew, and President Durham.*

*Nay: None*

*Motion Carried*

**VII. Resolution 22-01 providing for and requiring the submission of the proposition of issuing General Obligation Park Bonds to the voters of the District at the June 28, 2022, general primary election**

President Durham announced that the next agenda item for the Board is consideration of a resolution providing for and requiring the submission of the proposition of issuing \$15,900,000

(option 1) or \$9,800,000 (option 2) general obligation park bonds to the voters of the District at the general primary election to be held on June 28, 2022. Prior to the Board possible acting upon the resolution, Director Harris and others will further provide additional information regarding the possibility of presenting a referendum before the Glen Ellyn Park District constituents.

Director Harris stated following up the Commissioner's previous discussion from the Board meeting on March 15<sup>th</sup> regarding the possibility of presenting a referendum before the Glen Ellyn Park District constituents, tonight additional information will be presented. This will include data and analysis regarding the recent Community Voter Survey conducted by aQity Research, Inc.; review of the potential ballot question and related scope of projects; financial impact and outcome; education and information plan; communications counsel; Board involvement and expectations and finally a timeline of milestones and deadlines.

As a reminder, the District is considering two potential referendum questions, both of which were presented in the recent Community Voter survey along with the scope of the related projects.

#### Community Voter Survey Results and Report

Director Harris then introduced Jeff Andreasen and Andrea Gruver of aQity Research, Inc. Andreasen discussed in detail the results of the Community Voter survey that was conducted late February to early March. The survey specifically targeted registered voters that had voted in the 2018 and 2020 primary elections. A total of 566 surveys were completed, far exceeding the original goal of 400. The survey concluded that there is a strong margin of support within the Glen Ellyn community for both proposed referendum questions, approximately 65% supported or somewhat support the two proposals. Support was based on the Glen Ellyn Park District's contribution to quality of life and property values within the community. After much discussion, the Park District Board and Director Harris thanked aQity for their effort. Director Harris expressed his appreciation for aQity mobilizing so quickly and effectively within such a limited timeframe.

#### Referendum Ballot Question

Harris reminded again the Board of the two referendum options as they appeared on the survey. Both options include Lake Foxcroft Park, last improved in the 1970s; Churchill Park last improved in 2006; Babcock Grove Park last improved in 1994; Lenox Road property undeveloped since purchased in 2008; various athletic improvements, Sunset Pool last improved in 2001; and land acquisition. The two potential ballot questions are below:

##### \$15.9 M option 1:

Shall the Glen Ellyn Park District, DuPage County, Illinois, improve, equip and maintain Sunset Pool, expand, improve, equip and maintain Ackerman Sports & Fitness Center, improve, equip and maintain other parks and park facilities, acquire land for park purposes, and issue its bonds to the amount of \$15,900,000 for the purpose of paying the costs thereof?

### \$9.8 M option 2:

Shall the Glen Ellyn Park District, DuPage County, Illinois, improve, equip and maintain Sunset Pool, improve, equip and maintain other parks and park facilities, acquire land for park purposes, and issue its bonds to the amount of \$9,800,000 for the purpose of paying the costs thereof?

### Referendum Scope

Harris then outlined the scope of each proposed question. Each is aligned with the consensus of the community based on the Community Attitude and Interest survey results from late fall 2021, and the 2022 Community Voter survey. Both survey's outcomes prioritized the maintenance and improvements of the existing community assets. As mentioned, Lake Foxcroft Park last improved in the 1970s, Churchill Park last improved in 2006, Babcock Grove Park last improved in 1994, Lenox Road property undeveloped since purchased in 2008, various athletic Improvements, Sunset Pool improvements, and land acquisition. The \$15,900,000 option also included Ackerman SFC improvements and the addition of a gymnastics center. The \$9,800,000 question excludes any improvements to Ackerman SFC. The addition of a gymnastics center to Ackerman SFC would significantly expand recreational opportunities for all ages and abilities while addressing an outdated and undersized facility still in its original condition from 2001. Additionally, the expanded gymnastics center would address extensive waitlists while generating increased revenue which will further support and contribute to the ongoing maintenance of all Park District assets.

### 2023 – 2032 Financial Forecast

Superintendent of Finance and Personnel Cinquegrani presented the financial forecast based on the two proposed options as well as the forecast based on no referendum. Both options would address assets that will require attention and capital funding in the future. Without the referendum funding, these items and/or others will be deferred to later years or not addressed at all. The District can certainly continue its practice of one significant capital effort every 8-10 years while able to address many required yearly capital needs. A successful referendum would enable the District to address improvements and needs in a timelier manner while strengthening the District's financial ability in the years to come. As the District is presently the lowest DuPage County Park District tax levy, even if the referendum passes, Glen Ellyn Park District tax rate would still be one of the lowest in DuPage County.

### Education and Information Plan

Manager of Marketing and Communications O'Kray gave an overview on how the Glen Ellyn Park District would focus on a Referendum Education and Information Plan. The plan would include direct mailers to registered voters, community information sessions/open houses, staff training, social media, senior newsletters, just to name a few. Most important, educating with facts and based on community priorities including preserving open/green space, protecting and enhancing

assets/community investments, expanding recreation opportunities, making Glen Ellyn a more attractive place to live, and helping property values.

### Communications Counsel

If the Park District moves forward with a referendum, Harris recommends outside assistance from a consulting firm to assist the Park District's efforts to educate and inform members of the community. The consultant would work collaboratively with the Park District and supplement and complement existing services and abilities. As the Park District has one full-time staff member dedicated to communications, this would support and enable the District to adequately inform and educate the community regarding the referendum. Harris then introduced Craig Pugh, President of PCI, Public Communication Inc.

### Role of Board Commissioners

The Park Board of Commissioners are a critical component for a successful referendum. As a Board and when serving and representing the Park District, Commissioners are allowed to inform and educate. However, in that same capacity and role, Commissioners are not allowed to advocate for the referendum. Each Commissioner should be prepared to attend engagements and commitments beyond the regular Board meeting schedule, this would include open houses, advisory meetings, community events, etc.

### Timeline

Director Harris went over the potential timeline: April 5, approve referendum Resolution, April 11, file Resolution with DuPage County Clerk's office, May 19, vote by mail begins, June 13, in-person early voting and finally June 28, 2022, Primary Election.

Following the presentation, a motion regarding the resolution was made.

### Motion

Commissioner Nephew made the motion to adopt Resolution # 22-01 providing for and requiring the submission of the proposition of issuing General Obligation Park Bonds to the voters of the District at the June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022, general primary election. It was seconded by Commissioner Cornell.

Board discussion ensued as each Commissioner was given the opportunity to further comment and raise questions.

Commissioner Bischoff is confident in the efforts to extract and gather community feedback and believes the referendum is aligned with the results and consensus of the community. Now it is critical that the District is prepared to further educate and inform our constituents.

Commissioner Stortz stated the District can certainly continue to maintain its assets albeit often delayed, deferred, and not in a timely manner. However, the District should strive to address more expeditiously as well as improve upon some of those critical assets including the pool and

Ackerman SFC. The referendum is well thought and well planned and most importantly aligned with community feedback.

Commissioner Weber agreed with many of the previous comments and perspective. He did express concerns regarding the length of \$15.9 million bond issue as those bonds would take 19 years to retire and whether this would inhibit future Board's abilities if they wanted to address other significant projects.

Commissioner Ward is in favor of the \$15.9 million referendum based on community feedback. He also mentioned the Park District having to address the Johnson Center. As that facility is way beyond its useful life, and the Board has accelerated the project to incur cost savings, that will adversely impact the District from being able to improve Sunset Pool and Ackerman SFC in the next 10 years.

Commissioner Nephew is in favor of the \$15.9 million referendum and was appreciative of the previous comments including Commissioner Weber's. As she and her family are frequent users of Park District services and facilities, she experiences firsthand how busy and valued Ackerman SFC, Sunset Pool, and the parks are for our community members. The referendum would address and improve upon existing assets while enhancing and impacting a wide range of users.

Commissioner Cornell is supportive of both options with her primary goal of the referendum being able to pass. She expressed concern about the 19 years as that is a long time even though it's a relatively small amount of money. However, the referendum would address many existing assets and further strengthen the Park District financially for years to come. While doing so, the District will still preserve its very low tax levy and limited impact on our residents while providing outstanding resources. As Commissioner Cornell strongly supports better parks, better park districts, and better communities, she is in favor of the more expansive option.

President Durham agreed to the comments provided by the other Commissioners. As he was an advocate and proponent of engaging and gathering community input, Durham was confident that the referendum proposal was aligned with the consensus of the community.

Glen Ellyn Park District Citizen Finance Committee member Don St. Clair reiterated that the Park District, if the referendum was not successful or if the Board determined not to pursue, the Park District could continue its current financial strategy as mentioned previously. That includes one major project every 8- 12 years while addressing some ongoing asset improvements on a yearly basis.

After thoroughly discussing the options, all seven (7) of the Park Board Commissioners supported approval of the resolution and unanimously agreed on Option #1 for \$15.9 million.

*Roll Call: Aye: Commissioners Nephew, Cornell, Ward, Weber, Stortz, Bischoff, and President Durham*

*Nay: None*

*Motion Carried.*

**VIII. Staff Reports**

Superintendent of Recreation and Facilities Miller highlighted several events taking place this month including four (4) Easter-related event, one of which will be at Ackerman SFC for the first time; a 2K Glow Walk/Run on April 23, and all spring outdoor athletic programs starting this week. Harris complimented the Park's Maintenance staff on preparation of the outdoor athletic fields. Superintendent of Planning and Natural Resources Troia stated that the playground at Newton Park is almost complete and on April 21 there will be an Open House for the Skate Park improvement project at Spring Avenue from 5:00-6:30 pm. Director Harris stated the Lake Ellyn Project is proceeding slowly due to poor weather but still anticipates completion by July 4. Manager of Marketing and Communications O'Kray stated an Earth Day celebration will occur on April 24 at Lake Ellyn Park. Harris thanked the Park District Board for constructive conversation over the last several months regarding the budget process, strategic planning, long-term forecasting, and consideration for a referendum. Regardless of the outcome, the Board preformed its due diligence and was attentive to community input and feedback.

**IX. Commissioners' Reports**

Commissioner Cornell is happy to see the referendum go on the ballot and very pleased to see expanded activities offered for older adults. Commissioner Ward commented that his youngest daughter is very excited about the new playground at Newton Park which is set to open this spring. President Durham was complimentary of the Ackerman turf field as it has been heavily used by soccer and others during this challenging spring. President Durham also thanked Director Harris and staff for their hard work in preparing information regarding the potential referendum.

**X. Adjourn**

There being no further business, Commissioner Weber moved, seconded by Commissioner Ward to adjourn the Meeting at 8:55 p.m.

*Roll Call: Aye: Commissioners Weber, Ward, Cornell, Stortz, Bischoff, Nephew and President Durham*  
*Nay: None*

*Motion Carried.*

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Harris  
Board Secretary