

**PALATINE PARK DISTRICT  
BOARD SUMMARY**

May 13, 2024

From: Benjamin M. Rea, Executive Director

Re: Palatine Stables Structural Review and Recommendation

Recommendation & Motion:

We recommend the Board of Commissioners close the stables because of the cost associated with the extensive repairs needed to keep the facility open and safe for use.

Move to close the stables and utilize the upcoming community needs assessment and master planning process to determine future development of the property.

Rationale:

The District hired Johnson, Wilbur, Adams (structural engineering firm) to review the structural integrity of the upper and lower arenas, as well as the horse pens that comprise the Palatine Stables. The investigation revealed extensive rotting to many of the posts that were inspected and brought to light other repairs that are needed (the engineer's report has been attached for the Board's review). In addition to the engineer, staff investigated and determined that both arenas were constructed between 1960 and 1972 utilizing historic aerial photographs.

After reviewing the engineer's report, staff toured the site with Lamp Construction (construction management firm) to obtain pricing for the potential repairs. The cost estimates to complete even just a portion of the repairs is extensive and cost prohibitive, most likely triggering additional code required improvements.

Staff gathered the following boarding and programing statistics for the stables:

**Park District Owned Horses and Ponies- 36**

20- Horses

16- Ponies

**Boarder Owned Horses- 25**

In-District- 8            28%  
Out-of-District- 17      72%

**2023 Programming-**

In-District Participants-      372 Enrolled    39%  
Out-of-District Participants- 591 Enrolled    61%  
Total Participants-            963 Enrolled

**2024 Programming to Date-**

In-District Participants-      102 Enrolled    34%  
Out-of-District Participants- 196 Enrolled    66%  
Total Participants-            298 Enrolled

**2023 Point of Sale Transactions-**

In-District Households-      9            20%  
Out-of-District Households- 36        80%  
Total Unique Households-    45\*

\*A total of 1302 point of sale transactions took place in 2023, however no household information was collected for 847 of the transactions. Of the 847 transactions, 669 were for individual pony rides.

Here is a breakdown on the potential structural repairs:

In addition to the rotted columns, damaged or modified roof trusses were identified, the roofs of both arenas are leaking, and the west arena roof was found to be sagging.

**Load Bearing Structural Columns-**

Interior Columns-            177  
Exterior Wall Columns-      136  
Total Columns-                313

**Repair Option One-**

Interior Columns Only-      \$1,103,741.50  
Code Improvements-\*\*      \$ 400,000.00  
Roof Coating-                \$ 350,000.00  
Total Expense-                \$1,853,741.50

**Repair Option Two-**

Exterior Wall Columns Only- \$ 857,229.00  
Code Improvements-\*\*      \$ 400,000.00  
Roof Coating-                \$ 350,000.00  
Total Expense-                \$1,607,229.00

**Repair Option Three-**

All Columns-	\$1,921,441.50
Code Improvements-**	\$ 400,000.00
Roof Coating-	<u>\$ 350,000.00</u>
Total Expense-	\$2,671,441.50

\*\*Code Improvements are not comprehensive but do include an estimate for installation of a sprinkler system. Additional improvements for the Americans with Disability Act (ADA), fire alarm installation, utility upgrades, etc. should be expected. Code improvements are typically triggered when 50% of the building replacement value is exceeded during improvements. The estimated replacement value of both arenas (present condition and structures only) is around \$2,500,000.00.

To complete repairs to each of the arenas, a contractor will need to remove all steel siding and any wood that comprises the walls. A hole will need to be augered by each column, a footing will need to be formed, the rot in the column trimmed out, the column will need to be sistered with two steel beams and set in a concrete footing. The proposed work is labor intensive and would require the horses and ponies to be relocated during the repairs and would impede stable operations.

It would not make sense to complete only partial repairs and risk damaging the improvements in the future when the unaddressed columns fail. However, the proposed all-in repairs exceed the estimated value of the buildings. In addition, most of the patrons who utilize the facility are out-of-district.

Given the age/condition of the facility and that most boarders and program participants are out-of-district patrons, staff cannot justify the expense to complete the extensive repairs. The funds would be better suited to redevelop the property or used for other capital improvements throughout the District.

The District is about to release a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a community needs assessment and comprehensive masterplan. This is a good time to consider moving away from the stables operation and seeking direction from our residents about the future of the property.

Staff does not recommend moving forward with the repairs, instead planning an exit strategy for the stables.