

MINUTES OF THE  
BERKELEY PARK DISTRICT  
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING  
Wednesday, May 27, 2022

The special board meeting of the Berkeley Park District was held on Wednesday, May 27, 2022 at Berkeley Park District's Lind Park building. The meeting was called to order at 7:33 p.m.

Roll call Commissioners present: J. Traina, D. Ditchfield, P. Smith, K. Lowe and T. Larem

Other present: Park District Director P. Graham, and Secretary, A. Hord

Berkeley Resident: 14 persons were present for public comment.

- A.) Park District Partnership Proposal with the Village of Berkeley: Commissioner Ditchfield stated that Berkeley Park District will thoroughly investigate and it will be done on the park district's timeline and not the village's timeline. The board has short term and long term goals, and it was very unprofessional of the village to portray the Berkeley Park District the way they did at the AdHoc meeting in April. The village has poorly maintained building in the neighborhood that are not brought up at village meetings. The Village of Berkeley is not listening to public comment, and what they want. The village should dedicate their manpower to run the village and not the park district business. During public engagement for Berkeley Park District, not one resident asked to improve the baseball field. They are wanting soccer , but the village has used \$20,000.00 on the baseball field at Berkeley Park. The park district needs to decide what is in the best interest for Berkeley residents. Commissioner Ditchfield and Pete Graham met with the director of Memorial Park District, Mark Flores. They have a dedicated maintenance employees. They are interested to partner with Berkeley Park District. Mr. Flores walked Berkeley Park. He can assist with contact information for maintenance items. The Village of Berkeley has different interest than the park district. Families are looking for leadership, diversity of communities, and programs, and not daycare from park districts, any longer.
- Commissioner Smith stated the proposal is more encompassing than is needed. He feels the village could assist more with the maintenance aspect, with garbage pick-up, building maintenance (with compensation). He is not opposed in working with the village and Memorial Park District
- The baseball field repairs and new tee ball field was funded by money given to the park district from the tollway, for use to move the ball field. This money is held by the village and was used by the village to do work on the ball fields.
- Commissioner Larem met with Village Administrator Rudy Espiritu and asked what rolls the commissioner would have. She feels the commissioners will have someone work with programs and keep Director Pete Graham working with programs. She feels the proposal is a lifeline to do more, and would like an opt out idea, to try the partnership and back out if it doesn't work. She feels there are more resources to work with the village, and trust is needed.
- Commissioner Lowe stated his kids are older now, but they grew up attending programs with Berkeley Park District. The questions are not only the park district to work with the village, but can the village work with the park district. He feels it was wrong for the village to point out all what's wrong with, but constructs a new ball field without having the park district commissioners approve a new field on park district property. The village is not showing willingness to work together. If a merge with the village would happen, there are some advantages: there is a need for clear rolls. Commissioner Smith stated that on a maintenance stand point, in the AdHoc meeting, the village said the need is to work together.

Berkeley Park District has completed writing their Master Plan, has done public comment, has architect plan, with a hold on a new building at Berkeley Park, since no one is in favor of the idea of a new recreation building at Berkeley Park. The plan for Berkeley Park would be to build new open pavilion with washroom facilities, tennis courts and pickleball court. Each commissioner has an area they are in charge of and it's the park district that should make the decision in the end. The park district will continue to investigate, and will stay accountable. Berkeley Park District has completed: the Memorial Corner, the Lind Park washroom renovations. The park district was not included in negotiations with the cell tower companies, even though it's located on park property. The village holds the funds given to the park district to move the ball field.

- B.) Tennis Court resurfacing: Midwest Sports Courts can ban aid the courts for a total of \$20,000.00. Robert E. Lee Construction would install the new posts for a cost of \$2000.00. Another company, also named Sport Court offers a different type of system that goes over the old court surface. Commissioner Ditchfield asked moving forward, is it worth resurfacing the blue court, or repair a tennis court and make the other court a tennis/pickleball court? Then there would be two playable courts. This would cost \$19,900.00 to do both. Commissioner Smith will get quotes on the picnic shelter repairs, even though the shelter would be torn down in a year or two. A motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Lowe to approve Midwest Sport Court repairs on the two tennis courts at Berkeley Park for the cost of \$19,900.00 and Robert E. Lee Construction to do the post for the cost of \$2,400.00. Commissioners voting "aye": J. Traina, D. Ditchfield, P. Smith, T. Larem, and K. Lowe. Motion carried.

- C.) Public Comment: There was 14 residents, which several made comments and asked questions-
- Q: When and where are the AdHoc meetings/ A: they are held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at the Bicentennial Room at the Berkeley Village Hall at 6:30 p.m.
  - Q: Why is all the talk about Berkeley Park and not Lind Park/ A: The Berkeley Park Master Plan is regarding the land at Berkeley Park. There are thoughts of retooling Lind Park for programs. The public is not in favor of having a new recreation center at Berkeley Park. They would like new carpet at the Lind building for exercise programs.
  - Q: Can Park District partner with other entities, not necessarily with the village. To have a backup plan. A: Memorial Park District serves 1/3 of Berkeley residents, and two streets of Berkeley are served by Elmhurst Park District. The budget should be controlled by the Park District and not the Village. Commissioner Lowe says the board is willing to listen and wants the best interest for the residents. Commissioner Larem states it's too much work for the director, and support from public works, who could do park garbage, clean washroom, etc. Q: The park district needs to look at all possibilities and not to rush into partnership with the village. Get a clear definition, because what is set in motion now will affect the future residents. Commissioner Lowe stated the village installed the light posts and story boards, along with the library which are great, but were not discussed with the park district, but told of their plans. Then at the AdHoc meeting the village shows a slideshow which slams Berkeley Park District. Q; A question was asked about the park district and marketing. Getting an intern from Elmhurst may help. Who would hire/interview/the village has resources. Q: Memorial Park may be able to help/ the park district is at an impasse with the village. Q: Berkeley Park District needs one or two full time employees, or combination of full time and part time, and get help with maintenance and have Pete handle programming. Q: The library had an agreement with the village and the village backed out from what they said they would do. Be careful of merging with the village. Resident suggested to keep

separate governing bodies. A partnership and not merge. The village wants a say in what happens, but need to work together. The operating budget allocated towards other things. Infrastructure- Village uses the parking lot which is park district property, village installed lamp posts on park property. The park district needed to show where money was needed for, to apply for grants.

Q: Why is the shelter roped off?/ A:Village deemed areas uninhabitable and dangerous.

Q:Initial proposal, was complete merger/A: Vote policies and budget and programs by the park district/ maintenance by the village. The Berkeley Park District is being as conscientious as possible, and is covering all bases. They will research thoroughly.

Q: Regarding the Proposal, can the park district counter offer? A: AdHoc meeting continue to discuss comprehensive. The park will make a responsible decision. A brief discussion of the last meeting and a special meeting will be set up.

Q:What is due diligence, there's no rush, with in the last month the village spelled out.

Q: During decision, will exercise programs continue/A: There is no plans to cut classes. The board and operations will work together. An explanation of Public Meeting Act was discussed.

Q: Must a Special Meeting be in public setting? What can resident do to help?/A: The park district needs input of what Berkeley residents want from their park district.

Q:How do residents get information regarding the park district?/A: Word of mouth, Facebook (3 groups are confusing, Pete will fix and only have 1) Website, posted on Lind Park door, and at Berkeley library.

Q: Can the village add on their Robo calls? A: The park district will check into this idea.

Q: Board agrees they need help?/ A: Yes, how can they move forward to get help?

Commissioner Smith suggested to hire outside to do maintenance.

Commissioner Larem stated the AdHoc meeting is at the village on May 12, at 6:30 p.m.

A motion was made by Commissioner Smith and seconded by Commissioner Lowe to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m. All commissioner voted "aye" Motion carried.

Ann Hord  
Secretary