



**GLENVIEW PARK DISTRICT
Strategic Plan Advisory Committee
Public Meeting**

Park Center-Room: Lakeview B&C
2400 Chestnut Avenue
Glenview, IL 60025
Meeting Minutes
March 23, 2010, 7:00 p.m.

Attendees

Commissioners: President Judy Beck, William Casey, Angie Katsamakakis, Bob Patton, Ted Przybylo

Glenview Park District: Director Charles Balling, Superintendents: Barb Cremin, Cheryl Deom, Fred Gullen, Robert Quill, staff members: Laila Bashia, Denise Blinick, Joanne Capaccio, Liz Gogola, Kevin Roberts and Interns: Chelsea Wagner, Kevin Lawler

Facilitator: Hank Gmitro

The Strategic Plan Advisory Committee: Al Kearney, Ann Yoshida, Bill Dempsey, Bill Moore, Dan Peterson, Judy Hynes, Laura Selby, Marty Fogarty, Richard Day, Sven Dahlquist

Public in Attendance: None

Greeting

President Beck thanked everyone on behalf of the Park Board for attending the last two meetings and for coming again tonight. She noted the importance of resident participation and comments from the community and encouraged the SPAC members to continue to give their feedback. Judy also commented on how the Park District's environmental activities are finally paying off with grants now coming in to support these initiatives. Fred Gullen announced that the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) recently awarded the Park District with a green roof grant for the new maintenance facility at Community Park West (CPW). We were also notified of funding for two wind turbines that will be erected at The Air Station Prairie and the CPW maintenance facility. Fred announced that the public is invited to an opening ceremony of the four new ballfields at CPW on April 30. At that time, the public will be invited to tour the new maintenance building and see all the new environmental and energy efficient features which include: geothermal heating and cooling, coils in the irrigation pond, light harvesting with light coils, and occupancy sensors just to name a few.

Director Balling pointed to the Glenview Park District School pamphlet that was passed out to the SPAC. He mentioned this cooperative program with the schools is no longer a mandated curriculum but a volunteer program. It is currently offered at The Grove but was expanded to Wagner Farm and The Tyner Center. Chuck then introduced a video from NSSRA (Northern Suburban Special Recreation Association). A parent with a child that participates in NSSRA programs volunteered to create this video He noted how we work with this agency to provide special recreation programs for people with disabilities. He also

explained a project that is being funded by both the NSSRF (Northern Suburban Special Recreation Foundation) and the Glenview Park Foundation to develop and renovate the Willow Park fieldhouse to be accessible and used for priority scheduling for people with disabilities. Both foundations have contributed \$100,000 each towards this project. The Park District is one of 13 Park Districts that fund NSSRA. Chuck Balling serves on the NSSRA Board and Commissioner Bob Patton is the Special Liaison. SPAC member Dan Petersen also serves on the NSSRF.

Recap

Hank discussed the results of the rankings the SPAC members had done on the proposed projects. He noted that the top three were items that already had some funding source identified. The other items have costs associated with them and are still at the exploration stage. The Park District will use this feedback as they continue to develop their three year Strategic Plan. (See attached ranking sheet).

Feedback

Homework Assignment (Registration process and non-resident fees)

Hank asked the SPAC members what kind of feedback they received from both their small group discussions and from asking others they knew on the question of registration procedures. Did they find most preferred the “first come first serve” if priority was given to residents or the lottery system. The results were most favored keeping the current lottery system by three to one. Also, on the question of reducing or eliminating non-resident fees but giving priority to residents, most felt in order to keep enrollments in a program, they would consider not charging non-resident fees. But fees for programs should be looked at on a case by case basis. (See Appendix for questions and comments). Hank asked for the SPAC to turn in their written evaluation and question sheets on these two topics.

Food Service Initiative

Cheryl Deom asked for any questions/comments from the March 18 presentation on the Food Service Initiative. She summarized the SPAC’s prior comments that most felt food service should be an enhancement for Park District patrons, not necessarily a revenue generating operation and we need to look at each location individually. Cheryl wanted to clarify that there are three recommended categories of food service operations: subsidized, break-even, and revenue generating. (See Appendix for questions and comments). Hank then asked for the SPAC to turn in their written evaluation and question sheets on this topic.

Strategic Initiatives

Staff proceeded to walk the Committee through the last three Identified Strategic Plan Initiatives (copy of slide presentations filed herewith). The following staff members presented:

- Denise Blinick: Delivering Exceptional Customer Service
- Laila Bashia: Optimize Our Talent Pool
- Liz Gogola: Expand Strategic Marketing to Achieve Business Goals

Issues and goals were identified and recommendations were given to achieve those goals. Hank asked the SPAC if the issues and recommendations were clear to them. Questions and comments were taken from the SPAC. (see Appendix). Written feedback was also turned in on each initiative.

Next Steps

Director Chuck Balling noted that all comments, ratings and feedback from the three Strategic Plan Advisory Committee meetings will be considered when presenting recommendations to the Park Board for the next Strategic Plan. We hoped to have the draft of the Strategic Plan ready to present at the May 27 Park Board meeting, 7:00 p.m. at Park Center. As we did last time, we will have the facilities recommendations listed on one sheet. We will also have items listed that will be researched over the next three years as well as those that might be considered in the future. We will also have timelines for completion of the tasks. The level of detail is important to show how we will implement our future vision and also to be held accountable to complete these initiatives. The tentative date for the Park Board to consider the final Strategic Plan for approval will be at the June 24, 2010 Park Board meeting. The Strategic Plan will then be posted on the Glenview Park District website for the public to review our progress.

Chuck noted that the Park District's priorities will be to continue the following: conservative financial planning, enhance parks and facilities, keep customer service a number 1 priority, ongoing commitment to the environment, broaden and strengthen community and integrated relationships, enhance food service/develop categories of food service, continue customer focused programming by being innovative and flexible, optimize our talent pool, and strategic marketing.

Chuck summarized by saying the Park District Board and staff will continue to listen to the community, do research, and take action to get things done. Chuck thanked the SPAC for their time and input.

Hank asked the SPAC to reflect on this Strategic Process and give their thoughts on what they felt has worked well and how the process could be improved for next time? (See Appendix for comments).

Director Balling recognized Barb Cremin and Laila Bashia for all their efforts in the meeting and material preparation as well as the other Park district staff that participated and the Student Interns who attended the meetings and saw how the community, Park Board and staff can all work together. He also thanked Hank Gmitro for facilitating each meeting and for the wonderful job he did.

President Beck also thanked all the members for participating.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:40 p.m.

ATTEST:

Judy Beck, President

Charles T. Balling, Secretary

Approved this 27th day of May 2010

Appendix

Discussion Points

Q= Question, A= Answer, C=Comment

SPAC Members were asked to provide feedback on three issues:

- *Whether they preferred a lottery or first come first served registration process*
- *Whether a change to the resident/non-resident fee concept as a means to promote additional registrations would be viable?*
- *The role of food service at the Glenview Park District*

Registration Process (Priority vs. Lottery)

Q: *You have stated that a lottery is usually used because demand for the program exceeds capacity. Could it be that now capacity is exceeding demand and the lottery may not be needed?*

A: Some programs fill up quickly and others do not. When we asked about the lottery in the Attitude and Interest Survey there was a 50-50 split between those who preferred the lottery and those who preferred first-come, first-served registration. Whichever way we finally determine as the preferred method of registration, giving residents preferred access to our programs and ease in registering will be key factors. Many people want one set of rules for registration.

C: Don't think it should be a one size fit all when it comes to registering. The park district should consider using a lottery for more popular programs and not for others.

Registration Process (Non-Resident Fees)

C: Most people understand why we have a non-resident fee, but it could be less than 25%. Programs should benefit the Glenview resident.

C: To keep a program running, most would consider eliminating the non-resident fee to entice non-residents to fill vacant spots.

C: Would rather see a program exist so families could enjoy it, even if that meant eliminating the non-resident fees to fill the vacant spots.

C: Some programs are expensive and the higher non-resident fee could price the non-residents out from considering our programs.

C: The Park District could consider partnering with other Park Districts to offer programs that might be more appropriate at their individual sites and allow more to participate and keep costs down.

Food Service Initiative

C: Look at where food service is working well and model other locations after that. Also, look at what is working badly.

C: Be careful when looking at what is working badly because if the philosophy is to have food service to enhance our patrons' experiences, the reason why something

- is working badly should not affect this philosophy at other locations, e.g., rain at the Golf Course, low attendance at the Café).
- C: If you are losing money running an operation in-house and could lose less money, continually by outsourcing, then you need to consider that. One size should not fit all.

Q: *How much do the subsidized food operations cost us?*

A: Not much, the subsidized operations are very small.

C: Maybe we should look at food service overall, is it revenue generating or subsidized?

C: If subsidized operations are not working, we should try something else.

C: The three categories in the Categories of Food Service should be broken down more. Need to define the variables involved and collect data to make decisions.

C: Feedback on the food service at the pools: even though the concessions may not make money, parents want food available for their kids.

C: We don't always look to make a profit at the Park District, but to provide service. This is a complex issue and need to look at more options. Should also look at making banquets more affordable for families.

Delivering Exceptional Customer Service

Q: *How does web chat work?*

A: The customer would click on a button to ask for assistance. The times that the web chat feature is available would be limited since it would need to be staffed. Details would need to be worked through.

C: Customer Service and Marketing is intertwined. Customer Service is key to answering the questions and collecting data from patrons to help us understand their needs.

Q: *Is customer service included in annual performance evaluations?*

A: Yes, both internal and external customer service is a criteria in the performance evaluations.

Q: *Is there a calendar form for patrons to see what programs they are registered in?*

A: Yes, we have that now.

C: I think the website is fantastic and cuts down on paper. More e mail reminders or program suggestions to patrons would be helpful.

Additional SPAC suggestions for enhancing Customer Service

C: I Phone Apps and other phone applications so patrons could pull up Park District information.

C: Emails are very important to alert patrons to upcoming special events in a timely manner.

- C: Some of this technology is generational and that needs to be taken into consideration. However, there are many formats that could be used to address various comfort levels with technology.
- C: Look into online training for staff especially during down time.

Optimize Our Talent Pool

- Q:** *Is there a park plan that shows every staff member how they fit in and are aligned to the district's plan?*
- A:** We have an organizational chart that shows how the employee is aligned. Each person's performance evaluation shows strategic goals and objectives and how that fits into the overall Strategic Plan. There are also teams that employees are part of, i.e., customer service, safety teams and allow staff to do what they do best.

- Q:** *The employee survey showed a 95% job satisfaction rate, but what was the response rate and what are a couple of concerns that were identified?*
- A:** Out of 100 full-time and 300 part-time, 80 surveys were returned. Communication and part-time benefits were two concerns. To address communication concerns, the Director has quarterly employee roundtable sessions with a group of employees to get their input on concerns. We are limited on the benefits we can provide part-time employees.

- Q:** *Are the core competencies for all staff positions being looked at?*
- A:** Yes, Our performance appraisal system includes an evaluation of core competencies, job performance and completion of individually assigned goals.

Expand Strategic Marketing to Achieve Business Goals

- C:** *Great job with Marketing overall but pools are still underutilized. The Park District should market special events at the pool i.e., family events. Sometimes there is too much email and texting as a way to stay in touch with customers, we need to have a personal touch/connection with our patrons as well.*
- A:** With the pools, weather is a big factor so we might need to look at the value of the pool passes. Also, special events are costly so we would need to look at that challenge of increasing special events while being able to cover costs. When it is hot, the pools are near capacity. We did have a few special events at the pool last season that were well received. We will continue to do more.
- C:** The Park District could partner with local businesses to help fund these special events.
- C:** Special events also bring in future customers.

Reflection on Strategic Process; what worked well, what can be improved for next Strategic Planning

- C: Presentations were outstanding, streamlined yet the details were clear and great delivery.
- C: Materials were great, and we received great insight from staff on follow-up questions. This process was good, sound, well-thought out and staff was wonderful.
- C: Liked the small discussion groups with staff and Board. Written questions could be more insightful and more specific to the topic.
- C: Loved the process, but for the future, need more dialogue from our users to get their input and include it in the strategic process. Also, need more direction on completing the ratings sheet. What criteria should I follow to decide on each one?
- C: Need to look at more categories including long-range planning that the Board is considering.
- C: Include the youth into the strategic planning process
- C: Overall planning/conclusions are fabulous. However, the recommendations are too detailed and tend to eliminate outside thinking. They are too defined and therefore your thinking is channeled.
- C: Like having the Board members and staff intermingle with the SPAC.
- C: More time needed for the meetings. Spread it out a little. Maybe one meeting for five weeks.
- C: The SPAC meetings from the last strategic plan process were longer and feedback at that time was to have them shorter.
- C: Send some information online and that might allow SPAC members to be able to participate easier and not have to attend each meeting.
- C: The Board members are elected volunteers that work hard. They should be commended for their extraordinary efforts on behalf of the community. They should consider more than just the SPAC recommendations for the Park District Strategic Planning.
- C: A lot of time went into preparing for these meetings, staff should be commended, especially Barb Cremin and Laila Bashia.
- C: Do not feel time was wasted on these meetings.
- C: This was a diverse committee that worked well. Thanked the SPAC.
- C: SPAC needs a centralized plan to follow while hearing the presentations/recommendations
- Q: Did anything surprise you from these meetings?
- A: Didn't realize how much the Park District does.