



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

Park Center-Room: Lakeview B&C
2400 Chestnut Avenue
Glenview, IL 60025
Meeting Minutes
March 18, 2010, 7:00 p.m.

Attendees

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

Glenview Park District: Director Charles Balling, Superintendents: Barb Cremin, Cheryl Deom, Fred Gullen, Robert Quill, staff members: Laila Bashia, Joanne Capaccio, Lorin Ottlinger, Joe Pollina, Steve Swanson and Interns: Chelsea Wagner, Kevin Lawler

Facilitator: Hank Gmitro

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

Public in Attendance: None

Greeting/Recap

Hank Gmitro thanked everyone for attending the last meeting and for coming again tonight. He noted that a quick review of the last meeting and feedback on the two initiatives would be given. Director Chuck Balling also thanked everyone and introduced Dan Peterson, a member of the SPAC who was not at the last meeting. Dan is an active resident who is involved at OLPH and is a member of the Northern Suburban Special Recreation Foundation and the Glenview Park District Foundation. The SPAC welcomed Dan.

Chuck said the feedback he received on the financial initiative showed that the goals were understood and the recommendations were clear. A question on fund balances was received and Chuck commented that it has been about three years since the fund balance goals were looked at and at that time the Park District was comparable to other districts. However, he noted that staff will be looking at the funds and updating our financial targets. He reminded the SPAC that most agencies do not have a Capital Replacement and Repair fund as we do where funds are set aside for future capital repair and replacement expenses. Chuck commented that he also received feedback indicating that the SPAC seemed impressed with the long list of improvements and new Park District facilities completed within the last ten years.

Bob Quill was available to take questions/comments from the SPAC on the Enhancing Experiences at Facilities & Parks Initiative and its corresponding Facilities Ratings sheet. (See Appendix). Hank then asked the SPAC to turn in their ratings sheet.

Strategic Initiatives

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

- Lorin Ottlinger: Expand Environmental & Historical Stewardship. Chuck applauded Lorin for being the Environmental Team leader for the last three years and for all her efforts to move the Park District ahead in Environmental initiatives.
- Steve Swanson: Broaden and Strengthen Community And Intergovernmental Relationships
- Joe Pollina: Develop Innovative and Customer-Focused Programming
- Cheryl Deom: Enhance the Food Service Experience

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 on the issues and recommendations was requested from the SPAC members on the first two initiatives and they were asked to turn in their feedback sheets at the end of each discussion. After the presentation on ***Develop Innovative and Customer-Focused Programming***, Hank asked the SPAC to split into groups of 3 and discuss two questions that were on the corresponding evaluation sheet for this Initiative. Question (5) *Do you feel the community prefers the current lottery system or registration on a first come first served basis?* and question (6) *Could you support eliminating or significantly reducing non-resident fees as long as residents were given the first opportunity to register for programs?* He asked them to discuss their personal opinions as well as how they thought the community would feel. He then asked members to find 5 people over the weekend to discuss these two questions with and get their perceptions. He directed the SPAC to complete the evaluation sheet and turn it in at the next meeting on March 23. He also asked them to take their evaluation sheet on the ***Enhance the Food Service Experience*** initiative home with them and bring it back on March 23.

In closing, Hank shared the results of the rankings the SPAC completed of potential Park District projects (see attached ranking sheet). He noted copies of the results will be given to the SPAC at the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:30 p.m.

ATTEST:

Judy Beck, President

Charles T. Balling, Secretary

Approved this 27th day of May 2010

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Appendix

Discussion Points

Q= Question, A= Answer, C=Comment

Enhancing Experiences at Facilities & Parks

Q: *Why did some recommendations make the list on the Facilities rating sheet and why some didn't?*

A: After doing some research, it was felt that the items on the rating list would be the most impactful. Some of the recommendations were maintenance items and not new projects so they were not included on the rating sheet. Also, some renovations/maintenance at field houses are issues that need to be addressed in a more timely matter and were therefore included in the strategic plan as a separate initiative and not prioritized with the other major projects..

Q: *References to turf fields were noted on the Interest and Attitude survey and elsewhere in the SPAC material. But it is not on the list?*

A: Artificial turf is being considered by GBS. We will continue our discussions with them about the possibility of cooperative efforts and community use if they move forward.

Q: *Can nothing be done about a potential boat house at Gallery Park until the Park District takes it over?*

A: The boat house was a concept that was presented to the Village of Glenview during the planning stages for Gallery Park as a possible future amenity to Lake Glenview. We are currently in discussions with the Village to transfer Gallery Park over to the Park District. The boat house concept may be considered as a potential project during the 2013-2016 Strategic Plan. This will allow the Park District plenty of time to transition Gallery Park under its operation.

Expand Environmental & Historical Stewardship

Q: *How are grants handled? Are they equally distributed?*

A: The type of grant determines how it is distributed. We use a variety of sources to seek out grants that may be applicable to Park District projects. For example, the Park District retains the services of a grant consultant who works with us to submit state grants. Judy Beck, President of the Park Board, also keeps us informed on federal grants, particularly environmental grants and she has also noted there is the Grants.gov website that lists available grants. Our local legislators also keep us informed on grant opportunities. The grant submittal process at the Park District is currently a decentralized process, but we may look to centralize the process in the future.

Q: *Do all the units of local government work together on purchasing, energy savings, etc.? Residents would appreciate that.*

A: We have a wide variety of Intergovernmental agreements that benefit our residents. We are always looking open to exploring other ways to further cooperate on purchasing and sharing resources. We already do some joint purchasing by purchasing vehicles and other items with other government agencies through the Illinois State bid process and purchasing other supplies through the Illinois Parks and Recreation Association's co-op purchasing program. These programs give the Park District the benefit of volume pricing which it would not qualify for on its own. In addition to joint purchasing, the Park District works together with many groups for the benefit of the community. For example, the Park District also has intergovernmental agreements for exchange of services with the schools and we have included an initiative in our strategic plan to develop an exchange of services agreement with the library.

Q: *What other parts of Glenview should we be historically preserving?*

A: This is an issue that falls within the responsibility of the Village's Historic Commission to make recommendations regarding historical preservation.

Broaden and Strengthen Community and Intergovernmental Relationships

Q: *As noted previously, should the message of cost savings from the intergovernmental agreements, co-op programs, exchange of services, etc., be more aggressively communicated to the public? Can this be tracked in the future?*

A: We do some of that now, we will continue to look at ways to best communicate that information to our residents.

Q: *Expand on the recommendation to "Review standards for donation of services"? Is this what the Park District donates or what is donated to the Park District?*

A: Both...

Q: *How do you standardize Recognized Organizations? How do they get levels of recognition? How do you grow those levels? If there is a conflict with an existing group how does that affect a new group? There should be more transparency with these community relationships and more outreach to other potential organizations.*

A: We currently have a policy on recognized organizations which determines eligibility for recognized organization status and benefits. There are several types of recognized organization which groups who meet the eligibility standards may apply for. Since our Affiliated Sports Groups, as one type of recognized organization, greatly impact park district operations, we meet with each group annually to understand their roles and services. We are also creating Memorandums of Understandings with each specific sports group since they are so different. So far, we have only had one primary group in each area of sports, so there haven't been any conflicts with the scheduling of fields. However, the criteria for priority use of our fields would be which group has the most Glenview residents being served. We need to further standardize this process and the associated opportunities.

Q: *Can you assess the costs to the Park District to serve these Recognized Organizations?*

A: Yes, Park Services knows what the unit costs are for the sports groups and there is a service charge back for field maintenance and lights. We are helping these groups by keeping fees low. These sports groups are also helping us because they provide a service that otherwise would need to be provided by the Park District. They are run by volunteers and save the participants money.

Q: *Explain the evolution and intent with the School District and The Grove curriculum agreements?*

A: The relationship with the Grove is 35 years old but the relationship with the schools and the Park District is closer to 50 yrs. The Park District and School District Boards created the joint curriculum agreement based on the Grove providing a programming which supplements the school's subject matter and gives students the opportunity to experience the Grove. We are now expanding education-based programming at Wagner Farm and the Tyner Center.

C: Would like to see private schools be a part of these curriculum agreements and experience the Grove as well. District 34 is now revisiting these agreements and this could be because of turn over and changing priorities within the School District. The money for school field trips should be going back into the community.

A: We are looking at expanding our educational opportunities to both the public and private schools.

Develop Innovative and Customer-Focused Programming

Q: *How much monitoring of programs is done now and how much will be new?*

A: We don't have a standardized process in place across the Board, but we do monitor our program numbers. Based on the enrollments, we increase marketing, add additional sections or cancel the program. The recommendation is to develop a more standardized review of program offerings and trends so that we can more quickly adapt to changing needs. We also are developing a process to better recommendations from surveys, trends and customer suggestions/complaints district-wide.

Q: *What kind of dialogue are we having with our user groups? What else is being done besides monitoring the numbers of participants in programs?*

A: We have increased our surveys in the last few years, and also had focus groups that have helped us to improve our services and develop our branding. We also have informal feedback from participants. We would like to develop a district-wide systematic approach that could still focus on the target markets of each facility. This past year, Board members and our staff went out and met with all recognized sports organizations.

Q: *How are other districts pricing in regards to resident and non-resident fees and are they using lotteries? What about traveling teams?*

A: Most Districts are doing away with the lotteries and moving towards first come-first-served registration. Each district handles non-resident fees differently. Our non-resident rates are about 25% more than resident rates. As far as traveling teams, we have seen a shift in the last few years resulting in lower participation in some youth Park District sports programs due to more children doing travel sports. We are very concerned about this trend because a traveling team target toward young children limits their ability to participate in other activities. We have seen some park districts that are focusing on travel teams and even hiring staff to run them. However, there is a lot of benefit to keeping kids in recreational programs too. Recreational programs are part of the core mission of the Park District and parents should be made aware of these benefits as well as the importance of balancing both recreational and highly competitive travelling sports. We need to do a better job of communicating the many benefits of keeping kids in recreational sports vs. traveling teams at a young age.

Q: *What about after-school programs, this is not on any of the recommendations?*

A: We didn't want to get too specific in some of our potential program offerings in these recommendations, but this will be addressed as part of our overall assessment of program offerings.

Q: *Are we duplicating any programs that the schools and library may be running?*

A: We are not aware of any duplication of programs. One of our initiatives for this strategic plan is to explore opportunities for partner programming.

Enhance the Food Service Experience

C: Attended an event at the Café and the food was limited, but price was good. Also attended an event at the Park Center where only one caterer could be used. I would like to have a choice of caterers. More flexibility needed.

A: We are looking to assess the value of our exclusive relationships with some of our vendors and service providers, i.e., caterers as well as vendors at our facilities.

Q: *What are other Park Districts doing with their food service?*

A: We are one of the last districts that are doing in-house food service at public golf courses. We are aware that The Channahon Park District also has in-house food service) but many others contract out services and are not open during the off season except for banquets. At the Glenview Park District, we have experienced that our outside food providers who operate concessions in our facilities are having a hard time making a profit and often ask for reduced rent. To offer value, we are constantly monitoring the quality of the food. There is a balancing of making a profit and still providing quality food and customer service. This is one of the reasons we currently don't allow patrons to bring in food at the outdoor pools as those concessions really help with our bottom line since pools are only

- have a short season to offset the operating costs. We are also recommending approval of a Categories of Food Service Policy that will help in this area.
- C: If food service is not your core business then outsourcing makes sense. You can make these experts your partners and make sure your patrons are being served.
 - C: Whether the food service is in-house or contracted, the real issue is to offer food service as an amenity to our patrons. However, it may not be enhancing our customer's experience at a certain facility. Food service is a very difficult industry. If we want to make a profit, this may not be the area to expect that.
 - C: Don't think one philosophy can cover all food areas. The District may need different philosophies for different facilities. Different price points for different areas.
 - C: We have exclusive contracts for financial reasons. If we contract out, i.e., The Café, we might have other issues and challenges such as limiting parking for golfers, signage, competition, etc. We do need to outline philosophies for food service.
 - C: Food offerings should be just as diverse as district programs are.
 - C: Can we get an outside vendor to do better than we are, improve quality and make a profit?
 - C: Not sure going to a contractor would make it more profitable. It could be in conflict with the core mission of the facility. Food will become more important to participants because of their busy lifestyles.