GLENVIEW PARK DISTRICT
Citizen Task Force
Public Meeting
Glenview Ice Center
1851 Landwehr Road
Glenview, IL 60025
Meeting Minutes
November 15, 2017, 6:00 p.m.

Attendees

Glenview Park District Staff: Michael D. McCarty, Executive Director; Katie Skibbe, Deputy Executive Director; James Warnstedt, Superintendent of Park & Facility Services; Lori Lovell, Superintendent of Special Facilities; Elsa Fischer, Superintendent of Leisure Services; Lorin Ottlinger, Director of The Grove; Jim Weides, Manager of Glenview Ice Center; Brian Montgomery, Manager of Program Services at the Ice Center; Jena Johnson, Manager of Marketing & Communications, Tony Lyttles, IT and Joanne Capaccio, Executive Assistant

Consultants: Paul Hanley and Bill Hofherr, George K. Baum & Company and Jim Hobart, Principal, Public Opinion Strategies

Citizen Task Force Members: Stephanie Arkus, Pete Boland; Patrick Callaghan; Pete Cardis; Carlo Cavallaro; John Gall; John Hedrick; Brad Hill; Craig Hurley; Brandy Isaac; Michael Lapiere; Matt Laurencelle; Alan Lofgren; Patty Marfise-Patt; Pete Masloski; Mark Miller; George Nassos; Mike Nolan; Louis Papamichiel; Pam Paradies; Charlie Pyne; Tracy Reeder; Laura Smith; Scott Southwood; Gregg Strellis; Kirsten Vick; Maggie Wall; Pilar Westfall

Task Force Members Absent: Three of Twenty-Eight members

Michael McCarty, Executive Director, Glenview Park District
Welcome
Park District Executive Director Michael McCarty welcomed the Task Force Members and announced the Park Board members and consultants that were present. He went over the objectives of tonight’s meeting: to review results of the mail survey, phone poll and outreach meeting feedback; address questions regarding community opinion research and bond proposal options and review and agree on next steps. He also noted that there would be time at the end of the meeting for any public comments. Director McCarty explained that if the Task Force came to a recommendation tonight, that the fourth scheduled Task Force meeting on November 28, 2017 could be used to present the Task Force recommendation to the Park Board.

Director McCarty reported that he and staff presented the proposed Bond proposal at three public community outreach meetings held at Wagner Farm, Park Center and the Ice Center, and to five civic groups: Glenview Values; Kiwanis; Rotary Noon Club; East Wing Senior
Center and Rotary Sunrise. He heard the following feedback from the community meetings: concerns about taxes; the Ice Center was too big; Sleepy Hollow improvements didn’t make sense being in a flood plain; the Open Space fund was too vague and people wanted more details on the locations; they thought the Grove projects made sense and very little questions were asked; wanted fees charged for non-resident use of the proposed track as well as the existing track at Park Center; were more supportive when more financial information was given. There seemed to be 50/50 for and against. And, he heard the following feedback from the civic groups: They were very supportive of all projects; some concerns with Sleepy Hollow, felt the tax impact was reasonable and all six attendees at the Senior Center were supportive. Especially one senior couple that noted they would be voting for the bond proposal because they wanted to convey their gratitude to the Park District for what it has meant to their family over the years.

Director McCarty noted he and staff also received some phone calls, emails and written letters. Most were critical of the proposal but some changed to positive after they received a response back to their concerns with additional information.

Director McCarty also announced that the Glenview Stars have pledged one million dollars over a designated period of time if the Ice Center project is approved by the voters. A question was asked if the one million dollar pledge from the Stars would change the amount of the proposal, and the answer was no.

Paul Hanley, Senior Vice President, George K. Baum & Company

Mail Survey Results

Paul explained that the next step in this entire process is for a follow-up letter to be sent out to all registered voters in the district beginning with “We listened” with the rest of the letter to be filled in by the Task Force. Paul noted the information that was provided to residents on this proposal. He acknowledged that the mail survey, a letter and a newsletter all went out to 21,933 registered voter households identifying likely voters (61% of respondents) and unlikely voters. And as of today, 2,962 surveys were received and analyzed; a response rate of 13%.

Paul then shared the mail survey results (presentation of mail survey results attached). He first pointed out that the mail survey is unscientific. The results were broken down by: age of respondents; past year usage of the Ice Center and The Grove; number of District employees; gender; school age children in home; where respondents lived; level of awareness of bond proposal; and level of satisfaction of information received. Paul then explained that priorities were asked on different parts of the Bond Proposal. He noted a 30% priority level or higher is a good indication of what will pass or not pass. The indoor walk/jog track and adventure play area both received very low priority. The survey went on to ask about arguments for and against the Bond proposal; again looking for a 30% rating. Many of the arguments against the proposal rated as “very convincing”. The argument to purchase the existing rink in Mount Prospect rated very high as “not at all convincing”. The final analysis of the ballot question, if voting was held today, was 46% voting Yes and 49% voting No, with ages 35-44 voting highest in favor of the ballot question. The likely voter vs unlikely voter support was fairly equal with female voters more supportive. Paul pointed out an important result was the high support from those who visited the Ice Center in the last year. An open ended question asking for any main concerns of the proposal showed the tax impact as the main concern followed.
by the total cost, too few benefiting and too fancy of a design for the new or renovated Ice Center.

Task Force Members Questions on the Mail Survey

Q: The walk/jog track was rated high on the Comprehensive Master Plan survey that the district did a few months back, so I am surprised it is rated low on this survey?  
A: Yes, it is surprising. The Park Center track is very busy and not sure why the adventure play area didn’t rate higher.

Q: The data used previously was 164,000 visitors to the Ice Center and 100,000 visitors to The Grove. The survey numbers don’t match up with those numbers, shows more visits to The Grove. Is it because the survey was only for Glenview residents? The community could be concern that the Ice Center is only serving a small group of users.  
A: It is difficult to capture visitors to the Grove because it is a 40 acre open park. Visitors to the Ice Center are constant with kids coming in all the time where visitors to the Grove may be only a few times a year. So the Ice Center gets more usage than numbers.

Jim Hobart, Principal, Public Opinion Strategies

Phone Poll Results (presentation of phone poll results attached)

Jim explained that the Phone Poll that was completed November 4-7, 2017 with 300 likely voters is a statistically valid survey because there is control of who takes it. The measure asked was:

Shall the Glenview Park District, Cook County, Illinois, build and equip a new Glenview Community Ice Center to replace the Glenview Ice Center at its existing location, construct safety and security improvements to the entrance of The Grove, improve the Interpretive Center at The Grove, relocate the fieldhouse and playground to higher ground and construct other improvements at the Sleepy Hollow Park and purchase land for open space and issue its bonds to the amount of twenty-four million dollars for the purpose of paying the costs thereof?

Jim noted results of the measure were 54% total Yes and 35% total No. However, the intensity level is low which is concerning; Definitely Yes at 24% and Definitely No at 20%. The “Probably” Yes and No are most likely undecided and potentially could move against the measure. We would like to see around a 57% intensity level. The support was fairly consistent across party lines where normally you will see a higher support among Democrats. Jim noted there was more support among women than men and more support from those with younger children in the home. The Definitely Yes votes were highest in the Northfield Central Region. Jim also noted that the polling showed the main reason for voting yes was it would improve the infrastructure and the main reason for voting no was it would raise taxes. The results also showed that the voters largely trust the Glenview Park District to handle taxpayer money wisely with a total confident score of 79%.

The phone poll went on to assess what at the Park District is most important to the voter that they would want to see it funded. The Grove safety and infrastructure improvements rated most important followed by Sleepy Hollow Park improvements, larger Ice Center and funding for Open Space in that order. Also asked was what messages were most convincing to get you to vote for the proposal. Improving The Grove (83%) and updating the old Ice
Center to make it safer and more accessible (72%) were the most convincing and having 2 and \( \frac{1}{2} \) sheets of ice would eliminate families needing to travel outside the community to access ice time was the least convincing (56%). Summarizing the results show that a majority are supportive of the bond measure but intensity is soft; there is not a clear base of support; improvements to The Grove are most supported; more information is needed on how funding addresses the growing needs of the 44 year old Ice Center versus new amenities; eliminate the glitz, and a lower cost and tax impact and no nonsense approach that does not erode base support are all needed for the measure to be successful.

**Task Force Members Questions on the Phone Poll**

Q: Of the no voters, raising taxes was 1 and 2 for being opposed to the measure but reducing the bond cost did not increase support, why?
A: If you are already voting no, you will not change your vote regardless of any proposed changes.

Q: What is the percentage of the total cost for the Ice Center and The Grove
A: Ice Center is 35 million and The Grove is 2.6 million.

Q: Can you determine if there might be a backlash because the feedback shows The Grove is most supportive but it is a relatively low percentage of the proposed funding?
A: There is no way to predict, but if the voter is looking to find something to be upset about this they will find it but if they are supportive, they will be fine. There was no indication from the comments received that this might be an issue. The most comments were regarding too big of a tax impact related to the Ice Center. Everyone is supportive of The Grove.

Q: The question about lowering the amount of the Bond proposal did not give many details so maybe that is why people did not respond favorably?
A: They were told that the additional sheet of ice would be eliminated so the yes voter may have changed their view based on that. When these types of questions are tested at the end, the definite yes person will not support the lower amount. Because the initial mail surveys coming in were not favorable, this question was inserted to see if we might get support if the bond was lowered.

Q: If the question was phrased with 2 1/2 sheets but the track and child area eliminated, do you think the support might have gone up?
A: Cannot predict that but the mail survey prioritized the walk/jog track and child area and they got low priority percentages.

Q: What is the overall cost of the walk/jog track and the child area? Aren’t they a small percentage of the overall costs? Would they really make a difference?
A: The Task Force will need to decide what they want to tell the residents in their follow-up letter after acknowledging that they listened to their feedback.

Q: Instead of looking at high priorities, shouldn’t we look at the top two categories?
A: That is why we added the two lower priorities and two high priorities together and came up with only 30% and 24% high priority for the walk/jog track and child area.
respectively. However, Mike McCarty received favorable feedback on those two items at his outreach meetings.

Q: I rated the track and child area low because ice was the high priority for me and probably for others too.
A: Correct.

Q: How do you communicate to the public, if we do nothing, what does the Ice Center look like in 10 years and how much money will it cost to keep it operating? I don’t think that was conveyed clearly.
A: We subsidize the Ice Center $100,000 annually for maintenance. We would have to fix the roof and do something with the parking lot. Must haves would cost between 3-5 million dollars; and what we should do, would cost around 12 million dollars. That is where the number for the question on lowering the bond amount came from. However, you would lose the additional revenue that would be generated with the additional sheet of ice.

Q: The Park District has a maintenance budget to maintain its buildings, correct?
A: We only have the ability for a ten million dollar bond and that would most likely have to be spent mostly on the Ice Center issues; the Grove and Sleepy Hollow issues could not be addressed.

Q: Is there a way to separate the issues for each facility and Open Space funding on the ballot?
A: You could, but The Grove would probably pass and the Ice Center would not.

Q: If the 10 million dollar bond is used, is there a tax impact?
A: No, because we have been abating the bond and interest on that bond.

General Comments
If it costs approximately 12.5 million dollars just to keep the Ice Center operational and up to code and another 9 million for a new or renovated building, the question could have been framed better.

We have three options: 1. do nothing; 2. keep it going throwing money at the Ice Center and 3. build a new facility. Not sure the questions clearly conveyed the costs to keep this going.

The School District showed the funding that had to be spent regardless if the referendum passed and what would need to be spent immediately, i.e., new HVAC system.

Public Comments
Carole Brown: She wanted to know what residents can do to support the proposal. But she noted she will wait to see what the Task Force recommends.

Judy Beck: Judy noted how old the Ice Center is, how much it is used and gets beat up. She also noted that the Park District has kept it up over the years and has taken great care of it. She would like to see this proposal talked about more positively and have the community
build a better facility. Judy does not think the glitz and additional sheet of ice will sell the proposal. She would like to see solar, geothermal and energy conservation included in the design and to build a facility for the future. Judy feels the discussion on Open Space should focus on working lands, getting a handle on storm water, and making sure Glenview keeps adding to its open space, jogging trails and spaces for nature. Open Space benefits the entire community. The public entities around the Ice Center have many opportunities for biking, walking and outdoor trails. Those amenities would bring more people into the area and into the Ice Center. Judy also noted there are major safety issues at The Grove and they really need to be addressed.

**Michael McCarty, Executive Director, Glenview Park District**

**Paul Hanley, Senior Vice President, George K. Baum & Company**

**Full committee discussion**

Paul asked the Task Force to discuss the following: their thoughts on the community feedback, were they surprised by the results; parts of the proposal they might want to eliminate or keep; if they feel it’s important to reduce costs or the tax impact; is the New Ice Center option still the desired approach; do they need additional information and would they like to make a decision tonight or want more time to think about it.

**Group comments**

The group was not surprised that the phone poll results showed 54% support of the proposal. Some felt the Sleepy Hollow option could be eliminated; however, accessible bathrooms should be added. The proposal could be less extravagant. All projects should be tweaked. Change Open Space to workable lands, there are historical opportunities especially since there is support from the Grove Heritage Association. Park District programs don’t pay for ice, only the Stars and other groups pay revenue. The revenue that might be generated with a new/renovated Ice Center will not affect the ballot question and has no impact on the tax impact. In order to pass the measure, the bond amount will need to be reduced. The Ice Center does not need to be so expensive, we can make it more affordable (renovated instead of new/2.8 million dollars savings) eliminate the track/1.9 million dollars savings, and child’s play area/saves 1 million dollars and take out Sleepy Hollow/saves 1 million dollars). More education of the public is needed for them to understand the issues; would still need to spend 12 million dollars just to keep the Ice Center running and the issues at the other facilities would not be addressed. Some felt the renovated option might not save as much as the difference between the new because of contingency costs.

**Group questions**

Q: **Is the Ice Center a revenue generated facility and if so, was that presented in the survey? That might influence some votes.**

A: It currently does not cover its overhead costs, it is subsidized. A new Ice Center or renovated with the additional sheet of ice would generate over a ten year period an average of $260,000 annually. Additional events and tournaments were not factored into the additional revenue that could be generated.

An initial motion was made by Carlo Cavallaro to put the initiative on the ballot and cut the bond proposal 7 million dollars from 24 million to 17 million.
Deputy Executive Director Katie Skibbe reported that renovating the Ice Center and eliminating the options proposed would reduce the bond amount to $17 million dollars and the tax impact on a $500,000 house would be about $35 annually.

Deputy Executive Director Katie Skibbe reported that building a new Ice Center with The Grove and Open Space funding but eliminating the options discussed would reduce the bond amount to $20 million dollars and the tax impact on a $500,000 house would be about $39 annually.

Carlo Cavallaro amended his motion as follows: Carlo moved and it was seconded by Stephanie Arkus to recommend to the Park Board to put the initiative on the ballot and adjust the bond amount, renovate the Ice Center, eliminate the jogging track, play area and minimize Sleepy Hollow to open bathrooms. On a hand vote, 18 of 25 members voted yes, the motion carried.

A comment was made that we have to move ahead and put something before the public. Also, the follow questions were asked and considered by Task Force members in their group discussion:

1. If we pass the motion, does this show the Task Force is in favor of this?
2. If we could motion to put the initiative on the ballot but wait a week to decide on a new versus renovated option.
3. Does the ballot question need to specify new or renovated because we may be able to build a new Ice Center for less than the cost that has been proposed.

The Task Force was advised that someone could make an amendment to Carlo’s motion if they wanted to and change the motion from a renovated Ice Center to a new Ice Center. No one amended the motion and Carlo’s amended motion stood and was voted on.

The group also asked Carlo Cavallaro to present the Task Force recommendation on the group’s behalf to the Park Board at the November 28, 2017 Finance Committee of the Whole and he agreed.

Director McCarty on behalf of the Park Board and staff thanked everyone for attending and thanked the Task Force for all their work on this initiative. He noted how much thought they put into this and the civil way they approached it was greatly appreciated. He also wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:15 p.m.

ATTEST:

Robert J. Patton, President 
Michael D. McCarty, Secretary

Approved this 21st day of December, 2017