

Coronavirus-driven market slump generates quarter-million-dollar savings for Glenview Park District



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Neil Milbert, Freelance Reporter
3:00 am CST March 1, 2020

Discussion about the newly renovated Glenview Ice Center highlighted the Thursday, Feb. 27 meeting of the Glenview Park District Board.

Deputy Executive Director Katie Skibbe had some very good news when she updated the commissioners on the issuance of alternate revenue source bonds.

When the bonds were issued on Feb. 12, the interest rate was 1.713 percent, she said, but there has been a downturn in the markets due to fears of a coronavirus epidemic, generating an interest savings for the Park District of approximately \$250,000 from what was previously anticipated by the March 1 closing date.

Acting on staff recommendations, the board unanimously approved agreements with the Superlative Group Inc. to negotiate sale of naming rights to the Ice Center, as well as a low bid of \$96,539.81 from Henricksen of Itasca for office furniture, general seating and restaurant seating at the facility. Henricksen was the lowest of four bidders.

The Superlative Group is a national company with offices in Chicago that specializes in naming rights.

The Park District's 12-month agreement calls for a \$3,500 monthly retainer and a 100 percent commission for the first \$5,000 in revenue if the Park District signs a contract with any of the leads provided by the group.

An amendment to the agreement between the Park District and Williams Architects was approved, making adjustments to the price of design work that didn't meet Park District expectations.

Park District Executive Director Mike McCarty said the adjustment has produced a savings of \$120,193.

Attorney Rock retiring

Jim Rock is retiring from the law firm Ancel Glink after serving for three years as the Park District's attorney and he will be succeeded by Derke Price, his colleague at the firm who has been collaborating with him on legal work involving the district.

Before becoming a lawyer, Rock spent 21 years working for park districts in the state, the last seven as executive director of the Round Lake Area Park District. He then spent five years as vice president of administrative affairs at College of Lake County and two years as the college's interim president. He went to law school while working at the college, and after passing the bar, he joined Ancel Glink and practiced for 11 years.

"As our attorney, you succeeded someone (Sam Witwer) who had served as our attorney for 35 years and your professional experience and experience in parks made it the perfect segue," Commissioner Bill Casey told Rock.

"Now, with Derke, it's another seamless transition."

"It has been an honor and a privilege to work with the board, the staff and all the volunteers," Rock said.

IAPD/IPRA awards

The board presented 2019 Illinois Association of Park Districts/Illinois Parks and Recreation Association Public Service Awards to Dennis Downes and to the Crown family and Golden Oaks Farm for their service to the Glenview Park District.

Downes is a local artist who has won international awards and a writer as well. He has a long history with The Grove, and there are displays of his work at the national historical site. Over the years, he has made donations totaling almost \$40,000 to The Grove.

The Crown family's Golden Oaks Farm in Wauconda has the distinction of being the last farm in Cook County. For the last 15 years, it has provided assistance and support to the Park District's Wagner Farm.

Golden Oaks rents dairy heifers to members of the Glenview Clovers 4-H Club, which is based at Wagner Farm.

"If they had to purchase the dairy heifers (rather than rent them), the cost would have been more than \$425,000 over the last 15 years," McCarty said.

Glen Oaks Farm President Dan Fallett, who has been employed at the farm by the Crown family for 47 years, accepted the award on behalf of the family and the farm.

Environmental action urged

Environmental advocates Sally Stone, who is a lifelong resident of Northbrook, and Rob Sulski, a longtime Glenview resident, asked the board to either adopt a resolution or send a letter to the Metropolitan Reclamation District urging that it manage and maintain the 57-acre parcel of land it owns in Northbrook, upstream from Glenview on the west fork of the north branch of the Chicago River.

"There are invasive weeds from Techny to Willow Road," Stone told the board.

"This basin covering almost 60 acres will remain open space for perpetuity because of its designation," Sulski said. "The weeds shed seeds and these seeds contaminate Glenview property. It takes at least seven years to purge weed seeds."

McCarty told Stone and Sulski that the board's staff will take follow-up action.

Pickleball anyone?

Glenbrook pickleball players Jim Sullivan and George Emme also addressed the board during the public comment session of the meeting.

Sullivan requested the board "extend our hours and extend days at Flick Park," and Emme asked the board to consider introducing pickleball at Westbrook Park.