



# **Kankakee Valley**

## **PARK DISTRICT**

### **Kankakee Valley Park District Committee Meeting Minutes January 11, 2021**

The Committee Meeting was called to order at 5:02pm by Commissioner Hollis. Those present for roll call (in person or via Zoom) were Commissioner B. Spriggs, D. Palmer, A. Hollis D. Skelly. Others present: Dayna Heitz, Executive Director; Melissa Woodard, Superintendent of Recreation/Business, Rick Collins, Superintendent of Buildings & Grounds, Attorney David Freeman.

Public Present: Some members of the community present via Zoom: Commissioner candidate Matthews, Nick Petrovski, Tom Hillgrove of Rink Management and other KVPD staff. In person: Chris Breach of Daily Journal Staff.

#### **COMMUNICATIONS**

**Public Comment:** NA

**Written:** Included in the packet.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

##### **Riverfront Update**

D. Heitz: KRS has a PO Box. Working on the D&O insurance and will be obtaining this month.

##### **Board Policy**

D. Heitz: Will receive the final draft at the next meeting. There will be a memo on what ordinances and polices are changing. Have not had a board policy prior.

##### **Update on facilities and operations – Covid-19**

D. Heitz: Hoping that January 15<sup>th</sup> we can move back in to tier 2. Will be able to reopen for more than 1 on 1 as ice valley. The Rec Center will reopen as well. Will reopen the Civic Tuesday for walkers. Goselin, Jeffers, and Bird will be available for rentals.

##### **Resident advisory committee**

D. Heitz: Last month the board wanted to make a few changes. Commissioner Hollis thinks the committee should report to the board. Director Heitz said we had talked about holding off on the committee until after COVID-19. There is an application that will be available for applicants. Commissioner Skelly agrees with what was said. It's way too early to do anything with it now.

Keep working on it. Commissioner Palmer said some park districts do interest areas. Some also have a citizen's finance committee, environmental committee, youth sports advisory committee, or club fitness or golf course. They sliced things into a different matrix. Included students on some committees. Bringing these up for considerations too. Director Heitz wanted to stay with one committee. We don't have enough staff to spread into all those committees. Like to keep it within residents because they pay taxes and should have a voice. Anything that the committee suggests is only a suggestion to the board. They don't give direction. Commissioner Hollis thinks we could put those things on agendas instead of breaking them up into different committees. Commissioner Skelly appreciates what Commissioner Palmer is saying. Agree with Director Heitz that we should start with one group and see where it goes. Not as much of a fan of the geographical interest. Rather have people that are interested even if they are in the same area. Definitely would need something at Ice Valley. Commissioner Hollis thinks we need to keep the geographical options open for those who may not feel like their voice is heard. We want a wide variety so we can touch on every area of the community. Commissioner Skelly thinks we will have to see who comes in and then go from there. Director Heitz said it would be a 3-year commitment for the volunteers. Start with 5 and continue to add more each year until it's full advisory committee.

#### **Management services for IVC and SV**

D. Heitz: Did receive a presentation from Rink Management. They would do all the employee training and hiring. They would maintain the equipment and property and do financial reports. They could attend board meetings. Tom Hillgrove: We toured the facility. Rink Management can add value by adding full force. All park districts have a tight budget now. We run 30 rinks. We have to drive revenues. Create programs that people want to purchase. We run the ice rink for the City of Chicago. We work for the Effingham Park District. We have worked at smaller towns and large cities as well. You have a decent staff there. We could provide some guidance and resources for them. It's important to the District to take care of the people there. We are willing to bring on your employees. If they are our employees it's more cost effective. We have a good health benefit plan. Think you have a good location but we just have to get the people motivated. In the summer we run 3 big aquatic centers. Think we can contribute to Splash Valley. We are comfortable in the mechanics. Got good connections in the industry. Commissioner Palmer wants to know about the financial part, specifically the monthly fee. What can we expect? Mr. Hillgrove said we can develop numbers. We create programs the public wants. We are pretty good at driving the revenue. Capture their contact info and make sure they have a good experience. Work with local youth hockey agencies too. Director Heitz asked if the monthly fee was split between the ice and splash facility? Mr. Hillgrove said we can work on that with you but it would be for running both facilities. We send out 85,000 email blast per week. Our team handles all of that. Commissioner Palmer asked about maintaining

the equipment. Does that mean you oversee scheduled maintenance? Mr. Hillgrove said if you decide to hire us, you will stay in control of your assets. Any key decisions will need a signature. There will be plenty of protection. We will run any pricing through the District. Anything that occurs, we will keep in communication with the District. Commissioner Palmer asked if you would be open on Thanksgiving Day? Mr. Hillgrove said an afternoon skate sometimes gets some traction. If it's something the District wants, it can be discussed. Commissioner Skelly asked if there is anything that we could have changed from how we run the facilities? Mr. Hillgrove thinks the main thing is if we can drive the revenues, that covers a lot of the monthly. We can probably help with sponsorships too. Not going to make any guarantees the first year but it will bounce back. Do hear good things about the General Manager and that it's neat and clean and well-marked. Add some direction for the staff and keep track of the maintenance. Commissioner Skelly asked if you have experience with hockey leagues and figure skaters? Mr. Hillgrove understands the struggles. We work with about 50 youth hockey leagues. We can help with the beginners and then hand them off to the youth leagues. We do a lot of entry programs. Will work with the District on the price points. We will also work on group sales. Commissioner Skelly thinks we have a good base and a good hockey club. We have struggled with accommodations for requests. As long as you are willing to understand that dynamic. Mr. Hillgrove said we won't blow it up for you. Nothing happens quickly in the hockey community. We will try to appeal them and figure out a schedule that works for the facility. Director Heitz said it sounds like Effingham had some issues with people not understanding the difference between the management company and the park district. We are here for the community and not just here for the hockey or figure skate. Will you have special events? Mr. Hillgrove said we will have open communication. Won't do anything without permission. Eventually and gradually the goal is to raise the prices to help offset costs to run the facilities. We will spend a lot of time out there if we are able to take on these facilities. We will have a community meeting and do calls with figure skaters and hockey communities. Commissioner Palmer said you have an impressive resume, what is your client retention rate? Do you keep your customers? Tom doesn't have the number but will give some examples. Ran 6 rinks for Chicago after 4 years, lost the bid and then won the bid after a couple years. Been with Effingham for 5 years. 5-year contract with the Cubs. Have had a lot of long-term customers. Most contracts are 3-5 years. We have never been released from a contract. Sometimes the economics don't make sense but can sit down and figure it out. We have 1900 employees and have an aggressive disciplinary policy. Employees are thoroughly trained. Commissioner Palmer asked if you would be responsible for the lifeguards at Splash Valley? Mr. Hillgrove said yes, it would be better for the park district. He can send some financial reporting samples. There would be monthly financials. Commissioner Palmer asked about utilities for the facilities? Mr. Hillgrove said we would include the utilities in our books but would stay in the park district's name. Rick asked about compressor maintenance and Zamboni and the filter

system? Mr. Hillgrove said that's correct. The ice rink has 3 employees so they would move with us. We have certified ice rink employees. We would find an HVAC company and do a maintenance agreement with them. Commissioner Hollis asked if this should go on the agenda for the board meeting? Commissioner Palmer would like to continue discussion and get some anticipated cost savings. Commissioner Hollis is for continuing discussion as well. Would want input from current staff. Mr. Hillgrove will send a potential contract for the board review and sample financials.

### **Gas Pipeline for Cobb Area**

D. Heitz: Hope to hear something in the near future. Commissioner Palmer ask Director Heitz if she knew anything about removal of trees on wildwood. He realizes that would be the city but did she know anything? Director Heitz stated she does not but If she does, she will let the board know.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Discussion of Resolution and naming of RR Boat Launch for the late Edwin Mullady**

Commissioner Hollis said Matt sat on this board with us for a long time. Got to know of his father and he has done great things for the community and the river. Think it would be fitting for a person who gave his life to conservation, to name the River Road boat launch after him. This would give his family a legacy. Commissioner Hollis would like to move this to next board meeting for approval. Start the resolution and he can contact Matt to let him know what our plans are. Commissioner Skelly thinks Bird Park boat launch would be more fitting. Commissioner Hollis said if Matt gives him direction that Bird Park boat launch would be more fitting, that's fine too.

### **STAFF REPORTS**

R. Collins: Continuing to maintain outside and buildings. Commissioner Hollis asked if we are doing any improvements in the buildings? Rick said we haven't yet. We only have 2 staff. We have painted Splash Valley and rewaxed the floors.

M. Woodard: Kyle has a 5K that already has 35 people registered. Talked with Lauterbach and Amen and they will be assisting with outsourcing. Commissioner Palmer would like us to follow Bourbonnais financial reports. Director Heitz said Lauterbach & Amen will use our accounting system. They would assist in the financials in making modifications and adjustments. They will come out and go through things and then they will remote in after that to assist. They will create different monthly reports. This is in our budget already as well. Commissioner Palmer understood Marcie was going to do adjustments. Director Heitz said we did start the adjustments and due to COVID-19 haven't been able to. Commissioner Palmer asked about

Sikich? Director Heitz said Sikich has completed their agreement with the Audit. Commissioner Palmer would appreciate some consideration on the financial statements since he's the only one not approving the financials. Would like to use some of the financial formats that Bourbonnais uses. They have more information that he finds vital to assess the financial condition.

D. Heitz: Farm land lease will be on the agenda for the next board meeting. Continue to work with the state on the Cures reimbursement program. Spoke to them last week and waiting to find out if that program will be renewed for additional. Angie, Ariana, and Rick are attending classes at KCC. Continue to work on the 5-year improvement plan. Fiscal year 2021-2022, Melissa will start budget sheets for staff. Any Commissioners want to be included in that, please give me a call. Fleet lease and surplus will be ratified at that next meeting. Numbers came in slightly lower and includes maintenance. Did invest some money in the river view trail. Commissioner Palmer asked what have we done in regards to due diligence on the farmer for the lease. Director Heitz said it was a public bid. We didn't put anything in the bid package for references, backgrounds or credit. Commissioner Palmer said he recommended previously, talk to vendors who work with farmers to find out if there are any concerns about the operations or reputations of the farmer. Attorney Freeman said you could do a background check. Would have to hire a consultant to ask certain questions. Commissioner Palmer suggested a farm manager. Has done some tracking on his own. Not paid to do this. Commissioner Hollis wants to know how long we had been dealing with the farmer? Director Heitz said at least 2012. Didn't feel it was right to just cut off the farmer as there was no negative with them. Commissioner Hollis hears we don't have familiarity with the new person but we did with the prior one. What you are talking about us doing is going to cost more money that we don't have. Not saying you are wrong just saying that as a commissioner, none of us get paid. Anything we do, I've done research too, never once knocked our Executive Director for not. Will pass along that info and won't say it's not my job. If it's important to me and my job is to help. As an elected official, you took this on. To knock her is Ludacris. Director Heitz said she presented the bid package and the notice well before going out to bid she did her due diligence. That's how we found out we were over charging. Not once was it asked how and not one commissioner was present at the bid opening. Weren't asked to do background or credit checks. Went above and beyond what the board asked. Commissioner Spriggs said Director Heitz worked her tail off, we got more money and he farms everywhere. We treated Fecke terribly, we need to have some ethics and morals. The new farmer put his bid in and he will pay us more, what in the heck do you want? Director Heitz said our bid started at \$210 which is what we received prior. The airport started at \$180 and they received \$300 per acre. We didn't do that bad. Commissioner Palmer reminds Commissioner Spriggs that he didn't want to do it at all. Commissioner Spriggs said that farmer brought us money every year. Did no

background check on him? We knew him and suddenly we are unethical. Let this go. We are wasting our time. Commissioner Palmer said it was unethical to not provide the opportunity to other farmers. Asked what the Attorney thinks? Attorney Freeman doesn't think it's an ethical issue. It's more moral. Dayna has given the report, the matter will come up again at the board meeting, the commissioners can either accept or not. Commissioner Spriggs said if we don't pass this vote, something is wrong here. She did everything she was supposed to do.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

KCCVB Report: D. Heitz – no report.

Historical Society: Commissioner Spriggs – no report.

SRA Report: Commissioner Palmer/Hollis – no report. Next meeting in January.

### **COMMISSIONERS FORUM**

NA

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

NA

### **ADJOURN MEETING**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 6:32pm by Commissioner Spriggs, seconded by Commissioner Hollis. Upon voice vote, all ayes, motion carried.

### **OFFICIAL REPORTS:**

1. Riverfront Update
2. Board Policy
3. Resident Advisory Committee
4. IVC & SV Management services
5. Cobb Gas Pipeline
6. R. Collins
7. M. Woodard, K. Burton, J. Meyer, L. Krenkel, A. Padilla
8. D. Heitz, A. Tousignant, A. Padilla, S. Ryan

Respectfully submitted by: Melissa Woodard