

**Burr Ridge Park District
Regular Meeting
January 18, 2016**

REGULAR MEETING

The Regular Meeting of the Burr Ridge Park District was called to order at the Burr Ridge Community Center at 6:30 pm by President Rob Quigley.

Present: Board Members Bergholz, Caplis, Fara, Malloy, Quigley
Absent: None
Also Present: Jim Pacanowski, Director of Parks and Recreation,
Jamie Janusz, Superintendent of Finance
Lavonne Campbell, Superintendent of Recreation
Members of the Community

APPROVE

January 18, 2016 Agenda

No changes were made to the Agenda as presented.

December 14, 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes

Caplis moved, seconded by Malloy and approved by roll call vote to approve the December 14, 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes.

Ayes: Bergholz, Caplis, Malloy, Quigley Nays: None Abstain: Fara

OPEN FORUM (Public Comment Other Than Woods Pool)

No Open Forum on Agenda Items other than Woods Pool.

CORRESPONDENCE

Nothing further added to the written report.

REPORTS

Director of Parks and Recreation

Nothing further added to the written report.

Supterintendent of Finance

Nothing further added to the written report.

Bergholz asked what the total donations were received from the Foundation Appeal. Janusz responded that Kim Wenkus will be reporting on totals when all have been received.

Caplis offered congratulations to staff on receiving PDRMA's highest rating.

Recreation Division

Nothing further added to the written report

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Malloy inquired how many registrations were received for the Gower Enrichment Spanish program.

Campbell responded that approximately 8 children are registered for the entire year, however, payment to Language Stars were broken down into two payment for the year.

Bergholz asked that the Board Meeting time change to 6:30pm be noted in the Gower Newsletter.

Caplis asked how many participants are in the Gateway SRA, and is Hinsdale still an active participant.

Pacanowski responded that there are 8 to 12 participants, with Hinsdale still an active participant.

Caplis asked for clarification of roof repairs.

Pacanowski responded that high winds damaged some roof shingles on the west exposed peak and needed to be repaired before ice and snow can cause further damage. The roof damage was not extensive.

Fara asked if the plan for the ice rink is week to week at this time.

Pacanowski responded that the rink is a week to week decision. There were not a lot of operations required this season so far as fill was accomplished by rain. The ice condition is up and down with the weather. It is getting close to the time that weather conditions will factor into operating decisions.

Malloy moved, seconded by Fara and approved by roll call vote to approve the January bills.

Ayes: Bergholz, Caplis, Fara, Malloy, Quigley Nays: None Abstain: None

NEW BUSINESS

No New Business

OPEN FORUM (Public Comment Regarding Woods Pool)

Larry Ridgway, 701 South Drive, Burr Ridge, stated that he would like to present comments and opinions from community members surrounding Woods Pool as follows. Woods Pool is the only public swimming pool in Burr Ridge. Closing the pool seems inconsistent with the park district's mission. The pool facilitates the health and well being of our children. We acknowledge that the Burr Ridge Park District and pool need to be prudently managed but also ask that it is not to establish a profitable enterprise. The Hinsdale Central High School Athletic Director notes the growing need for community swimming pools. Obviously pools promote learning a life skill. The surrounding neighborhood has experienced a 25% housing turnover the last 5 years replacing many empty nesters with young families desiring an opportunity to swim at the pool. The accounting for the pool is not done on a fair and comparable basis with other park district programs. Budgeting and analysis should be adjusted for tax allocation. The community has demonstrated interest and support for the pool when it has been engaged. For instance, we have 77 petitioners, 35 membership commitments, vs. 58 memberships for the last 6 years on average in just this 3 month window of time. Six banner commitments and 12 donation commitments. We have contacted 85 former members from 2014 and 2015 seasons to solicit membership. There are another 100 families who took swim lessons in 2015 to be contacted for membership. The roof replacement estimate is \$9,800. The scope of the repair is the pool building, shed, power, vents, ice and water shields. We propose the excess \$4,000 from the Foundation be used to fund other improvements. The community who have elected you to serve is speaking with a clear and unified voice in support of Woods Pool and makes the following requests:

1. Partnership with the community with our members to co-actively address the issues of the pool.
2. A 3 year commitment to keep the pool open.
3. Benchmarks: What's the Woods Pool deficit vs. other public pool deficits in the area, i.e., Clarendon Hills and Hinsdale.
4. Conduct a pool life expectancy analysis. This can be done for a nominal fee through Barrington Pools or another company.
5. A traditional season – in this area of the county a swimming pool should be open from Memorial Day through Labor Day.
6. Marketing – we should work with the park district on managing their database with names and emails already collected for newsletters to promote pool membership, lessons, and rentals.

Lastly, we should add activities and improvements to the pool. For example:

- Diving boards in need of replacement
- Additional tables and umbrellas
- Pool cover to help manage utility expenses
- Grills
- Lawn games, etc.

Thank you for the opportunity.

PJ Doppke, 1301 Laurie Lane, Burr Ridge, asked the Board to keep Woods Pool open as he has been a member since his birth.

Mary Harrell, 1332 Laurie Lane, Burr Ridge, added that 6 new pool banner commitments on top of the 10 that are normally received have been made. With the money the Foundation has been able to donate towards the pool, it will total approximately \$6,000 to \$8,000 to offset the deficit.

Jim Doppke, 1301 Laurie Lane, Burr Ridge, thanked the Board for their dedication and time, and after reading previous years minutes it struck him how many times the Board had to consider keeping the pool open. Doppke asked the Board to continue this commitment tonight to manage the pool and be good stewards of the pool. The community surrounding Woods Pool feels it is an amenity that reaches as broadly as Harvester Park. Property tax dollars would be well served if applied to the pool. The absence of property tax dollars hurts Woods Pool. Doppke asked that the Board authorize the continued operation of the pool.

Aleta Belletete, 1200 Laurie Lane, Burr Ridge, asked that a marketing committee for the pool be formed in order to market to the new families as they move in to the neighborhood. In addition, Aleta Belletete did not like a basketball court on a concept plan for replacements of the pool. A basketball court should not be considered in an area that doesn't have sidewalks and street lights as it will promote drugs in an area that already has a drug problem.

Diana Gonzalez, 1308 Laurie Lane, Burr Ridge, stated her surprise at no tax dollars being dedicated to Woods Pool. Neighboring towns property tax dollars are significant. Hinsdale and Clarendon Hills provide a huge amount of tax dollars. Clarendon Hills provides \$952,000 to the Recreation Department Oak Brook runs at a deficit of \$425,000 per year. It is also a job opportunity for the teenagers in the community and important for the community to have a pool.

Isabella and Molly Salvino, 1033 Laurie Lane, Burr Ridge, stated they have six siblings and have taken swim lessons for 2 years and swim at Woods Pool daily and would not want the pool to close because they love Woods Pool.

Courtney Johnson, 1140 Laurie Lane, Burr Ridge (did not sign attendance sheet) stated she has a 5, 3 and 6 month old who take swim lessons. The new heater was a huge help in getting the young children into the pool. A zero depth entry which is available at other pools would also be a help for families with very young children. Courtney Johnson supports the pool, however, will get more use out of the pool when her children get older because there is no zero depth entry which makes it difficult with 3 young children. In addition, Courtney Johnson asked that the realtors in the area add more exposure about Woods Pool on their listings.

Lindsay Johnson, 28 Dougshire Court, Burr Ridge, notified the Board that Woods Pool was a huge attraction when the realtor provided information with details on their home. Being able to walk to a pool brings back an old school neighborhood feel and would like the Board to keep Woods Pool intact. In addition to the Thursday event, Lindsay Johnson would like to see events for members such as BBQ and events surrounding the holidays which would entice surrounding neighbors to become members.

Joan Parrot-Shaffer, 1340 Laurie Lane, Burr Ridge, brings her grandsons to Woods Pool for swim lessons and asks the Board to keep Woods Pool open.

Dorothy Griffith, 716 Tomlin Drive, Burr Ridge, stated that her kids have grown up with the pool. The pool is always crowded and closing the pool would be cheating them on a part of their life. Dorothy Griffith stated that she assumed tax dollars were going to the pool. A splash pad or basketball court to replace the pool would be a mistake. The kids deserve Woods Pool.

Helen Demetis, 1241 Laurie Lane, Burr Ridge, (did not sign attendance sheet) stated that the pool is a central part of the community. It serves the neighborhood. We love the pool and are willing to help to keep it alive.

Quigley thanked the community for their time and sharing their thoughts. Several emails were received from community members which were distributed to Board Members. All memberships that were filled out were taken without payment and given to Board Members.

In addition, Quigley informed the members of the audience that several emails received misunderstand the role Jim Pacanowski and staff play in discussions such as Woods Pool. Jim Pacanowski and staff follow Board direction. They do not decide whether the pool continues or not. They will do what we direct them to do. Several of these emails assumed Jim decides and that is not the case. The Board has respected your time. The Open Forum is now closed and we would appreciate the audience respect the Board's time to make a decision.

OLD BUSINESS

Discuss Operational Status of Woods Pool

Bergholz stated that the pool status is reviewed every year. We ask that our employees provide financial information and membership information. We are good stewards of your money. We appreciate knowing from you what you value, but the process is a worthy one.

Caplis stated that a lot of misinformation exists. Heresy is not allowed in a courtroom for a reason. If you look at your tax bill you will see that this park district does not have a tax deficit because we are conservative. Everything is looked at every year.

The statement that we don't use tax dollars at Woods Pool is absolutely wrong. Our accountant put Woods Pool to a separate account. The fact is that sometimes Woods Pool cost as much as 10 times as much as other programs. We want to keep things open with the ability to keep everything open.

The comment that Clarendon Hills put \$950,000 towards their pool, we have spent \$1.5 million on our pool. We are restricted in the amount of money we can tax. We are tax capped, the state is giving less money. We don't have space to build a bigger pool including parking. We already had to get a village variance for parking in 1995.

As far as the comment on the basketball court, we have to keep a close eye on all our dollars.

Only 10% of the households in the Woods Pool community are members.

Bergholz stated that rates have not been set for 2016.

Caplis stated that a good chunk of money is being spent on the Woods Pool area and only 10% of the area belong to the pool. Caplis would like to see 80-90 families join to break even. Even with this big push they weren't able to get that. The pool has been marketed and it doesn't generate memberships. When the pool was purchased initially, marketing efforts were shot down because the people in the area did not want outsiders to go to the pool. We can't commit to 3 years but the year to year benchmark won't work. If you extend the season from Memorial Day to Labor Day you can't get the personnel.

Bergholz said that costs were high if the season were extended.

Caplis said the cost was approximately \$6,000, but the biggest problem was personnel.

Fara stated that Board Members have been members for 20 plus years and saw the pool get into trouble when other pools came into the area. The issue is longevity. Jim's study showed the pool in good shape for its age, however it could at any time get a major crack. This park district is a separate tax collection from the village, unlike Oak Brook and Hinsdale. We can't continue losing money every year. What damage to other programs does a deficit over \$8,000 do? We can't just raise fees on other program. We have to be fiscally responsible to our budget and our residents. I agree with a neighborhood pool and would like to keep that going but need to be fiscally responsible. I would like a longer term commitment than 1 year from families. If we could see a commitment of 3 to 4 years that would be great, or next year we may be doing the same thing.

Bergholz responded that she is not sure any family can commit for more than 1 year. It is a short life span for families to use a small Woods Pool. It is a beautiful brief moment in their family's lives. Bergholz believes the answer is to agree that this membership number is never going to increase. It would be nice if families that are not members of the pool would be contributors. Efforts over the last 12 to 15 years have gained and lost 20 families but it always remained in the 50 to 70 family membership range. As far as raising the rate, there is limited amount of what you can afford for a very valuable amenity. We have to figure out our acceptable loss. The pool can't be replaced and the park district is not broke yet.

Fara responded that the Board is not working for 120 people.

Bergholz responded that usage is good. Day camps, daily visits have been significant. The pool is busy. We are taking tax dollars allocating it to Woods Pool at a higher per person for a smaller percentage of people. We have a commitment from Foundation. They fundraise every year. Next year we will have to deal with it again.

Quigley stated that in the Board packet is some information in response to two questions he asked Pacanowski.

1. Compare direct costs for the pool to the rest of the programs.

On the Operating Level \$9,600 lost at the pool, \$141,000 generated above direct expenses in all other programs.

Despite a short period of time for the data, we would probably find that what we did on Woods Pool and programs is probably the same for the last 5 years. Staff adds and deletes programs. Some are big programs. Very important when we bring them on.

We look at the numbers and decide it's not going to work. We subsidized non-residents at the pool and we are putting dollars into it to keep it going. Indirect expenses on a per person basis is at least as much but probably more. We spend a lot of time promoting the pool. What is going to change in the future? Past is the only predictor of the future. We sit here every January and discuss the same thing. This is nothing new just a few new faces. When I look at the possibility of what can we do to change the numbers it is a neighborhood program. There are very few people outside the neighborhood that are going to help with the revenue. I don't see these numbers changing ever.

2. How do we compare Woods Pool vs. rest of our programs for capital expenditures? Woods Pool was measured over 21 years and the Community Center was measured over 11 years. Certain assumptions and historical data were utilized, and they make sense to me. At Woods Pool, there were a projected 21,420 enrollees costing \$7.45 per enrollee, and 309,550 visitations costing \$.52 per visitation. At the Community Center, there were a projected 126,880 enrollees, costing \$1.01 per enrollee, and 2,352,000 visitations, costing \$.05 per visitation. In a second scenario, even more favorable assumptions were applied to the pool and the gap in spending was still significant. A much larger amount of capital funding has been spent on pool enrollees and attendees than at the Community Center.

The amount of capital is not going to get any less. A catastrophic event is going to happen. Quigley appreciates the support of the community, but the Board has been here before.

Unless there is something in here and something in the past we are missing, we are going to be here every year and a different group of people every 5 years. If this were any other program we would have given 1 or 2 seasons and then would have been cancelled. I think we need to decide whether to terminate the pool permanently.

Bergholz stated that the park site is viewed as less valuable as KLM or Garywood as we border on KLM and we have Garywood within walking distance. It is not viewed as quite as valuable as the unique feature of the pool. If you are looking at swim lessons compared to ballet then I follow the calculation, but you are looking at the pool and comparing it to ballet.

Fara stated that it is an example of paralysis by analysis. Little League and use of the fields is more comparable to the Woods Pool situation. If this is the same measure of capital for the pool, would it justify it?

Caplis stated that this would be a preliminary discussion of the 5 year plan.

Fara asked for the capital expenditure over the next 5 years.

Pacanowski responded that the roof needs to be repaired at a cost of \$9,000 to \$14,000, and painting.

Caplis stated painting was estimated at \$12,500.

Bergholz asked if All Seasons noted any hazards in addition to those already identified. Pacanowski responded that generally the pool seems to be in good shape for its age. Cracks will need to be cleaned and caulked as they are each year. This does not mean a major crack will not happen. It does not mean a major crack will happen in the next 5 years either.

Caplis stated that this is not taking into account the \$9,000-\$10,000 each year. The projected 5 year is \$76,825 plus \$10,000. Ten years \$126,000.

Caplis stated that with our \$1.5 million budget we can handle the Woods Pool deficit this year. If taxes come in less than anticipated, however, that will affect it.

Bergholz stated that we can look at everything in the master plan and cut something else out or cut this.

Caplis stated that we can wait for a catastrophic cost to occur

Fara asked what needs to be done outside the pool itself. Roof, paint, gravel?

Pacanowski responded that the roof definitely needs to be repaired at some point as it is failing.

Fara stated that we need to maintain safety and aesthetics standards.

Bergholz stated that the Foundation has donated money that can be put towards the roof.

Quigley stated that he cannot justify keeping the pool open strictly based on the numbers. Support from the community is commendable but the finances don't say to keep it open.

Caplis stated that logically sooner or later the pool has to close. I think it's later rather than sooner.

Bergholz stated that costs are contained, the asset is valuable, our annual review is appropriate and we are nimble and can change it next year if it doesn't work. This is the triumph of hope over experience. Every year we go back to this little pool that has family values written all over it. There are not a lot of new members coming in which I think you have seen by your marketing effort. There have been criticisms of how we manage the pool, and if there is some community partnership, I think we try again next year. Fix the roof with Foundation approval, paint based on another expert and up to our standards.

Fara stated that he looks at the numbers and we keep throwing money that isn't going away. I hear what the community says and I know the input of that smaller community. I think we need to restrict if we decide one more year. Roof, paint exterior as need, non slip floors on the inside.

Malloy stated that she agrees with what Tim Fara stated. With the money from the Foundation, providing we get more memberships, she loves the neighborhood feel of the pool and will agree to one more year.

Bergholz stated that she will take responsibility for asking that a development plan be put together to present a viable replacement option for Woods Pool. She was starting to fear that the thought was that it would be turned into a parking lot and felt that if we could go out with some plan with a modern amenity it would be a meeting place for us. We don't have a viable plan right now. I wouldn't be surprised to eventually see a lesser plan and grass over the pool. I would be looking for a Friends of the Pool group. I don't think it has to lose money every year. Right now we have the money to lose.

Caplis stated that we will be cash strapped in the future.

Bergholz stated that it is a valued amenity.

Quigley stated that it looks as though the majority of the Board is directing Jim to get the pool ready to open next season

ADJOURNMENT

Caplis moved, seconded by Fara and unanimously approved to adjourn the regular meeting at 8:13 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Stednitz
Recording Secretary

H/Jamie/board/minutes/brpd minutes 1 18 16