



**LISLE PARK DISTRICT
JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS
SPECIAL MEETING
Tuesday, February 18, 2025
6:30 p.m.**

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

President Wessel called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Director Garvy Called Roll:

Commissioners Present In-Person:

Altpeter
Hummel
Tapella
Wessel

Commissioners Absent:

Dombroski

Staff Present Included:

Director of Parks & Recreation Garvy
Superintendent of Finance Silver
Superintendent of Recreation & Marketing Pratscher
Assistant Superintendent of Recreation Mejjicano
Program Manager Price

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

III. PRESENTATION

A. Indoor Recreation Space Feasibility Study Kick-Off Presentation and Discussion

Director Garvy introduced Leon Younger, President, and Phil Parnin, Assistant Principal, from PROS Consulting to the Park Board. Mr. Younger began the presentation with an introduction of his professional history within Parks and Recreation, as well as some of the qualifications of PROS Consulting to perform the feasibility study. Mr. Younger gave a brief synopsis of what PROS Consulting considers to be the scope and purpose of such a study before turning the presentation over to Mr. Parnin.

Mr. Parnin explained that PROS Consulting began the process of data collection with information sent by the Park District for review and stated that earlier in the day he and Mr. Younger met with members of staff to discuss what their views are regarding the needs of the space. Mr. Parnin outlined tools and methodologies that will be utilized throughout the process such as market analysis, interviews, focus groups, etc. and how each of those will be implemented. Mr. Parnin then gave a brief overview of how funding would be considered as well as the presentation of the findings to the public and the Park Board. He stressed that the results of the study will be based entirely on what is feasible for the Park District to accomplish based on community feedback and available resources.

The next part of the presentation began with Mr. Parnin giving a more detailed description of the market analysis plan which included an example of looking at the Naperville Park District and other facilities within a 15-minute radius to identify niches where the Lisle Park District may be

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able to fill programming voids. From there, Mr. Parnin moved into the various engagement tools that would be utilized throughout the process, beginning with the current meeting. The next tool to be introduced is the Social Pinpoint website, which allows for ongoing public engagement with features such as an online survey that would allow members of the public to provide feedback at any time regardless of whether they are chosen to participate in the statistically valid survey – another tool that will be part of the process. He finished with a description of the public forum, which will be where the findings are presented, and the focus groups that will be interviewed in order to capture different viewpoints within the community.

Mr. Parnin discussed how gathered data from various stakeholders will be used to create guiding principles for the project, and he gave an example of discussions from earlier in the day laying out a guiding principle of the project being “cost-neutral” in terms of revenue generation versus operation costs. From there he moved into a brief overview of cost analysis and what that will entail, including fixtures, furnishings, maintenance, staffing needs, and more. Mr. Parnin briefly explained the importance of looking at current funding resources to see if all available resources are being utilized, or if there are other avenues for funding that can be explored.

Mr. Parnin concluded his portion of the presentation with the proposed schedule for the project, stating that PROS Consulting is estimating the study will take place over a span of 9 months, with room for flexibility built into the schedule. Vice President Altpeter inquired about the Pinpoint website in terms of whether it will maintain current information and asked if it will keep site visitors on that website without redirecting them to a different site. (i.e., the Lisle Park District’s website). Mr. Parnin assured the Board that all engagement will be run through the Pinpoint site, and that one of the features also gives information on where they go after they leave the site, with the hopes that interactions would promote the public to go the Park District’s site for more information.

Mr. Younger began the discussion portion of the meeting by asking the commissioners if they are users of the current facilities. Vice President Altpeter confirmed that her family has made use of many of the facilities over the years and noted that the lack of available gym space for activities such as basketball, in particular, has been a prevailing issue. Commissioner Hummel stated that most of his participation in Park District activities has been outdoors rather than indoors. President Wessel stated that having a younger child means that his family utilizes more of the early childhood/youth programming than anything else.

Mr. Younger’s next question for the Board involved what the Board hears most often from the public regarding its desire for facilities. Vice President Altpeter stated that her experience has been that gym space is the biggest desire, especially for older youth offerings. She mentioned that access to gym spaces through intergovernmental agreements has decreased over time. Mr. Younger acknowledged hearing similar feedback from staff during the day. Commissioner Hummel inquired if PROS Consulting would be looking into partnership opportunities between the Park District and private entities within the community, or if there is a possibility of privately owned buildings that could be repurposed instead of building a new facility. Mr. Younger responded with an example of a recently completed feasibility study in Sioux Falls, South Dakota where the city purchased a building from a hospital system and converted it into a community center. Commissioner Tapella discussed early childhood programming and the positive feedback that she has heard from the community regarding the programs offered by the Park District, but she also discussed how she hears disappointment that constituents express regarding limited availability. She went on to say that there needs to be a balance between size and quality and what it would take to find that balance. Vice President Altpeter mentioned that she has heard from constituents that they appreciate the Park District having a centralized location within Community Park as it provides easier access to programming that may have conflicting schedules. She mentioned that it is preferable to have one central location rather than having to quickly travel from place to place for different activities.

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The third question posed by Mr. Younger to the Board was regarding programming offered by the Park District, and what the commissioners would like to see in terms of new offerings within a new space. Commissioner Hummel stated that he believes it is not so much of a need for new programming, but rather a need for more space to support existing programs and events. Vice President Altpeter discussed the Senior Center's Walking Club and her thoughts about being able to extend it to a year-round program. She also discussed the impact the closure of Community Park Fitness Center had on the patrons who used the facility, and her thoughts that it would be beneficial to have an indoor walking facility made available to them. President Wessel agreed that it would be beneficial to have a place where activities like volleyball and basketball could be enjoyed by the public year-round as the Park District currently lacks the space to allow such programming.

Mr. Younger then inquired about whether the Board had any ideas for partners that they would like PROS Consulting to speak with. Commissioner Hummel discussed a local indoor golf facility as well as the former White Sox-Bulls Academy space. Superintendent Pratscher responded that the last time the Park District met with the former Academy space, a few years back, it had included indoor volleyball courts, batting cages, and an arcade space on the upper floor. However, they did not have anything that the Park District felt could lead to a partnership at the time. Commissioner Hummel then mentioned Benedictine University and Benet Academy as potential partners. Mr. Younger gave examples of several types of partnerships that are becoming more prevalent in other areas with regard to things like golf simulators, music venues and hospitals being linked to parks and recreation. Commissioner Hummel asked if there were any fitness related businesses located in the adjacent industrial park. Commissioner Tapella responded that there are some gyms, with Superintendent Pratscher adding that there is a CrossFit facility across from the Recreation Center. However, Superintendent Pratscher mentioned that attempts to discuss a partnership have not received much of a response. Vice President Altpeter expressed her willingness to pursue partnerships that endorse the Park District, but she is wary of seeing public funds going towards private institutions which could lead to reciprocal agreements that could later be changed.

Mr. Younger asked what the Board thought the greatest obstacle to overcome to make the indoor recreation space a reality would be. Commissioner Hummel simply responded that funding would be the biggest issue. Mr. Younger discussed the most recent bond passed by the Park District, which was for Sea Lion Aquatic Park in 2002. Vice President Altpeter followed this with discussing her belief that if the community sees value in the project that it would not be difficult to get support and that she has heard a lot of discussion about desires in the community for more space so she wants to see this project move forward. Mr. Younger mentioned that the Park District needs to provide an outline of everything it has done with the funds received from the bond over the past two decades to remind people how much has changed, and to highlight what can be done in the future. Commissioner Hummel asked Mr. Younger what he has seen on a national level regarding referendums on ballots as at a local level he has seen that most referendums pass across multiple agencies. Mr. Younger confirmed that it is the same at the national level, and that quality of life is at the forefront of many people's minds. He discussed the evolution of community spaces over the past few decades with a focus on the current desire for facilities that can serve multiple generations within the community as a whole, not individual areas or neighborhoods. Vice President Altpeter discussed the growing population of younger generations within Lisle that has led to an increase in programs that can be offered because there are enough participants to warrant those offerings, and looking at this project as a way to head off future problems where there isn't enough space to allow for increased demand. Mr. Younger stated that similar buildings usually operate around one hundred hours per week and allow people to feel more connected to them as it is not limiting, and they can make better use of them. Commissioner Tapella cautioned that since there are so many great facilities within the surrounding areas that the Board needs to be able to justify the costs by

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being able to show the long-term benefits of any expenditures made by the Park District. She stressed that the community needs to be aware that any new facility would not be built just because of short-term demands which could fade over time and lead to diminished enthusiasm for the facility once people become used to it. Mr. Younger responded that having a facility that is multi-faceted in terms of use makes it much more likely to see consistent use for longer periods of time than a building that can only be used for one purpose or by one group. Mr. Younger shared he was impressed with the culture of sharing that the staff at the Park District exhibited when discussing how to use the space.

Mr. Younger concluded his portion of the presentation by reassuring the Board that PROS Consulting is there to answer any questions the Board may have. Commissioner Hummel asked if the company had worked on recent projects for the Naperville Park District, and if they had any lessons learned from that process. Mr. Younger stated that PROS Consulting had provided the Naperville Park District with all the information they requested, but that a decision has not yet been made regarding next steps. A brief discussion was held on the differences between the demographics of the two towns and what is requested by the residents. Vice President Altpeter thanked Mr. Younger and Mr. Parnin for the way in which they presented themselves more casually and expressed her satisfaction with the formatting of their presentation. Commissioner Tapella asked what the immediate next step in the process is. Mr. Younger replied that a summary statement of the day's discussions will be sent to staff, and going forward there will be bi-weekly meetings to maintain momentum. He also mentioned that they will have an outline of the plan that will be shared with Director Garvy so that he can pass information on as requested at any time. He outlined that there will be focus groups and individual interviews to which Director Garvy asked for clarification that all of the listed steps would be happening within the next month. Mr. Parnin mentioned that PROS Consulting would also be sending a creative brief to Director Garvy, Superintendent Pratscher, Assistant Superintendent Mejicano, and the marketing team so that the Pinpoint website could be set up prior to the focus group meetings and interviews. He stressed that it is important for the site to be readily available as part of the process is to request participants to share the information and tools they are given with the community on a greater scale. Vice President Altpeter asked for clarification on whether the public comments on the website would be constantly monitored, to which the response was in the affirmative. Commissioner Hummel inquired about how survey results would be interpreted in terms of what thresholds indicate that a referendum would be successful. Mr. Younger answered that there are multiple levels that go into supporting those types of responses, and Mr. Parnin referenced the question regarding funding that was included in the District's Strategic Master Plan. He also mentioned that the questions in the survey for the feasibility study will be much more direct and in-depth. He also pointed out that the Pinpoint website will have more information on it, which will allow those who responded with answers of "not sure" on the Strategic Master Plan to better make an informed decision.

IV. ADJOURN SPECIAL MEETING

Vice President Altpeter moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Tapella seconded the motion.

Voice Vote:

Ayes: Altpeter, Tapella, Hummel, Wessel

Nays: None

Absent: Dombroski

Motion Passed.

The special meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.