



Wilmette Park District **Board Brief**

Updates of interest from your Wilmette Park District Board of Park Commissioners

Community Playfields Presentation & Discussion

Executive Director Steve Wilson, provided an overview of the options and associated cost estimates discussed at the Parks and Recreation Committee for two proposed amenities at Community Playfields: the fitness path and public bathrooms. After the presentation, a public comment section was held.

Fitness Path at Community Playfields

There was unanimous agreement that a permeable surface is necessary if there is to be a path. “We have a lot of united beliefs about *permeable* in terms of the material,” agreed Commissioner Goebel.

The park board's discussion of the fitness path surrounded the path length and location. The board was divided due to several factors. A longer path is expected to encourage greater public use, as well as use by the local junior high school. “I think we should pursue the 1-mile path,” said Commissioner Wolfe, “We need to be considerate of a long-term objective and not be short sighted in our thought process. It will be extremely beneficial for the schools as well as for public use.”

However, it was also brought up that a longer path would accrue a significantly greater expense, and require more strategic planning to protect existing trees while keeping a buffer zone outside of the fields on the south end of the park. “I'd love to have a mile track, I get where everybody is coming from, but I just can't justify the cost,” commented Commissioner Anderson.

After further debate, Commissioner Wolfe recommended a compromise, to vote on moving forward with a path and to leave the length and location decision to the future board, allowing for staff recommendations and further analysis. Commissioner Shissler moved “to proceed with a path that is either a half-mile or a mile, that does not affect the trees, does not affect the field configurations or rotations, and does not have a board walk.” This motion was approved.



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Bathrooms at Community Playfields

Regarding the proposed public bathrooms, several members of the public urged support for a location on the western side of the park closer to the baseball fields and other existing public amenities.

With the undetermined possibility of access to District 39's junior high restrooms, some board members expressed interest in tabling the decision of a bathroom location until the intergovernmental agreement had established terms of use for the D39 restrooms. "I am not prepared to weigh the pros and cons of locations," said Commissioner Murdock. "I think we should fully understand the options with the junior high."

With the IGA in its infancy, it has been agreed that the Park District can have access to the restrooms but the detailed terms are yet undetermined. "In the long run, the school would control our access to the bathrooms, so I would look at those bathrooms as a bonus, but not to count on them," said Commissioner Anderson.

With the terms of the IGA potentially influencing the bathroom location, it was agreed to at the April 12 meeting that a vote would be taken to move forward with a bathroom structure, but to leave the decision of location to the future board, so as not to lock incoming commissioners into or out of any big decisions. The motion to proceed with a bathroom was passed.

Langdon Shoreline Protection Contract Approved

At the April 12 board meeting, Commissioner Abbott discussed the proposed contract with SmithGroup, bringing attention specifically to an optional \$41,000 line item to lock in a construction management fee prior to further planning. The park board raised several concerns over agreeing to this fee so early in the process and they instead agreed to move forward and approve the contract, less the optional \$41,000 fee.

Additional News from the Parks & Rec. Committee

Following the Community Playfields discussion at the April 12 meeting, Commissioner Murdock completed his report, updating that camp registrations are far ahead of schedule for summer 2021. There are a few anticipated items that will be discussed at the next committee meeting, including the location for the new dog park and additional pickleball facilities.

Golf Cart Path Project and Other Updates

Commissioner Wolfe reported at the April 12 meeting that the Golf Cart Path project has been postponed until the fall. "Unfortunately, due to slow progress from the contractor, the project started but was not far enough along to avoid seriously impacting the course this season," explained Commissioner Wolfe. "The decision was made to defer the work until the fall, when better course conditions and weather could be taken into consideration." The course has since been put back to playable condition.

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Summer camp registration has been going well, reported Commissioner Wolfe. “The driving range is open for the season, and memberships are ahead of last year’s totals.”

Updates from the Financial Planning & Policy Committee

A proposal was approved at the April 12 meeting for a new phone system to replace the expired system at the Wilmette Park District.

Commissioner Goebel was also pleased to report that the district is ahead of budget at this time, largely due to summer camp registration. “It looks like there is a lot of excitement, and it shows in the numbers from our programming,” commented Commissioner Goebel.

To read the full minutes from our past Board meetings, click [here](#). Minutes are posted after they are approved at a subsequent meeting.

Next Board meeting: Monday, May 10 at 7:30 p.m. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our next meeting will be a hybrid, virtual/in-person meeting. Details will be posted on the [Park Board](#) page on our website.

Meetings will be available on Channel 6 locally for Comcast subscribers, as well as available on our shared YouTube channel with the Village of Wilmette.

Please check our [website](#) for updates.

See what's happening on our social sites

