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RECREATION, SWIMMING POOLS, AND MUSEUMS COMMITTEE
Glenview Park District – Multi-Purpose Room, Glenview Community Ice Center
1851 Landwehr Ave, Glenview, IL 60026
Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 18, 2021 @ 8:30 a.m.

1. Roll Call

Committee Chair Joe Sullivan called the meeting to order at 8:30 am and the roll was called.

Commissioners present: Committee Chair: Joe Sullivan; Committee Members: Jen Roberts, Bill Casey; Dan Peterson, Dave Tosh

Official Staff present: Executive Director Mike McCarty, Superintendent of Special Revenue Facilities Lori Lovell, Superintendent of Park and Facility Services Jim Warnstedt, Director of Recreation Amy Watson, Assistant Director of Recreation Joe Pollina, District Attorney Derke Price, Recording Secretary Amy Wille

Guests: None

Late Arrivals, Early Departure: None

Commissioners/Official Staff absent: None

2. AGENDA TOPICS

a. Park Center, long-term rental per Facility and Equipment Use Policy 5.02

Staff requested consideration from the Committee to approve the Community Church Network rental on a continuous basis on Sunday mornings for religious services and move to the full Board for approval.

Superintendent of Special Facilities Lori Lovell provided background on the request from leaders of Community Church Network, also known as Home Church, to begin conducting weekly services at Park Center. The church reached out to Park Center in their search to find a physical location for its services since the church's virtual inception during the pandemic. After staff's assessment of Park Center operations on Sunday mornings, staff created a 9-month proposal agreement to host approximately 150-200 people per service with the potential for two services on any given Sunday.

Lovell noted that Glenview Park District Facility and Equipment Use Policy 5.02, Section 6-B states: "*Permits shall not be granted for political meetings or religious services holding six or more meetings in any eight-week period except by approval of the Board of Park Commissioners.*" In order for staff to move forward with rental agreements with Home Church, approval is needed by the Board of Park Commissioners. If approval is granted, church services will be ready to begin 2-3 months afterwards. The church will need time to gather materials, recruit volunteers and put an overall plan in place to begin. If staff gain approval at the May 27, 2021 Park Board meeting, services will begin between July 11 – August 1.

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Over the initial 9-month rental period, the fiscal impact of one service per week would be \$3,389 per week or \$132,171 for 39 weeks. For two services per week, it would be \$3,960 per week or \$154,440 for 39 weeks. Lovell added that there is a potential for additional residual revenue in addition to rental fees. There is a possibility of hundreds of new customers with interest in signing up for programs, fitness memberships, pool memberships or additional rentals including weddings, showers, baptisms, etc.

Committee Chair Joe Sullivan noted the complexity of this agenda topic and the significance of its fiscal impact for the District coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic over the last year and a half. He commended staff on bringing forth a good opportunity, but added that the Board has several items to discuss regarding the legalities of the rental. He recommended that the item be on the May Board agenda allowing the full Board to provide input on the agenda item.

Commissioner Joe Sullivan stated his interest in this opportunity for the District from a revenue standpoint while noting a previous discussion about the separation of church and state. As historical background to the general rule provided from Policy 5.02, Commissioner Bill Casey explained the rule was developed when Naval Air Station Glenview closed and The Glen development began. There was a local religious group that requested weekly services to be held at Schram Chapel. At that time, the Park Board decided against the weekly services, but allowed the group to hold services on occasion. Commissioner Joe Sullivan added that the policy still states the Board may decide on whether to proceed with religious rentals and requested this item to be a staff recommendation at the May 27, 2021 Park Board Meeting to be voted on by the full Board of Commissioners.

District Attorney Derke Price stated the courts have become more protective of spiritual practices in the last few years and this rental would fall under the right of free association from the 1st Amendment. Price added that staff work to fill the public spaces within the District with programming and rentals in the best interest of the community based on the boundaries set by the Board in Policy 5.02.

Price went over how the boundaries are enforced and how they can be interpreted. He advised the Committee on what the District can legally allow and not allow on District property when the renter is of a religious or spiritual nature, including the right to hold services. He informed the Board that they must decide if this rental violates the 1st Amendment because it could involve undue entanglement with religion. The Board must consider if the 9-month commitment becomes too entangled in the separation of church and state.

The commissioners discussed numerous items: whether this rental falls under undue entanglement, the potential messaging from District staff and church leaders, how to control the signage for the rental, public optics, the 9-month commitment and how rentals fit in the District's business model and mission. Price noted that the District may put some regulations on signage, but cannot regulate within the rental space when it is occupied.

Commissioner Jen Roberts expressed her concerns over the 9-month commitment and the amount of requested classroom and rental space. She stated that she does not agree with Home Church running their entire operation at Park Center on Sunday mornings and would consider it to be undue entanglement. She suggested that a finite time be

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determined in order to prohibit the church from establishing themselves on District property.

Superintendent Lovell provided background on staff communications with Home Church leaders and the intent to find a location for in-person services. Executive Director Mike McCarty added that staff would have presented a different agreement to the Board if they thought it was a permanent renter, such as a lease agreement.

The commissioners had an extensive discussion ensuring that all aspects of the rental were discussed and all viewpoints were mentioned. Commissioner Dan Peterson was in favor of the rental agreement and was open to changing the timeframe of the agreement. Commissioner Dave Tosh was not in favor of 9 months and preferred a shorter timeframe. Commissioner Casey was in favor of the agreement as presented. Commissioner Jen Roberts presented her perspective on how the rental is unduly entangled with this religious organization if the District were to move forward with the rental. She was not favor unless it was a much smaller operation with a short-term rental. Commissioner Sullivan thanked Commissioner Roberts for bringing her perspective to the Board and her valid input into a tough decision.

The commissioners present agreed to bring the discussion to the May 27, 2021 Park Board Meeting and vote on the rental agreement with Home Church.

b. Park Center, extended rental per Facility and Equipment Use Policy 5.02

Superintendent of Special Facilities Lori Lovell requested consideration to approve Mindset Club Volleyball rental at Park Center on a continuous weekly basis on Mondays and Wednesdays for team practices and move to the full Board for approval.

The committee recommended the acceptance of the Mindset Club Volleyball rental at Park Center to be moved to the Park Board meeting for full Board approval.

3. Other

None

4. Matters from the Public

None

5. Adjourn

Board President Bill Casey moved seconded by Committee Chair Joe Sullivan to adjourn the Open Session at 9:50 am. On Voice Vote: All present voted aye, motion carried.

ATTEST:

Daniel B. Peterson
Board President

Michael D. McCarty
Board Secretary

Approved this 24th day of June 2021.