

Belvidere Township Park District
Special Board Meeting
July 1, 2021

Minutes

The Belvidere Township Park District Board of Commissioners board meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m. Roll call was taken. Those present at the meeting were Mary Marquardt, Jean Twyning, Amy Grafton, and Daniel Noble. Sam An was absent.

IAPD Boot Camp Discussion

There was a brief discussion on who attended this years IAPD boot camp. It was confirmed that Grafton, Twyning, An, and Noble attended this years bootcamp, and Marquardt and Twyning have previously attended Boot Camp.

There was a discussion on lessons learned during the bootcamp. Twyning mentioned that government funding is different than business funding. Twyning and Marquardt discussed different taxes that we do not utilize. Twyning discussed Tax Levy, how little control we have over it, and the necessity to request the necessary amount. Grafton mentioned the things she learned and found interesting including the rules for Open Meeting Act, five member boards, and the way the board should be doing things. Twyning discussed remote participation rules.

Grafton and Twyning discussed approval of meeting minutes, and how meeting minutes need to be approved in a timely manner. Grafton mentioned how overdue meeting minutes needed to be approved or amended and approved if they could not be approved as is. Marquardt mentioned the minutes from May 11th and May 25th were incomplete and in contention. Marquardt said the May 11th and May 25th minutes were not prepared by the secretary for the district and were not accurate. Marquardt would not discuss it further until it was an action item on the agenda. Grafton mentioned how we were in violation and needed to discuss. It was decided that discussion would continue when the item was on the agenda. Twyning and Grafton discussed that the minutes must be approved or amended and approved to avoid being in violation.

Twyning discussed how law or conflict of interest was of importance. Twyning discussed how we need to be very careful of potential conflicts of interest. Discussion on how no political activity can be done on park district time or during board meeting by board members or park district employees.

Noble discussed how the board works through the Executive Director and should not be micromanagers of day to day directions of Park District employees. Noble also mentioned how different each individual Park District was with funding and financing. Noble discussed the need for a mutual respect between the board and the Executive Director. Twyning concurred and warned against board micromanagement of park district. Noble mentioned the need for mutual respect of all parties.

Grafton discussed how the board needs to act as a whole regardless of how an individual board member votes. Twyning agreed and mentioned how this was not always done in the past.

Twyning and Marquardt mentioned how they do not discuss board business on social media. Marquardt mentioned how a minority report is a very dangerous thing and should not happen.

Board discussed best method of emailing/communicating with each other.

Twyning requested more discussion of Boot Camp be added to the next agenda.

Grafton requested further discussion on individuals in Executive Session.

Twyning mentioned how we needed to have public comment at every meeting. Public comment will be added prior to Executive session.

Unfinished Business

A. Discussion on Open Superintendent positions

Noble stated the Parks position posting will be kept open and the applicants for the Recreation position posting will be closed June 27, 2021.

Twyning asked about the open Administrative Superintendent position. Marquardt stated the position description was not complete or approved. Grafton said she was sure it was approved at the last meeting and was complete. Noble will investigate it.

Twyning discussed the departing Superintendents of Recreation and Parks did not want to have a replacement hired prior to a new Executive Director. Twyning mentioned that current staff may be able to function without Superintendents if we hire an ED quickly. Marquardt mentioned that it was not the boards decision to make but the Executive decision only. Noble mentioned that the advice of Jim Pirages was that HR and the board President could hire but warned that the board should be informed and if possible, consent prior to any interim or permanent Superintendent was hired. Twyning warned that any hiring might be micromanagement. Grafton is concerned that we may lose qualified applicants if we wait. Marquardt inquired as to whom would the newly hired Superintendents report? Noble and Grafton mentioned that this responsibility would fall on the board and specifically the board President. Twyning discussed that much of our staff is capable and warned that any new Executive Director could demote or fire any Superintendent we hire.

Noble discussed the compensation policy for current staff taking on duties of Superintendents and that one employee is nearing the end of the compensation period. Twyning and Grafton worry that any interims may not be promoted under a new Executive Director. Noble mentioned that one position may need to be hired and this situation will be discussed during the Executive Session.

Further discussion on whether we should or should not hire interim or permanent replacements for Superintendent positions.

Unfinished Business

B. Discussion on Interim and Permanent ED positions

Discussion on if everyone filled out survey. All 4 commissioners present did. Noble would investigate whether IAPD had all 5 surveys.

Discussion on potential interim ED candidates. Noble mentioned the previously discussed candidate from Joliet was withdrawing from consideration but was being helpful to assist. Noble provided information on another potential candidate who was recommended by Todd and the Joliet contact. Currently this individual is the only candidate.

Grafton mentioned that one day a week for an Interim may not be enough.

Twyning mentioned that if we are able to get an interim ED, we would likely not need to hire interim Superintendent. Twyning also mentioned that we need to look on both sides. Twyning did mention that we have had an employee quit after being offered in interim position. Noble mentioned that he has seen interim both work and fail and the importance of setting expectations correctly if we do move forward. Marquardt said that if we do hire an interim or permanent Superintendent, we are putting the new Executive Director in a position to fire or demote and this is dangerous.

Public Discussion

Two visitors were present. Neither wanted to make a public comment.

Executive Session

Commissioner Grafton motioned to go into Executive Session to go into executive session under section 2(c)(1). Commissioner Twyning seconded. A voice vote was taken with all commissioners present voting Yes. Motion Carried.

At 6:45 p.m. meeting adjourned

Submitted by
Daniel Noble