

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
KENILWORTH PARK DISTRICT BOARD HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL,  
419 RICHMOND ROAD, AT 5:00 P.M. ON THURSDAY, MAY 1, 2008.**

Park District President Thomas Feeney called the meeting to order at 5:08 p.m. and the Secretary called the roll as follows:

Present:	Thomas Feeney	President
	Chip Kenyon	Commissioner
	Richard Peterson	Commissioner
	Heidi Higgins	Commissioner
	Jason Hanold	Commissioner
Others Present:	Brad Burke	Secretary
Arrived at 5:45pm	Lou Maggi	Superintendent
	Mary Cole	Secretary to Mr. Burke
Others Present:	Eileen Madigan	353 Melrose Avenue
	Kevin Flannery	350 Melrose Avenue
	Michael Madigan	353 Melrose Avenue
	Chris Killion	515 Cumnor Road
	Rachel Noel	141 Kenilworth Avenue
	Ken Mrock	Westchester
	Lois Colberg	353 Sterling Road
	Debby Killion	515 Cumnor Road
	Kenner Davis	716 Kent Road
	Katy Sutter	333 Richmond Road
	Elli Sutter	333 Richmond Road
	Mariam Pahl	316 Cumnor Road
	Lois Stanley	167 Sheridan Road
	Marilyn Brooks	428 Cumnor Road

President Feeney announced that the meeting was being taped and cited the laws about taping at a public meeting.

The minutes of the April 2, 2008 meeting were placed before the Board. President Feeney made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Kenyon seconded the motion, and the minutes as presented were unanimously approved.

President Feeney said the next order of business was the payables. Secretary Burke said all the payables were pretty straight forward. He noted payment to Lurvey's because of increased spring maintenance and planting activities. Secretary Burke said the Park District was on track with their budget.

Commissioner Peterson made a motion to approve the payables. Commissioner Hanold seconded the motion, and the payables were unanimously approved.

President Feeney said the Park Board needed to approve an Investment Policy. Secretary Burke said it is a State regulation, and the auditors noted the need for a policy in their management letter from the previous Park District audit. Secretary Burke noted an amendment,

removing mention of the Storch Fund from the Investment Policy because it is a separate and independent fund.

Commissioner Peterson made a motion to approve the Investment Policy as amended. President Feeney seconded the motion which was unanimously carried, and the Investment Policy as amended was approved.

Secretary Burke noted the auditors were at the Village Hall last week to complete field work and will be coming back in July.

Commissioner Kenyon introduced Ken Mrock who is the head groundskeeper for the Chicago Bears. Prior to his association with the Bears, Mr. Mrock worked for the Chicago Park District. Commissioner Kenyon said Mr. Mrock was present to offer an honest assessment of Townley Field.

Ken Mrock took the floor and proceeded with his assessment. He said Townley Field is used for a myriad of activities and is the center of the Village. Mr. Mrock said he realizes the importance of the field, and noted based upon his evaluation the turf is hard and sparse. Mr. Mrock explained there are ways to build natural fields that allow better playability. For example, he worked with Lincolnshire where there was more room, and they ended up with what is known as slide fields where baseball diamonds, etc. can be moved around. This allows turf time to rest and revitalize. Mr. Mrock noted Townley Field is too small and has too high of use to accommodate the concept of slide fields. Mr. Mrock noted the field has compacted which takes the oxygen out. This makes it difficult for grass to grow. Mr. Mrock said he felt a synthetic field was the way to go for Townley Field. Mr. Mrock noted there was talk of synthetic fields not being good for children. He said there is now 8 or 9 years of experience and there has been much research on the topic.

Mr. Mrock went on to say there is some maintenance involved with a synthetic field. If there is lots of use of a field, it will last 5 to 6 years. With less use, it could last 8 to 9 years.

Commissioner Higgins asked if there was any way to soften the field naturally. Mr. Mrock said the field has to be rebuilt. He explained the rebuilding process which included sampling and amending the soil after stripping off everything and installing 2 year old sod which creates a soft cushion and accepts moisture. Mr. Mrock said there should be no ice rink on natural turf because it seals the ground and it takes a long time for plants to come back. Commissioner Higgins said the Park District used a liner this year under its ice rink. Mr. Mrock said that seals off the ground and restricts oxygen.

President Feeney and Commissioner Kenyon both asked Mr. Mrock how much a natural turf field would cost. Mr. Mrock said \$400,000.00 which may be a little high. He said you need 1 person dedicated to maintenance and scheduling. Mr. Mrock recommended the play be restricted if the weather conditions are bad, and noted playing on the field on one rainy day can take 2 to 3 months to repair. He said it would cost \$50,000 per year to maintain after the original installation, and reiterated playing has to be limited to allow good maintenance.

Commissioner Higgins asked how it is determined that play should not be allowed. Mr. Mrock said standing water is a good indication. He said the field needs time to drain otherwise there will be too much damage done. Mr. Mrock said at times of major downpours playing should be suspended.

Commissioner Higgins noted school kids do not use Townley Field in the rain at gym time.

Ken Mrock said Townley Field is unsafe because it is too hard. It is in tough shape, and the hard winter took its toll.

Commissioner Higgins asked how long it would take to re-do the field. Mr. Mrock said a little over a month. He said it is like putting carpet on top of floor. Once done, it is playable immediately.

President Feeney asked if there were any questions from the audience.

Kevin Flannery of 350 Melrose Avenue asked about the budget for natural turf. Ken Mrock said the budget should be about \$50,000 per year if events are scheduled properly.

Eileen Madigan of 353 Melrose Avenue asked how many years sod can last. Mr. Mrock said it has to be re-sodded in various high-use places every year. He said you need a comprehensive program, and concentrated areas need a break.

Commissioner Higgins asked if the yearly \$50,000 includes re-sodding. Mr. Mrock said the number does include some re-sodding. He felt confident with his estimate.

Lois Stanley of 167 Sheridan Road asked if Pee Wee Park could be used as a relief for Townley Field. Mr. Mrock said that is a great idea. He said his proposal makes the field accessible to kids all year long. Scheduling is the key. He asked when football is over. Commissioner Kenyon said November 1<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Mrock said that would be the best time to do maintenance including aerifying, fertilizing and seeding. He said this could be done anytime Townley Field is free.

Commissioner Kenyon said all activities are done by November 1<sup>st</sup> except for skating.

Kevin Flannery asked Park Superintendent Maggi when Townley was last aerated. Mr. Maggi replied that it has been a couple of years. Mr. Mrock said it should be aerated twice a year.

Lois Stanley asked when Townley was last sodded. Superintendent Maggi said the soccer field was last sodded in 1998.

Superintendent Maggi said some of the maintenance programs being suggested require special equipment. Mr. Mrock said this could be outsourced or the equipment could be rented.

Rachel Noel of 141 Kenilworth Avenue said the Field Turf will cost \$1,000,000. and \$600,000 every 8 to 10 years. She asked if the private donors would donate only for field turf.

Commissioner Hanold asked if the costs are similar, why recommend synthetic turf. An increase of injuries throws up red flags. Commissioner Hanold said if a maintained natural grass turf field is the safest, we need a commitment to the Park District crew that the proper equipment will be available to them.

Kevin Flannery asked about how much maintenance is needed. Ken Mrock said less for synthetic turf. Mr. Mrock added that if you groom the synthetic field too much you affect the warranty. He explained the downside of synthetic fields. He noted the heat factor.

Commissioner Higgins said that Mr. Mrock's proposal recommends synthetic turf, but it appears Mr. Mrock prefers natural grass.

Commissioner Hanold asked why the consultant recommended synthetic. Mr. Mrock said what is there is unsafe compared to synthetic turf.

Commissioner Higgins said putting money aside, what is the best for the kids – natural or synthetic. Ken Mrock said natural, although synthetic turf does allow constant play.

Commissioner Kenyon made the point of how many days the field was unplayable in April. Mr. Mrock said this year in Lake Forest, there was 90 inches of snow, which is more than previous years. Now the fields are dry, but there were a lot of rain outs this year.

Next, there were general questions and answers about synthetic and natural turfs. It was noted that New Trier is going to synthetic turf.

The Park Board thanked Ken Mrock for his presentation.

President Feeney asked if there were any further questions.

Commissioner Kenyon said the Board needs prices. He said if everyone is for natural grass, the Park District needs to get the money.

Commissioner Higgins said we need an estimate of the cost associated with natural turf.

President Feeney said the Park District budget is maxed out.

There was general discussion comparing prices and maintenance.

Commissioner Hanold said there is a useability issue.

Rachel Noel asked what the cost would be for an estimate for natural turf. Commissioner Kenyon said Mr. Mrock charges a fee of \$100.00 per hour.

Lois Stanley expressed her opinion grass would be best. There is not enough information to prove the safety of synthetic turf, and noted she also wants to do what is best for the kids.

Commissioner Kenyon said there are other synthetics that are safer.

Commissioner Hanold asked what the right resources are to maintain the turf well. Superintendent Maggi said synthetic is best if there is a limited crew and equipment because there is less maintenance with synthetic. For natural turf, the crew will need specific equipment.

President Feeney asked if a referendum was needed for bond issues.

Commissioner Higgins asked if there is money in the budget to get Ken Mrock to give the Park District an estimate.

Secretary Burke said there is no line item, but he and Superintendent Maggi would look at the budget to see if there are funds available. He said he would contact Ken Mrock and ask him to

provide a quote for his consulting services to develop a natural turf option for Townley Field including an ongoing maintenance program.

Commissioner Higgins asked if the needed equipment for maintenance could be rented. Secretary Burke said Mr. Mrock had suggested that as an option and noted he would ask Mr. Mrock to include this in his quote.

Kevin Flannery asked about outsourcing the maintenance.

Commissioner Higgins asked if the Field Turf group would consider funding natural grass. Commissioner Kenyon said they are only interested in Field Turf.

Commissioner Higgins said the Board needs to go back to the residents and find out what they want.

Lois Stanley said what is best for the kids is what the Park District should pursue.

Commissioner Kenyon said his group is not excited about grass because it is not as usable and there is a lot of down time.

Commissioner Hanold said he was not comfortable with today's information to make a decision. He would like a more formal presentation and more data.

A general discussion of the cost of maintenance for Townley Field followed.

President Feeney said at this point, the Park Board is just looking at options.

Commissioner Higgins pointed out that in 10 years, the Park District will not have to re-do the whole natural grass field. She said the issue needs to be presented to the whole community.

Secretary Burke reiterated he would obtain a cost estimate from Mr. Mrock for a scope of services. Commissioner Peterson asked if Mr. Mrock was aware of the proposed drainage.

One resident said her sons have played on synthetic turf and have gotten hurt. She prefers natural grass, though she understands there is a problem with down time. She felt there was not enough information available.

A discussion about Mondo Turf followed, and Ms. Eileen Madigan noted that option is 60% more expensive. Commissioner Kenyon said the benefactors have raised money and a State grant could follow. He said Mondo Turf has no environmental issues, is not harmful and costs \$6.00 per square foot.

Superintendent Maggi noted that natural grass is heavily fertilized and a lot of weed controllers are used on it in order to maintain playability on the field.

Ms. Madigan said synthetic turf also required weed control because of seeds in the air that get into the synthetic fiber.

Commissioner Kenyon said again that Townley Field as it is, is unsafe.

The Board moved on to other issues.

Commissioner Peterson said there are 43 kids in T-ball. He said there was a good turnout on the first day. He also said the T-shirts have been ordered.

Commissioner Kenyon said the numbers are down for Football Camp, but he would get the word out.

Superintendent Maggi said more work is needed in Pee Wee Park which involves some cost, but there are no big budget items. He brought up the issue of the Girl Scouts donating a tree for Susan Hoopes. There was general discussion of the proposed location.

Commissioner Higgins asked if Village approval was needed, and noted the Girl Scouts want to do their own memorial for Susan Hoopes and they would like to do it on June 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ware Park.

Next, Secretary Burke cited enrollment numbers for Little springs.

Commissioner Higgins said the directors need to let college kids know earlier about employment. Her son applied quite a while ago, has worked their for a number of years, and still has not heard anything. She also discussed enrollment for campers. Some kids are not getting put into the same group with their classmates because of their ages.

Secretary Burke said that should be worked on for next year, but we cannot change the enrollment method in mid-stream.

Commissioner Higgins made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Hanold seconded the motion which was unanimously carried, and the meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Cole