

Springfield Park District
PUBLIC HEARING
Bunn Administrative Office/ 2500 South 11th Street / Springfield, IL
June 9, 2021 – 5:30 p.m. Prior to Committee of the Whole meeting

MINUTES

A Special meeting of the Springfield Park District Board of Trustees was held on Wednesday, June 9, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. prior to the Committee of the Whole meeting.

President Sgro called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and requested roll call.

Roll Call:

Members Participating Virtually: Trustees Eck and Metcalf

Members Participating in Person: Trustees Badger, Beck, Schmidt, Theilen and President Sgro

Members Unavailable: None

Others Participating Virtually: None

Others Participating in Person: Derek Harms, Executive Director; Stephen Flesch, Director of Finance & Administration; Jason Graham, Director of and Parks; Lynn Saputo, Director of Recreation & Staff

President Sgro opened the meeting and declared the following statement:

“Based upon the COVID 19 outbreak and the Governor Executive Orders, the Board declares in person meetings impractical at this time and not prudent based on the nature of the disaster.”

Open Public Hearing

President Sgro opened the public hearing regarding the Illinois Public Museum Grant Capital Grant Program application. Director Harms informed the public that the purpose of the meeting is to inform the public about the project and solicit input and feedback. Director Harms presented the following information.

The Conservatory is a 50-ft diameter plexi-glass dome structure containing over 150 species of plants with exotic and economically important plants that are arranged by the geographic regions to which they are native. The conservatory is the only public facing greenhouse and therefore it is really the heart of public interaction and public education at the Botanical Garden. The conservatory also provided important greenhouse space for popular seasonal displays include Easter lilies, poinsettias, and orchids. Beyond the diverse flora, the conservatory also houses native tree frogs and an occasional anole as well.

The conservatory was dedicated in 1972, facing nearly 50 years of being exposed to the elements. Although the Conservatory has been well maintained, it is certainly showing its age and desperately needs to be replaced. The exterior access ladder no longer functions. It is used to service the exterior of the panels and the exhaust fan. We are unable to replace sections of plexi as they break. Many of the panels have experienced significant cracking large enough that you can see through, some are spider webbed. As you can imagine, when it rains, we have substantial leaks through the plexi and the framing. Needless to say, the dome is highly inefficient.

The preliminary plan for the grant includes replacement of the existing conservatory with a similar iconic dome shaped structure for which the botanical garden is known. Grant applications may be between \$25K and \$750K. We plan to submit a grant for the full \$750K. We are working on cost estimates now. Depending on replacement costs, it is possible that we can also replace HVAC system as well.

Public Comment

President Sgro asked if anyone from the public would like to comment on the issue
No one addressed the Board.

Closed Public Hearing

Moved by: Trustee Theilen
Seconded by: Trustee Schmidt

All approved by voice vote.

President Sgro closed the public hearing.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board
the Public Hearing was closed at 5:40