

Present: **Parks & Recreation:** Chairperson Greening; Vice-chair Nagle; Members: Harmon, O'Reilly, Schmitt and Wilms  
**Council:** President Taylor; President Pro-Tem Walsh; Members: Burry, Koss, Pfeifer, Rijnovean and Woodrow

Absent: Parks/Rec: Davis

Also Present: Assistant to the Manager, Pasieka

A video showing scenes from summer concerts in Beverly Park was played to demonstrate how much fun people have at the concerts in the park. Former Parks and Recreation Board member Dan Nelson produced the video.

President Taylor called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. in the Village municipal building at 18500 W. Thirteen Mile Road.

### **DISCUSS CONTINUED FUNDING FOR PARK MAINTENANCE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS**

Greening stated that the Parks and Recreation Board is recommending that Council budget for park maintenance/capital improvements now that the dedicated millage has run its course. The budget had previously included a line item for capital improvements. The Finance Director has estimated annual depreciation of park facilities at about \$35,000-\$40,000 per year. The Parks and Recreation Board is suggesting that this amount be budgeted on an annual basis.

It was clarified that this is a request that the Village provide a budget for maintenance and repair of items in the park and for future capital improvements. Examples given were future repairs to the sled hill, playground equipment repair or replacement due to wear or new safety regulations, parking lot repaving, fencing along Allerton, signage or fencing for Riverside Park, etc. These types of repair or replacement do not fall within the park maintenance line item allocated for lawn mowing, trash pickup, and minor repairs.

Walsh read from the resolution to create the Parks and Recreation Board that delineates the purpose of the Board. The resolution indicates that general maintenance of the park is the responsibility of Village administration.

Greening responded that administration will need funds with which to accomplish park maintenance. The Parks and Recreation Board wants to make sure that there is funding available to maintain the improvements made with park millage money. Harmon added that current park facilities will need to be replaced as the park ages. It would be prudent to begin setting aside funds each year so that a project can be undertaken when it becomes necessary.

Rijnovean asked what other parks receive improvements. Greening responded that a picnic table, park bench, trash receptacle and sign have been placed in Riverside Park. She noted that the dedicated millage was solely for use in Beverly Park. Riverside Park will eventually need upgrading.

Wilms commented that the Parks and Recreation Board is offering suggestions to Council based on its involvement with the parks.

Burry stated that taxpayers have spent a lot of money to upgrade Beverly Park, and the Parks and Recreation Board has done a wonderful job implementing the improvements. He agrees that the Village needs to protect and maintain its investment in that park. It would be helpful to prepare an inventory of park facilities and the cost of maintenance in order to arrive at an estimated cost figure so that Council can determine how this can be financed under current budget constraints.

It was noted that the current budget for park maintenance is \$51,474. The total budget of \$64,174 includes maintenance, utilities, park opener fees, and telephone.

Pfeifer stated that Council will take the recommendation of the Parks and Recreation Board under advisement during its budget deliberations.

### **DISCUSS AND CONSIDER BALL FIELD BIDS**

At its November 1, 2005 meeting, Council voted to award a contract for improvements to the north baseball diamond consistent with plans amended and approved in its motion. A petition was submitted by a resident at the November 15 Council meeting signed by eight homeowners on Allerton objecting to the placement of bleachers on the third base side across from their street. Greening stated that Eileen Michalak was present at the Parks and Recreation Board meeting held earlier this evening voicing her objections to the location of the bleachers.

David Hinman, President of the Birmingham/Beverly Hills Church Softball League, stated that his league consists of a couple hundred individuals age 16 and older who have played on the north diamond on Sundays during the summer for over 20 years. He commented on the enjoyment that this activity provides for a number of people. Hinman mentioned that the league makes a small contribution to Beverly Hills Parks and Recreation at the end of each season to help out with the fields. League members supported the park millage proposal several years ago and are enthusiastic about the improvements proposed to the north diamond with the rotation of the diamond, dugout improvements, and location of the bleachers.

Hinman stated people gather at the third base side of the field even though there are no bleachers there. They bring chairs or stand in that area to cheer for their teams. He does not believe that there will be any change in the noise level with the addition of the bleachers. He views the proposal as an improvement for the families that come out to the games every Sunday from May through August.

Kathleen Berwick of 31381 Kennoway stated that she is distressed about paying taxes for many out-of-towners to play ball in Beverly Park. She thinks Beverly Hills is being a bad neighbor to the people on Allerton and that bleachers should not be located at the third base side. Evergreen trees should be planted along Allerton to screen the view of the ball fields.

Bunker Kelly of 21526 Corsaut Lane maintained that the cost of the ball field improvements is greater than just the construction cost in that it includes consultant costs. There will be a lot of

dollars spent for an improvement for an entertainment facility in the Village. Kelly believes that it shows a lack of focus if the park board is concerned more about entertaining non-villagers than being good neighbors to the people on Allerton. Those residents just want a compromise in terms of the location of the bleachers.

Sam Morgan of Nottingham Forest, member of the Board of Director of the Beverly Hills Little League, stated that there are 400 families in Beverly Hills who have their kids in the Beverly Hills Little League program. They all go to Beverly Park at some point to play ball. Referring to the objections from Allerton residents, Morgan noted they had a park across the street from their homes when they either built or purchased those houses. They knew that the park was there for use by all of the residents. He believes that renovation of this diamond is very overdue and that it will become more dangerous from a safety perspective if it is not improved. The baseball diamond is a recreational facility where kids play and build memories. The park is part of the community and not just part of 15 families who own houses on Allerton.

Vince Borowski of 31115 W. Chelton concurred with the comments made by the previous speaker.

Jon Oen of 32061 Verona Circle stated that the Village approved a millage to undertake park improvements. Beverly Hills does not have a downtown. Features that sell this community are its parks and open space. The ball field needs renovation. He agrees that the park was there when residents purchased their homes on Allerton. The park has limited hours, and residents can call Public Safety if people are making noise after the park closes at 10 p.m.

Bob Walsh of 20655 Smallwood Court stated that no one is questioning the need for ball diamond improvements. The only issue is moving the bleachers from the first base side of the field to the third base side, which will probably result in an increased noise level. Walsh thinks that the residents along Allerton were ignored in terms of the design of the ball field improvements. He proposes that the bleachers be moved back to the first base side.

Ron Berndt of 31384 E. Rutland talked about property owners' rights along non-residential uses. He citing the fact that his home abuts a cemetery, and he experiences noise from heavy machinery at times. He recalled that Council voted after a lengthy debate to let a contract to a vendor to accomplish specific items in the bid package. Berndt suggested that the decision has been made and it is time to move on and look at some of the other issues with our parks.

Dan Nelson of 32311 Sheridan commented that Detroit Country Day School is in Beverly Hills. He stated that the idea that Allerton was not considered when the baseball diamond discussions were going on is not correct. A large portion of the renovation cost will be to rotate the field to keep balls from going onto the road and the yards. Nelson thought that the idea of planting trees behind the bleachers is a good one, and he pledged \$100 towards a tree.

Lisa Ross of Kinross commented that she is affiliated with the Little League. There appears to be an issue with the noise level with respect to the proposed bleachers. Currently, people bring their chairs over and sit on the third base side at ball games. The only difference will be that

they will be sitting on bleachers. Ross remarked that the current field looks awful from the road, and the renovations will be an improvement.

Eileen Michalak stated that property values on Allerton are affected by the deteriorating fence, weed patch and drainage ditch, ice skating rink, condition of the road, and the proposed aluminum bleachers. These things are visible and depreciate property. Michalak remarked that she approves of the recent developments in the park and thinks it adds to the value of all the homes in Beverly Hills. It is a negative factor for the people on Allerton when that side of the park abutting their homes is poorly maintained.

Jack Harmon addressed the topic of the bioswale in the park across from Allerton. It is designed to be a method to handle runoff from the parking lot. The basin requires mowing and maintenance.

Greening remarked that the Council has voted to proceed with the ball diamond improvements. The Parks and Recreation Board looks forward to its next project, which will be the tennis, basketball, and volleyball courts.

Taylor proposed that there be some consideration and cost analysis of planting trees behind the bleachers to screen the view from Allerton residents. Harmon concurred with this course of action noting that Dan Nelson pledged \$100 towards landscaping and he would donate \$100. Bunker Kelly offered to contribute \$100 towards this effort. O'Reilly stated that we will have a better idea of exactly how much space is available for landscaping once the bleachers are installed.

#### **DISCUSS BUDGET FOR SPECIAL EVENTS**

Greening commented that the Parks and Recreation Board would like Council to consider budgeting for special events including the Summer Concert Series (\$5,000), Winter Family Fun Day (\$1,350) and Beverly Park Cleanup (\$750). These are the events that the Parks and Recreation Board is associated with; there are other special events that occur in the park but are sponsored by other individuals or organizations. The Halloween Hoot is organized by Pat Greening; the Jaycees sponsor the Easter Egg Hunt; and the Women's Club will request funds to defray the cost of Memorial Day activities in the park.

Schmitt remarked that he has cut expenses associated with Winter Family Fund Day and asked that some of the money requested for the event be moved into the Summer Concert fund.

Pasioka commented that a reason for bringing these special events to Council for consideration is that the Village will need to enter into a contract for entertainment and to reserve use of a portable stage for the summer concerts. The Board is looking for an indication as to whether it can count on the money to do this.

Nagle related that she is organizing the concert series in the park, which will take place for three consecutive Thursdays in the summer. The cost of the three concerts will be approximately \$5,000, which breaks down to about \$1.13/family. Nagle said that she attempts to keep the costs down by contracting with bands that do not have managers. The bands

featured play to all age groups. The concerts are a fun community event that represent the essence of summer. The event provides recreational opportunities for senior citizens and for young families. Beverly Hills is in competition with surrounding communities for young, dynamic families. Nagle would like to see the series expanded to four or five concerts in the summer. The attendance this year has been from 300-600 participants at an event.

Kay Michael of 15767 Kirkshire stated that there is no question that the music in the park is an enjoyable event. She thinks that it is important to understand that there is a strong economic advantage to continuing music in the park. Part of what makes a strong community that attracts residents, businesses, and growth is not just a good place to work and to live, but to have a fun gathering place that gives Beverly Hills that small-town charm. It is a quality of life issue. There are hundreds of residents having picnics, dancing, playing volleyball and using the playground equipment. People leave the park with a strong sense of community. Michael stated that Oakland County sells quality of life to businesses that are being courted by other states. Economic developers recognize that a vital component of quality of life is music and the arts.

Michael stated that Oakland County Deputy Executive Dennis Toffolo provided a letter for consideration by the Village of Beverly Hills to express how important this issue of music in the park is to Oakland County. Michael read excerpts from the letter, which makes the point that Oakland County's quality of life arsenal is critical to its success. It says, "As Michigan is facing increasing economic challenges, it is vital to Oakland County's future growth that it maintain and preserve elements the comprise its high quality of life". Michael concluded that she personally enjoys the concerts in the park and urged Council to give careful consideration before voting to cut this from the budget. She thanked Cynthia Nagle and the Parks and Recreation Board for doing an excellent job.

Bunker Kelly agreed that providing things like park concerts are a means by which families and friends can come together. He mentioned that surrounding communities with successful concerts and park events actively pursue participation from organizations and businesses to sponsor these events.

Taylor stated that Council will consider special events in the park as part of its budget deliberations.

**MAINTAINING PARK PAY TELEPHONE SERVICE**

Pasieka reported that the cost of maintaining a pay phone in the park is \$50 a month. The phone monument in the park pavilion was recently repaired at the expense of SBC, and the phone has been back in service since the first week in November. There are about 20 phone calls per year made to 9-1-1 from that location. Not all of the calls are legitimate. This is a topic of discussion tonight to determine if everyone agrees to provide this lifeline.

Pasieka indicated that the Village is exploring a service offered by a company called Code Blue that would provide a direct line to a central point, which would be the Beverly Hills Public Safety Department. He will communicate the information and related costs to the Parks and Recreation Board and Council when it becomes available.

**SALES IN BEVERLY PARK IN ACCORDANCE WITH CURRENT ORDINANCE**

Greening stated that it was the sense of the Parks and Recreation Board to comply with the Village Municipal Code, which states that sales are only permitted in the park with Council approval. Council has granted approval to the Woman’s Club for sales during the Memorial Day Carnival and for the Garden Club Plant Sale.

Woodrow asked for the opinion of the Parks and Recreation Board with respect to a request from an individual who wanted to park his ice cream truck in the Beverly Park parking lot. Board members responded that their recommendation is to maintain the current policy of the Village. It was indicated that this vendor parked on the other side of Beverly Road and sold ice cream.

**LIAISON COMMENTS**

Burry hopes that the Village can do something to address the property value concerns of the Allerton citizens. He thinks that the Board should look at the conditions in the section of the park abutting Allerton.

**ADMINISTRATION COMMENTS**

None

**BOARD/COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Taylor thanked the Parks and Recreation Board for their ideas and knowledge over the years that culminated in the great park improvements. He thanked them for their willingness to pursue a landscaping screen behind the bleachers.

Walsh commented on the benefit of a joint meeting where Council and Board members listen to various viewpoints. She appreciated the work done by the Board in Beverly Park. Walsh remarked that there are residents who do not know that Beverly Park is a public park.

Rijnovean proposed that the Village start thinking about having fund raisers to add to the money that can be spent on the parks and on park events. Questions on the operation of the park restrooms were addressed by Pasieka.

Koss thanked the Parks and Recreation Board for its great work. Beverly Park has been a great source of entertainment for her daughter. Koss wholeheartedly agreed with the comments made in the letter from Deputy County Executive Dennis Toffolo about preserving elements in the community that promote quality of life.

Pfeifer suggested that the Parks and Recreation Board look at the bioswale on her street, Charrington Court, which resembles a rock pile and serves its function well.

Pfeifer stated that she has been a resident of the Village since 1966 and lived in a house that backed up to Beverly School before Allerton Drive existed. The Parks and Recreation Board has been very cognizant of Allerton and has worked with its residents throughout the years, and they should receive credit for that. Pfeifer believes that this is probably the most involved and hardest working board in the Village. Jim O’Reilly has been very involved with the Little

League, the Boy Scouts, and Eagle Scout projects. Pat Greening has been extremely involved in organizing park activities. All of the members are involved in the park. Board members stained the gazebo in the park. Pfeifer expressed her appreciation for their involvement and enthusiasm.

Wilms recalled that, when the park millage was being discussed, many people wanted the beautiful fence along Beverly Road to surround the park. This Board would be happy to look at funding to install a new fence along Allerton. Wilms observed the unsightly garbage cans at the pavilion and thinks that they should be replaced.

Wilms hopes that there can be a resolution that somewhat satisfies everyone in terms of the ball diamond improvements in terms of arriving at a means to finance planting of evergreens along the fence. She mentioned that there were many similar comments made when the Board was working on the playground plans. People were concerned about the look of the play structures, the noise, and the people it would attract. She does not hear those negative comments now. There were also complaints about the parking lot paving and the fence. The Board has heard complaints every step of the way. The general consensus from the Council is that it is a beautiful park and that we have made great strides.

Wilms does not think that people realize that children who attend the after-school clubs at Beverly Elementary School use Beverly Park every day until their parents pick them up. They are supervised. Wilms stated that she can come up with many examples of ways the park is used by Beverly Hills residents. The park is a vital asset of the community. It attracts young families; it helps keep families here to renovate their homes and increase property values, which is good for everyone.

Wilms urged Council to consider funding the concert series. The Parks and Recreation Board would like to have movie nights in the park once or twice a summer. The Village can look at other sources for financing, but she thinks there is also a need for support from the community. She knows many families who are happy to support these types of services. Wilms maintains that people with small children cannot attend a lot of Council meetings and voice their views.

Harmon related that the Board has held public meetings over the years as part of the development and implementation of the park master plan. He agrees that fund raisers are a good idea, noting that the park master plan funding started with Parks and Recreation Board fund raising events. This would be a good way to help offset the cost of items that we need and want for our parks.

Nagle mentioned that the Halloween Hoot was bigger and better than ever this year. The Parks and Recreation Board's involvement in this event consists of finding out what it can do to assist Pat Greening. Pat and Don Greening are the individuals responsible for volunteering their time and money to stage this event. Nagel thanked them for their hard work.

O'Reilly wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and a Happy Holiday.

Schmitt related the history of Beverly Park, formerly a Dodge Park, from the year 1922. The Deed provides several express conditions and limitations including that the premises shall be perpetually maintained for the free use of the general public without discrimination. Schmitt remarked that he brings this up because he thinks “free use of the general public” prohibits charges to little leaguers. He also cited the language “public use without discrimination” because of comments made by a resident at the November 1 Council meeting that he considered racist. An individual stated that they moved to Beverly Hills to avoid bussing and complained about renovations to the park because it encouraged “those people”.

Schmitt thinks that the Parks and Recreation Board should go on record as reaffirming that it believes that Beverly Park should be used for all people without discrimination. Nagle seconded the motion, and there was a unanimous vote of the Board.

Schmitt thanked Pam Rijnovean and Dorothy Pfeifer for helping at the Halloween Hoot. He was pleased that Dave Taylor, Hugh Woodrow, and Rosanne Koss came with their kids. He invited everyone to attend the Winter Family Fun Day on January 15.

Greening thanked everyone for attending the joint meeting and wished them a Happy Thanksgiving and a Happy Holiday. Greening looks forward to the continued support of Council.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

**Patricia Greening, Chairperson  
Parks & Recreation Board**

**Dave Taylor  
Council President**

**Ellen E. Marshall  
Village Clerk**

**Susan Bernard  
Recording Secretary**