

**URBANA PARK DISTRICT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**MINUTES – BOARD STUDY SESSION**  
**TUESDAY, MAY 4, 2021**  
**6:30 PM-8:00 PM**  
**ONLINE VIA ZOOM**  
**URBANA, ILLINOIS 61802**

The study session meeting of the Urbana Park District Board of Commissioners was held Tuesday, May 4, 2021 at online via Zoom at 6:30 pm. The notice and agenda of the meeting were posted at the park district administrative office and at the location of the meeting. Copies of the notice and agenda were received by each commissioner of the district and by local newspapers, radio, and television stations at least forty-eight hours before the meeting in compliance with the Open Meetings Act of the State of Illinois. A copy of the notice and agenda is attached to the minutes. Also available for inspection are all documents that were reviewed or approved at the meeting.

COMMISSIONERS	PRESENT	ABSENT
President Michael Walker	X	
Vice President Nancy Delcomyn	X	
Commissioner Lashaunda Cunningham		X
Commissioner Roger Digges	X	
Commissioner Meredith Blumthal	X	

Also present were Tim Bartlett, Executive Director;  
Corky Emberson, Superintendent of Recreation;  
Caty Roland, Superintendent of Business Services;  
Derek Liebert, Superintendent of Planning and Operations;  
Andy Rousseau, Project Manager;  
Cedric Stratton, Commissioner-Elect;  
Kelsey Beccue served as Recorder.

Present from the Urbana Parks Foundation were Fred Delcomyn, President;  
Megan Puzey, Vice President;  
Jim Conlin, Treasurer;  
Helen Grandone, Secretary;  
Carolyn Trimble, Trustee;  
Amani Ayad, Trustee;  
Bill Gray, Trustee;  
Jake Wolf, Trustee;  
Jean Paley, Trustee;  
Marianne Downey, Trustee;  
Nancy Schrumpf, Trustee;  
Sarah Nemeth, Trustee;  
Ellen Kirsanoff, Trustee;  
Steve Rugg, Fundraising Committee Chair

**I. Call to Order**

Urbana Park District President, Michael Walker called the meeting to order at 6:34 PM.

**A. Remote Attendance**

President Walker announced that the meeting was being held remotely pursuant to Illinois Public Act 101-0640.

**II. Accept Agenda**

**COMMISSIONER BLUMTHAL MADE A MOTION WITH A SECOND BY COMMISSIONER DIGGES TO ACCEPT THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN, ALL SAID "AYE."**

**III. Public Comment**

There were no comments from members of the public.

**IV. Discussion**

**A. Joint Discussion with Urbana Parks Foundation**

**1. UPF Information for UPD Board**

**a. Overview of UPF Organization**

Urbana Parks Foundation (UPF) President, Fred Delcomyn introduced UPF Trustees and committee members. Fred provided an overview of UPF organizational structure including each committee of the foundation: Events Committee, Fundraising Committee, Finance Committee, and Nominating Committee.

**b. UPF Events Planning**

UPF Vice President and Events Committee Chair, Megan Puzey gave a report on the activities of the Events Committee. She provided an update on the successful virtual closeout event to wrap-up the Campaign for the Next Century. She also provided some information on the upcoming UPF Annual Dinner, which will be held June 11, 2021 in Crystal Lake Park, and attendees will be able to learn more about the Crystal Lake Park Rehabilitation Project, as well as the Health & Wellness Campaign. She noted that this year's Annual Dinner will be a "grab and go" style event, and that invitations would be sent out soon. She also provided an update on the Barn Bash, which has been postponed until May 20, 2022, and will be at Hudson Farm. She said everything is locked in for the 2022 event. Megan also mentioned that the committee is brainstorming ideas for a Health & Wellness groundbreaking event, as well as other Health & Wellness fundraising event ideas. Lastly, she noted that the committee is looking forward to post-COVID events, when people can gather in person. New event ideas for the future include a trivia night, marathon, and craft beer fest.

**c. UPF Financial Status**

UPF Treasurer and Finance Committee Chair, Jim Conlin gave a report on the foundation's financial status. He noted that 2020 revenues equaled \$345,000, and were primarily derived from Health & Wellness Campaign donations. Total expenses in 2020 were \$55,000 with net income of almost \$300,000. Expenses were down in 2020 due to the pandemic. He noted that the overall net income for 2020 was higher since the December 2020 reimbursement to the park district did not post until January 2021. Next, Jim gave some updates on year-to-date financial information. He noted year-to-date revenues of \$483,000 derived primarily from Health & Wellness Campaign donations. Year-to-date expenses have been relatively minimal, about \$9,000, and mostly spent on marketing efforts for the Health & Wellness Campaign. Expenses included the new website, Health & Wellness Campaign video, and paid media spots. Jim also noted that UPF reimbursed the district \$58,207.53 in April. Jim also updated the group on the adoption of an investment policy in March that requires the majority vote of the Finance Committee and the full Board of Trustees for investments of any kind. Lastly, Jim mentioned that UPF had engaged Royal Bookkeeping Services for accounting, and that has really streamlined the foundation's accounting process.

Fred noted that more expenditures than usual are related to marketing and advertising, including paid media appearances on CiLiving, WILL, and Smile Politely, and that UPF's overall financial position is good.

d. UPF Fundraising Status

UPF Fundraising Committee Chair, Steve Rugg gave a report on UPF fundraising activities. He noted that the foundation has had great success fundraising over the last few years. Steve discussed the successful Campaign for the Next Century and its closeout, along with the transition into the silent phase of the Health & Wellness Campaign, which so far has raised \$1.4 million. Steve said that UPF would be launching a small, highly targeted fundraising campaign for the Blair Park tennis courts. He also thanked everyone in the meeting for their work on the Campaign for the Next Century and the silent phase of the Health & Wellness Campaign, noting that thousands of hours have been spent on fundraising activities during such an unusual historical time. He thanked the UPD Board for voting to increase the district's debt load by refinancing bonds, thereby demonstrating support and commitment to the Crystal Lake Park and Health & Wellness Facility project. Steve said this made it easier to garner donor support for the project. He also thanked the Board for their willingness to invest in superb professional design services and professional fundraising services from CCS. He noted that CCS has brought structure and knowledge of best practices to the Health & Wellness

Campaign. He also thanked UPD leadership staff for being available to assist with gift solicitation, noting their project knowledge was an asset in the fundraising process. Steve also thanked Natalie, and all others who participated, for producing the campaign video, which has been helpful in gaining support for the project. Steve mentioned that all of these groups working together have shown their effectiveness demonstrated by the fact that \$1.4 million has been raised, and the public phase of fundraising is about to begin. Steve noted that the public phase is more about increasing awareness and public support for the project, and less about raising vast sums of money. Lastly, Steve said that in the coming year, he hopes to see a successful closeout of the Health & Wellness Campaign, and a successful campaign to raise money for the Blair Park tennis courts.

Fred commended UPD Board and staff for hiring professional fundraising consulting group, CCS. He noted he was skeptical of process at beginning, but said that their value to the campaign has far exceeded the costs of hiring them. Their guidance and support has been invaluable. Fred mentioned that all of the UPF Trustees have made gifts to the Health & Wellness Campaign, and that it is important when engaging donors that they see that UPF is invested in the project. The fact that all Trustees have made gifts, illustrates that UPF is fully invested in the success of the project.

e. UPF Recruitment Status

UPF Nominating Committee Chair, Jake Wolf gave a report on UPF recruitment status. He said three new trustees have joined in the last year: Ellen Kirsanoff, Jean Paley, and Marianne Downey. Jake noted that the committee has been having regular meetings to identify, discuss, and vet potential new members, and that contact has been initiated with several potential new members. Lastly, Jake said that they always welcome suggestions from trustees, UPD board and UPD staff.

f. UPF Marketing Status

Megan Puzey provided a marketing report from UPF Marketing Consultant, Natalie Kenny-Marquez, who was unable to attend. UPF Marketing updates include the new website, which launched in late March. Natalie has also been engaging in blog posts about once per month, and has created a Health & Wellness Campaign page for the new website. UPF also has three-month ad buys on WILL, WCIA, and Smile Politely along with electronic billboards around town and vinyl banners in various parks. New video spots for the Health & Wellness Campaign are also in the works. Targeted email blasts and mailers for the Health & Wellness Campaign will be going out soon. Natalie also

regularly posts on social media, and is always looking for new UPD/UPF content to share.

Fred noted this is a high amount of marketing activity compared to normal with almost all of it being related the Health & Wellness Campaign. The main purpose of these marketing activities is to create awareness, so when donors are approached, it is not the first time they have heard about the Health & Wellness facility project.

## 2. UPD Information for UPF Board

### a. Report from UPD Board President, Michael Walker

Michael thanked Fred and Rest of the UPF trustees. He noted that it is impressive how much time and energy has been invested in this campaign. He went on to say that when the district refunded its bonds to support both the Crystal Lake Park Rehabilitation and the Health & Wellness Facility projects that they were taking a leap of faith that the rest of the money could be raised through private donations. Michael said he was glad the district took a chance, and praised the foundation for their success in fundraising for the Health & Wellness facility. He also noted that the timing is good because the county's space needs are constrained, and they are likely to need Brookens for their own use in the near future. Lastly, Michael said that the district is very appreciative of all the time and effort UPF has put in, and at the end of the day, trustees are soliciting the gifts that are supporting this project.

### b. Health & Wellness Initiative Update

Before providing an update on the Health & Wellness initiative, Urbana Park District Executive Director, Tim Bartlett noted the district had two sculpture acquisitions at Meadowbrook Park that were funded by donors: Molecular Reflection by Christiane Martens was donated by the Ellingers and Two in the Hand by Michael Young was donated by the Scherers. He went on to say that these donations also included the UPD gallery fee and UPF administrative fee, which serve to provide extra support for both organizations. The district is very grateful to have been able to add both these sculptures to the permanent collection.

Next, Tim moved into H&W update. He mentioned that the district is working with Farnsworth Group to put together permanent plans for facility designs now that some funding sources have been secured. Staff is still conducting site visits of other H&W facilities; they are specifically looking at design, construction, and facility and program management. Tim noted that we are moving into the public phase of the Health & Wellness Campaign to engage the rest of Urbana and surrounding communities in the project. The district is pursuing a

public art piece to use as a tool for donor engagement, and as a focal point for the lobby of the new building. A donor has committed to funding it, and the district is working with an artist, Binky, on the design theme and details of the piece. She has had several art pieces displayed in the lobby of the Champaign Public Library. Tim touched on some other funding sources that have been awarded for the project: the PARC Grant of \$2.5 million and a DCEO grant of \$3 million. UPD staff is working on managing these grant schedules to maximize effectiveness of each, and the goal is to move toward announcement of a groundbreaking date. Tim mentioned that further fundraising is still critical because of the potential for construction cost increases due to COVID supply shortages, and the need to plan for that possibility. Staff is working on getting updated cost estimates from Farnsworth Group, and working on a traffic study. The goal is to lay the groundwork necessary to be ready to go when grant funds are ready to be spent in order to avoid costly delays in construction. Superintendent of Planning & Operations, Derek Liebert mentioned that our designer said we should probably plan for a 5% increase in costs due to today's construction climate. Superintendent of Recreation, Corky Emberson thanked everyone for their investment in this campaign and their commitment. Noted that this would be great for Urbana.

UPF Trustee, Sarah Nemeth asked if the DCEO grant was in addition to the PARC grant and bond funds. Tim said that it would be additional funds and described the process on getting included for those funds: essentially, Representative Carol Ammons supported the project, and sought to include us in the Capital Bill to receive funding. Tim noted that the issue now is how to acquire the funds that have been awarded to us. State processes can be difficult and opaque. Tim also mentioned that juggling the requirements of each grant would be a critical process and that the plan is to continue with the public phase of fundraising to protect against construction cost increases. Tim noted that any excess funds from private donations could be applied to outdoor amenities. Corky agreed that there are considerations for how each grant will work together. Derek mentioned that staff are working with IDNR on how the PARC grant would work with DCEO. Tim then thanked the steering committee, fundraising team, and UPF leadership for their efforts on this project.

Urbana Park District Board Vice President, Nancy Delcomyn mentioned that it is rare that a foundation raise this much money in such a short amount of time. Tim echoed that it is extraordinary, and speaks to the merits of the project and the donors, and being well coached in the process by CCS. Steve noted that the \$1.4 million raised so far has come from a mix of donors: regular donors to UPF, and relatively new

donors to UPF. This mix gives confidence that we can continue to raise another \$1.4 million, since we are attracting some new donors to the foundation.

c. Capital Projects Updates

Urbana Park District Project Manager, Andy Rousseau gave some updates on capital projects. He showed some photos of the updates at CLP including stone outcroppings, kayak launch, naturalized fountain feature, Broadway Plaza feature, new small pavilion, family game area, new playground, access ramp to new boat dock, and a shop drawing of the new boat dock

Andy then provided some updates on the Blair Park OSLAD project. He shared the concept plan that was used for the OSLAD application. Features include an 8-foot wide perimeter path and 6-foot wide interior path through the park. Other features include challenge course, picnic grove, ADA improvements to the horseshoes area, and new playground. Nancy mentioned that UPDAC was helpful on some of the ADA updates that are being incorporated into Blair Park, which is a reminder of what an asset UPDAC is to the community and UPD.

Andy also covered the Outdoor Learning Pavilion project, which was awarded a \$750,000 Public Museum Grant. This grant will cover new parking spaces with solar lighting and a new outdoor learning pavilion. Andy showed renderings of the pavilion, and mentioned that it will be useable during multiple seasons. It will replace use of the North Woods Pavilion as the main Nature Day Camp hub.

The final project Andy presented was the Phase 3 Restoration of the Perkins Road Park Site. He reviewed the drainage work, road and ditch reconstruction, along with the wetland and stockpile areas. The stockpile area had some existing rubble, which is serving as a snake habitat. He also showed some images of the construction process. Derek shared some drone video of the site, and mentioned that the Urbana-Champaign Sanitary District has been a major player in the restoration of the park.

d. Other Information

No one had any other information to present.

3. Strategies for UPD and UPF to Support Priority Projects

Michael opened discussion on this topic by asking if the district was doing enough to support the fundraising efforts of the foundation, and asked for suggestions on how the district might better support the foundation. Fred responded that he thought the partnership has been extraordinary, especially in the context of the Health & Wellness Campaign. Michael asked if this model could be sustained in the

future for other campaigns, and Fred said that he said yes, but perhaps not multiple campaigns in quick succession, due to UPF needing some time to properly evaluate the each campaign. Fred went on to say that UPF exists to serve the park board – UPF might have its own concerns, but he does not foresee a situation in which UPF would decline to assist UPD if approached. UPF Secretary, Helen Grandone mentioned she thought that it would be important to allow the public to see what went into the fundraising process as far as the Health & Wellness facility and the work it took to get there. UPF Trustee, Carolyn Trimble agreed with Helen that publicizing these things is important, and she was surprised to hear of some of the projects that UPD has been working on. Carolyn suggested letters to the editor as a way to publicize these projects. UPF Trustee, Marianne Downey noted that hiring CCS put UPD and UPF into a framework for success, and also echoed that publicizing the ways in which a public institution can benefit from private giving is important. Our story needs to be shared more frequently and with a wider audience. UPF Trustee, Jean Paley commented on the staff's skill in putting together grant proposals, and their ability to leverage resources such as UPDAC in the process.

**V. Comments from Commissioners**

Commissioner Blumthal thanked UPF and UPD staff for their efforts on the Health & Wellness Campaign, and noted the project would be a great asset to Urbana. Commissioner Digges said he appreciated the perspective UPF brings to this discussion, especially the fact that UPD's work and efforts story is not always widely known. UPD Vice President Delcomyn mentioned that someone should write Tom's Mailbag every week asking what UPD is doing. President Walker reiterated how impressed he's been with the level of energy he's seen from UPF in the past few years, and thanked them.

**VI. Adjourn**

President Walker adjourned the meeting at 8:14 PM.

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Nancy A. Delcomyn, Vice President

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Timothy A. Bartlett, Secretary

(SEAL)

Date Approved: June 8, 2021