**BELVIDERE TOWNSHIP PARK DISTRICT**

1006 Lincoln Ave. Belvidere, IL 61008 Boone County, Illinois

**Meeting Date**: 08/31/2022 Time: 11:00 A.M.

**Meeting Location**: Baltic Mill 920 W. Lincoln Avenue Belvidere, IL 61008

**Meeting**: Special Scheduled Board Meeting of Board of Commissioners of Belvidere Township Park District Boone County, IL

The Belvidere Township Park District Board of Commissioners special board meeting was called to order at 11:02 a.m. by Daniel Noble.

**Subject**: Project No. 0205-22-01-MP; Project Kick-Off Meeting/Staff Introduction to MP Process

**Project Name**: Belvidere Township PD – Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP)

**Roll call** was taken; In attendance: Mary Marquardt, Jean Twyning, Amy Nord, and Daniel Noble. Absent: Sam An

Those also in attendance were Jen Jacky, Aly Graham, Jonathan Cudzewicz, and Teri Becker Administrative.

In attendance for Project Leaders (Outside Firm(s))

Darrell Garrison (PRI) Project Director; Steven Halberg (PRI) Project Manager; Daniel Atilano – (Dewberry) Principal/Lead Architect; Jeffery Keppler – (Dewberry) Architect; Jeff Andreason – (ARI) (Opinion Polling)

Absent: Ray Ochromowicz – Executive Decisions (Principal)

**Meeting agenda**:

Twyning made a motion seconded by Marquardt to approve the agenda for August 31, 2022.

A voice vote was taken with (4) voting yes. Motion carried.

**Public comment:** No public present

1. Introductions were made with all meeting participants (see attendance above)
2. **Visioning Exercise (Responses from each board member)**
   1. **Top 3 issues that you feel the CMP should address** 
      1. Noble: Outreach to Hispanic and elderly; recreation and use of park facilities; preserve and highlight things of historical value to our community; How can we better utilize the park? Are we fully utilizing our space and facilities? Better programming
      2. Twyning: Updates to current parks and finish current parks. Undeveloped land. Underutilization of buildings; stabilize properties, rivers, creeks, roads etc. Parks are being utilized for walking, benches would like to see more program participation.
      3. Marquardt: What does community want us to do with Baltic Mill? It has been here for 30 years. Decision with public on what kind of water recreation the public would like and where it needs to be located. Over 30 acres of property with no site plans; we need to develop these sites into parks. Before we work on water recreation and Baltic Mill we need to work on neighborhood parks. William Grady Pool – many financial resources went these past years to keep the pool open. Use the tax dollars to develop the parks.
      4. Nord: Facility usage – more potential than current usage. Land, parks, buildings etc. Baltic Mill preserve historic buildings that are meaningful to the community. How to properly capture how we serve the community and meet their wishes.
      5. Jacky: 40% of residents in the city limits are Hispanic 30% countywide. We are missing serving that demographic. Marquardt: They utilize Prairie Fields but other than that there is no connection to the District.
3. **Visioning Exercise (Responses from each board member)**
4. **What do you value most about the Belvidere Park District?**
   * 1. Marquardt: Seniors value pickle ball but most participants are not from the community. Prairie Fields popular for walking path. Swinging Bridge, Hickory Bills Island, and canoe launch linked with BCCD. Family programming. We need to continue to focus on family events. Movies, nerf parties, foam parties, bringing people together. All different social economic levels in the community.
     2. Jacky: Community wide concern to get the people involved;
     3. Nord: Beautiful park and walking path and Prairie Fields.

Programming beginning with pre-school asset to the community with many compliments received. Continued partnerships with the entities in the community to grow the programs.

* + 1. Twyning: Get people to own their parks in their mind. Develop neighborhood parks and/or build new parks. Maybe make more walking paths. Strive for mental ownership among the residents.
    2. Noble: Good useable green space, ice rink, splash pad. People use the small parks. Special education offerings. Very accommodating to the needs of the participants.

**Visioning Exercise (Responses from each board member)**

1. **If you were to leave Belvidere and return in 10 years, what would you hope to see as part of the Belvidere Park System?**
   * 1. Twyning: More development on playgrounds; Big Thunder is owned by the County, have tried to get permission to work together to develop the park, would like to keep trying. Good location and potential. Marquardt: We need to qualify for grants for neighborhood parks and playgrounds. 30 years ago 50% of our funding came from the State of Illinois grants.
     2. Nord: Aquatic problem solved; Baltic Mill utilized for community events; HVAC needs updating. Continued usage and development of parks and walking paths.
     3. Noble: Special Recreation growth to handle more people, transport people and increased programming. Growth in programs with the school district and outside camps such as after care, pre-school, and outreach about other programs available.
     4. Marquardt: We need to locate and serve special needs after age 18 in the District. Reach out to see where they are and what services they need. Jacky and Graham: Description of current special recreation program and affiliates. Jacky: Inherent in the community; community meetings, minimal response on surveys; we do not have a Hispanic community leader contact. Nord: New Hispanic business group in the community maybe we could reach out to them. Identify the center of their culture and look into outreach. Jacky: We are not represented in staff or in the Hispanic community. Twyning: Ownership example of park 10 years ago that was built in a Hispanic community and the community held a thank you dinner and watched over the park for a long time. Twyning/Nord: reach out to Maria M. owner of Apollo Theatre for connection opportunity when they put up the mural.
     5. Garrison (Project Director PRI): Goal is to reach as many people as possible; representation from various areas of the community. All opinions matter. Success of this plan hinges on community involvement. Jacky: Good point….people need representation of themselves. Someone to be the face to represent them in planning. Advocate for them.

Lunch break was held from 12:00 – 12:30 p.m.

The Belvidere Township Park District Board of Commissioners special board meeting was resumed at 12:38 a.m. called to order by Daniel Noble.

**Roll call** was taken; In attendance: Mary Marquardt, Jean Twyning, Amy Nord, and Daniel Noble. Absent: Sam An

Those also in attendance were Jen Jacky, Aly Graham, Jonathan Cudzewicz, and Teri Becker Administrative and Project Leaders (Outside Firm(s))

1. **Previous Long-Range Plans and Related Documents**

Discussion on previous Strategic Plan 2010 BPD, was it successful, what has been accomplished since 2010 from that plan, lessons learned.

* + 1. Twyning: We were restricted to zoom. Much better meeting in person.

We need the previous list in front of us to review.

* + 1. Noble: Surveys and the way there were done was not successful. Needs to be more aggressive and proactive. Get the message to the community and hear their voice. Nord: We reached out to many groups utilizing many different avenues but people just did not participate. Jacky: Mid Covid could not get in front of people. Part of the demographic doesn’t use social media. Twyning: Now the pool is down we have their attention. Use this moment to capture their attention. Jacky: This will be a larger broader group not just aquatics. 45 minute presentation was too long. Need small and easy. Nord: Need partnership buy in and they could not commit without a plan and we couldn’t commit because we don’t have a partnership.
    2. Marquardt: Vehicle and playground replacement plans help with budgeting and beneficial to the District. Ice Rink was completed.

1. **What is a Comprehensive Master Plan**

Discussion on what a Comprehensive Master Plan is comprised of. A). A long range vision for the BPD; b).a 5-year blueprint for the District’s future laid out in the form of goals and action strategies; c). a compass that guides direction for the District’s decision making; d).policy document that guides decision related to land development, capital improvements, and recreation programs, e).a living document. The CMP will be a living document to help the staff plan, strategize and budget as well as apply for grants.

1. **Background of the District**

Discussion on population, median age, community profile, assets, facility assets, staff and board.

**Community Engagement Process/Public Involvement (#10) on the agenda**

Public Engagement Meetings (3) Total

Meeting # 1 Meet the Planner/Meeting (Month 2)Where are we now? What do we want?

How can the District better meet their needs? Things identified and survey results.

Meeting # 2 (Month 3) How can the BPD meet your needs? What should the District’s top priorities be?

Meeting # 3 (Month 5) This is our vison

Community Survey – Print/hardcopy, online survey or telephone survey

Stakeholder interviews, Focus Groups, District Staff Workshop, Park Board Workshop, and Community Survey performed by aQity, Social Media Campaign.

Andreason (aQity): Survey will take approx. 8-10 minutes to fill out; it will be designed and developed from information gathered in the meeting today. It will be a high level survey with a 0-10 scoring scale. What do the residents think of the Park District? What do they want the Park District to know? What do you like about the District? What don’t you like about the District? Have you been at the Park District facilities lately? Last 12 months? Why not? Do you feel facilities are safe, accessible, maintained? Which park do you most frequent? How well are your needs being met by any source in the community? Where do they get their information about the Park District? Why is the Park District important to the community? Respondent demographics: Year born, household information, race, homeowner or renter, children under 18, how long have they lived in the District. What capital improvement project which may increase property taxes would you support or oppose. Survey will have language option English or Spanish. Addresses of all residents served in the District will be obtained and 8 out of every 15th household will be picked at random to be sent a survey. This will be a good representation of the entire area. (1) Adult member per household to respond for the whole household. Survey response is controlled by pin number, only one response per pin number. The survey will be broad covering programs, services, facilities of the BPD. Request for District personnel to provide to aQity ideas on current indoor and outdoor programs to include on the survey. Information obtained by the survey will assist the District to evaluate ideas for capital improvements by evaluating community areas of support, compare results to region demographics and identify the needs of the community. Analysis will be submitted to PRI and to BPD for focus groups and community meetings. 300 minimum responses out of 5-6,000 surveys sent out.

1. **Step # 1 The Planning Process, and Deliverables**

Discussion on establishing an identity, logo related to the master plan. Project branding goal is to complete the first week of September 2022 to assist in marketing effort. Work program includes (3) phases: 1. Planning Foundations Phase – project overview; 2. Inventory & Comparison of Existing Facilities/Programs Phase – Public Participation; 3. Planning Solutions Phase – Implementation Plan. Who do we want to benchmark with; neighboring Park District’s

with similar philosophy as BPD. Looking to establish partnerships to enhance the relationships that would benefit the community. Marquardt: Would like to see formal agreements for partnerships. Stakeholders, focus groups, identify what they see as park district issues and see if we are on the same page. Marquardt: Example – Partnership BCCD important to co-exist with them. They are conservation and we are recreation. Once completed the Board would receive the draft copy to review if the plan captures the board wishes and the resident’s opinions.

1. **Step # 2 Creating the Vision – Collaborative Process**

Community visioning, developing consensus about what the community wants for the future of the Park District. Establish vision statement that captures what the community member value the most about the District and the shared image of what they want their Park District to become.

1. **Step # 3 Identify the Issues**

Identifying the issues after the survey and public meetings are held to review of previous studies, community demographics, community survey, public meeting/input and SWOT analysis. Identify District strengths, opportunities, etc.

1. **Step # 4 Develop and Evaluate Strategies to Address the Issues**

Brainstorming ideas to address goals and issues; solicit ideas from the public; develop short term and long-term actions, establish definable and measurable goals and actions. Evaluate the strategies in year one things the community can see immediately.

1. **Planning Tools**

Facilities Assessment (Dewberry Architecture)

Atiliano: Will be touring facilities with Jonathon C. of BPD. Complete a matrix on all the facilities what can be changed, improved or stay the same to bring back to the Board. Reviewing facility, maintenance, usage etc.

Halberg: Visit every park will spend ½ hour – 45 minutes each site. Will rate the site based on curb appeal, pedestrian access, playgrounds, and parking accessibility.

(3)point scoring system1 = bad; 3 = immaculate. This information will be a tool for grant assessment on where grant money can be best utilized. Marquardt: Glenn Green who to collaborate with to make better use of the property.

Atiliano: Indoor facilities…Baltic Mill, Ice House, Water Park Facility, Special Recreation and Maintenance, Administrative Building, William Grady Bath house, River’s Edge and Maintenance, Gymnasium at Meehan (rental evaluation), 3rd base program.

R. Ochromowicz not present at meeting will be reviewing current programs for recommendation on enhancements potential or expanded.

Photographic library of evaluations will be turned over to Belvidere Park District for future use.

Jacky: Working on getting aerials and City of Belvidere Comprehensive Plan

Halberg: Will be spending time with Jonathon C. and Aly G. for input. Focus groups targeted to staff and their impressions and opinions on what is working and what is not working. Capital Improvement projects review on what is coming up so they do not put into the plan.

**Schedule:**

Garrison: A preliminary draft of schedule to Jacky to coincide with the Board meetings and other meetings to attend.

**Meeting adjournment**

There being nothing further to come before the board the meeting was adjourned at 2:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Teri Becker