

In the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building on Monday, August 28, 1972, at 9:35 p.m., E.S.T. The Special Session of the Common Council called by Councilmen Behen, Fix and Towell, to discuss the proposed Park Bond issue.

SPECIAL SESSION
COMMON COUNCIL
CITY OF BLOOMINGTON,
INDIANA

Members Present:

James Ackerman, Richard Behen, Hubert Davis, Brian De St. Croix, Wayne Fix, Jack Morrison, Alfred Towell, Charlotte Zietlow.

ROLL CALL

Members Absent: Sherwin Mizell was out of town.

Francis McCloskey, Mayor; Larry Owens, City Attorney; Bill Wilson, Director of Parks and Recreation; Tim Hadenfield, Assistant to the Board of Public Works; Grace Johnson, City Clerk.

CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT

Councilman Towell explained why the special meeting of the Common Council was called. He said that when Bill Wilson, Director of Parks and Recreation came before the Council in April asking for the Council to authorize him to go ahead with petitions and public hearings on the park bond issue, the Council had reservations about the Country Club Golf Course property being part of that. He said that at that Council meeting, it was the understanding of the Council Members that the money was to go for a golf course in general and not for any particular golf course and the City was to look for the best of any alternatives available. Councilman Towell says that he has since learned that this is not possible with this kind of bond issue--that this is a Beneficial Public Works Bond Issue which means that the specific public works must be listed with a legal description of each before signatures can be collected. He said that this means that there was never any possibility of having a general golf course category on the bond issue and that the Council was misled.

He said that since then, events have occurred which have led several members of the Council to have serious questions about the advisability of the Country Club golf course as a golf course, given the development that has been proposed for the area; and as to the appropriateness of using tax funds to help the Country Club people start their new facilities.

He said that when the Council Members have voiced these concerns they have never had any evidence that the Park Board or the park administrators have looked at any alternatives, have explored other possibilities for providing a golf course, nor have they seen any progress on alternative uses for the park bond issue such as block parks, etc.

Councilman Towell said that from the reports of the recent Park Board meeting that appeared in the paper, he got the impression that some members of the Park Board felt they would just go out and beat the Council on signatures, as a response to Councilman De St. Croix's expression of possible Council opposition to the golf course. Councilman Towell said that at

that point he felt that any authorization the Council had made to proceed with the bond issue should be withdrawn until there is a chance for more communication between these two parts of the City government. He said he and two other councilmen therefore called a special meeting of the Council to bring up a resolution expressing their displeasure with the bond issue as presently drawn up. Councilman Towell said that he has since been assured that the remarks he interpreted in this belligerent way were taken out of context and in fact that was not what was intended.

Councilman Towell said that, nevertheless, he feels that the Council has been put in a position, unless it takes some action, of having considerable work done on a petition for a bond issue which we do not fully support nor understand the justification for and then have to say yes or not after considerable work on petitions has been done. He said he would like to indicate in some way at this time his bother and confusion about the bond issue as it is presently being discussed.

Councilman Towell said he would like the Council to vote on some motion to withdraw support until further justification has been made of a golf course, or block parks or some other use of \$150,000 of that bond issue.

Councilman Towell moved that Resolution No. 72-51 be introduced and read by the Clerk. Councilman Behen seconded the motion. The motion was carried by a voice vote.

RESOLUTIONS

72-51

Amy Mann read Resolution No. 72-51.

Councilman Towell moved that Resolution No. 72-51 be approved. Councilman Behen seconded the motion.

Councilman Towell said that the only reason for taking formal action was that it seems that the Council's reservations have not made any difference at all. He said that he would welcome any other weaker motion in place of this resolution if it would carry the same effect.

Councilman De St. Croix asked Mr. Wilson, Director of Parks and Recreation, what alternative plans have been laid out for the park bond issue at this point. Mr. Wilson said that he did not think they could really say what alternative plans have been laid out until they can see what was requested last Sunday (August 27) at a meeting several Council members had with Mr. Wilson. He said he did not think the Council had been misled because other areas have been investigated. He said the farm northwest of the area in question was looked at but because of the rock content it is not acceptable. He said that he thinks that every time this issue has been discussed by the Park Board, some member of the Council has been present; in addition, he said there have been meetings requested by the Council. He said that when he met with the Council on August 27, with Dr. Jim Howard, the Council instructed him to proceed with the recommendation that a map be drawn with the exact boundaries of the area that would be given to the City as part of that golf course. He said he thought that the area that had been cut off was done with the recommendation of the Council.

In response to a question from Councilman De St. Croix, Mr. Wilson said that the Monroe County Poor Farm has also been under continuous discussion, although the Park Board did not feel it was a good site.

In response to a question from Councilman De St. Croix, Mr. Wilson said that, yes he did have some alternative plans for utilization of those funds for neighborhood parks or block parks. He said he thought they could work up a listing for the Council but that these would not be true facts until they can have the properties investigated for cost and appraised.

Councilman De St. Croix said that he has asked Mr. Wilson and the President of the Park Board, several times, that before the Council is asked to consider the park bond issue, they have before them in black and white this kind of alternative. Mr. Wilson said these have not been presented to the Council because the Park Board has not gotten that far yet. He said that the first step is a declaratory resolution by the Park Board to accept the projects for the petition and that the Board has not gotten to this step because the projects have not been finalized.

Councilman De St. Croix said that it appeared to him that the remainder of the bond issue is being used as a lever to get the Council to accept the golf course property. Mr. Wilson said that this was not the case, that no lever, in any form or means has been submitted to the Council. Mr. Wilson said that he thought it is in the record of the Park Board meetings that any time before the petitions are started the Council feels that any one item of this needs to be removed in order to make the rest of it successful, the Park Board is will to do this.

Councilman De St. Croix said that he was not questioning the cooperation the Council has had in any meetings with the representatives of the Parks Department. He said that he and other members of the Council have repeatedly asked for specific detailed recommendations and an alternative plan for utilization of that portion of the Park Board bonding for neighborhood parks and block parks. He said that the Council has not yet received this and that the Council could not make a decision until such alternative plans are received. He said that before he could make a fair decision on the total merit of the bond issue, he needs facts presented as to what could be acquired in the way of neighborhood and block parks with that portion of the Park Bond fund.

Mr. Wilson said that before they can tell the Council what is available for \$650,000, they have to have the lands appraised. Mr. Wilson said they do have a list of possible sites for block and neighborhood parks, but that he did not want to even furnish this list to the Council until he is sure of what the costs involved are. He said that this would be wasting the Council's time. He said they would have the Council approve the projects before the Board's declaratory resolution which legally "kicks-off" the bond issue petitions. In response to a question from Councilman De St. Croix, Mr. Wilson said that if the Council were to send the proposed bond issue back because, in its final form, the golf course property proved unacceptable, it would probably be another 30 to 60 day delay to bring it back with alternatives substituted.

Councilwoman Zietlow said that she spoke with Mr. Regester, Corporate Counsel on the question of having two separate bond issues. She said it was his opinion that this would make it difficult to sell either one of the bonds, that it would indicate confusion on the part of the City, and that it would probably increase the interest on each of the issues.

Councilman De St. Croix said that in every meeting he has had with Mr. Olcott, President of the Park Board, Mr. Olcott has indicated that he is willing to go along with whatever the Council requests in regard to the bond issue.

Mr. Wilson said that the Council has asked to see what kind of a golf course could be laid out on the property in question and that the developers, at their expense, are having a golf course architect draw up a plan for eighteen holes. The developer said that everything over and beyond the 80 acres they will make as a donation to the City, free of charge, which could be used as appraised value for matching funds to develop the other nine.

Mr. Wilson said at any time the Council wants to drop any portion of the proposed bond issue, the Parks Department will cooperate. He said that he did think that for the \$150,000 purchase price the City would be getting a very good return on the investment.

In response to a question from Councilwoman Zietlow, Mr. Wilson said that an eighteen-hole golf course usually requires about 120 acres, that it could be done on 100, though 100 acres would make it a little tight.

Mr. Wilson said that it is not the intent of the Park Board to get anybody off the hook or to help the Country Club establish a new course. He said that it was the intention of the Park Board and the Parks Department were primarily and secondarily and totally interested in what they can provide at the best economical cost for this community through this bond issue.

Councilman Fix asked that every encouragement be given to the architect and developer to not disturb the present golf course. Mr. Wilson said they would be happy to call a meeting of the Council committee to look at the plan when it comes in and if they are not happy with it, the whole thing will be thought out. Mr. Wilson said he would suggest to the developer that the present course not be disturbed tomorrow (August 29) so that the preliminary drawings could take this into account.

In response to a question from Councilman Fix, Mr. Wilson said that once the first signature is obtained on the bond issue petition, nothing can be changed on the bond issue. He said that this is why they will come in and talk to the Council once they have put the proposal together, before the Park Board makes the declaratory resolution that starts the bond issue petitioning.

Councilman Fix said that he thought that the main concern of the Council was that they want to really know what the alternatives are before the first signature is put on the petition. Mr. Wilson said that there would be no problem whatsoever with this.

Councilwoman Zietlow raised the question as to whether the resolution would have a detrimental

effect on the bond issue if the resolution is passed. Larry Owens, City Attorney said that by itself the resolution probably would kill the bond issue but prior to selling the bonds, the Council has to pass an ordinance and that ordinance would counteract any negative effect of the resolution.

Councilman Davis said that resolution No. 72-51 does not express his opinion at this point and he does not feel the need for it. He said he felt that Mr. Wilson has been saying all along that if the Council is uncomfortable with the golf course, they will remove it from the bond issue. He said that if that is what the Council wants to say, he will say just that and he said he would be willing to say that. He said that he thought what was said by the Council Sunday evening was that they are very uncomfortable with the golf course at this point and that short of some very good plans (though not necessarily detailed), they would not be able to go with it. He said he was willing to wait until those plans come in and then evaluate the golf course. But he said that he is hesitant and thinks there is a very good chance the Council may say they will not go with the Country Club and if there are no alternatives then that would mean that portion of the bond issue would not be used.

Councilman De St. Croix said that he would like for the process of developing alternatives to be carried out informally so that if the Council decides not to go with the golf course, all that would need to be done would be to carry out the formal, legal requirements of developing alternative plans, so that the bond issue is not held up ad nauseum.

Mr. Wilson said he did not think this was a simple proposition because if the \$150,000 golf course is dropped and block parks were presented as an alternative, it would then mean picking up 8 to 10 separate parcels, each of which has to be written up in appraisal form three times.

Councilman De St. Croix said that he trusted Mr. Wilson's judgement, as chief park administrator of the City, to be able to determine the park and recreation needs of the community. He said he trusted Mr. Wilson's judgement in being able to look at the block and neighborhood park needs of the community and being able to begin to give us some kind of indicator as to where we might begin to look for those kinds of properties and where you would recommend that we would have them, and perhaps have two alternatives should the Council and the Parks Department not agree on every point.

Mr. Wilson said that he has gone over this question of location of neighborhood parks with the planner who prepared the parks master plan.

Councilman De St. Croix suggested that one of the first places to look would be the older areas of the City, and those areas of the City where the likelihood of picking up property will be lessened in the future, as development expands.


Mr. Wilson said he has met with the East-Central Neighborhood Association several times and has gotten recommendations from them. He said the east side is also critical.

In response to a question from Councilman De. St. Croix, Mr. Wilson said that yes, in the interim while this particular issue on the bond issue is being resolved, that the Council can expect that the Parks Department will not begin developing as firm as possible plans for block parks and neighborhood parks so that the Council can move as rapidly as possible on the bond issue.

Councilwoman Zietlow said that she thought the intent of the resolution was being carried out by the discussion at this meeting.

Councilman Towell moved that resolution No. 72-51 be tabled indefinitely. Councilman Behen seconded the motion. The motion was carried by a unanimous voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 pm, E.S.T.


 Charlotte T. Zietlow, President
 Common Council

ATTEST:


 Amy G. Mann, Secretary

*tabbed
8/25/72*

RESOLUTION NO. 72-51

RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE PROPOSED
PARK BOND ISSUE

WHEREAS, on April 6, 1972, the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Board of Parks and Recreation addressed the Common Council and asked their recommendation regarding a certain Proposed Park Bond Issue; and

WHEREAS, the Common Council in said meeting did consider the Proposed Park Bond Issue and recommend to the Park Board that they proceed to circulate petitions preparatory to the Proposed Park Bond Issue; and

WHEREAS, the Common Council has subsequently studied the Proposed Park Bond Issue and having found it unsatisfactory in various aspects;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The Common Council of Bloomington withdraws its recommendation to the Park Board to circulate petitions preparatory to the Proposed Park Bond Issue and expresses its dissatisfaction with the Park Bond Issue as it is presently proposed. The Common Council expresses its intention to not grant approval to the Park Bond Issue as presently proposed and recommends to the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Board of Parks and Recreation that said Proposed Park Bond Issue be reformulated in compliance with Council's recommendations.

Adopted: _____

Charlotte T. Zietlow,
Council President