

Downers Grove Community Advocates



<http://www.dgcadvocates.org>
downersgrovecommunityadvocates@comcast.net
Phone 630-963-0000
Fax 630-852-4044

Daniel McInerney
President

Megan Schroeder
Secretary

Please answer the following question and return by February 21, 2011.
Please attach any extra sheets you deem necessary.

Candidate for: Downers Grove Park District Commissioner

Name: Cathy Mahoney

Home Address: 4832 Montgomery

Work Address: NA

Phone number: 630-964-2221

How long have you been a resident of Downers Grove? 25 yrs

Web site address: NA

Do you own a business in Downers Grove? No

Reason for running for office?

The Park District is currently working on several major projects: Barth Pond shoreline improvements, Fishel Park Band Shell, and the renovation of McCollum Park. I would like to continue my service on the Board in order to see these projects through to their completion. Upon completion, the community will enjoy these park renovations for decades to come.

What are the three most important issues facing the Park District?

(In order of priority)

1. Focus on Customer Service

Greg Beggs
Michael Carter
Betty Cheever
Hilary Denk
Kathleen DiCola
Tinker Harvey
Jan Kopis
Dan McInerney
John Mochel
Nancy Peraino
Ken Rathje
Jim Russ, Jr.
Megan Schroeder

Founding and Past
Members

Stephen Daniels
Robert Barnett
George Nicholaou
Randy Stark

2. Provide programming and facilities that meet the residents' requirements. This includes coordinating with other local governmental bodies the use of each other's indoor and/or outdoor facilities.
3. Keep taxes low while accomplishing #'s 1 and 2

Previous community service or volunteer activity, include previous elected positions.

- Grove Foundation Member for over 10 years.
- Fundraising volunteer for various sports, art and educational programs within District 58 and District 99
- District 58 Education Foundation Founding Member.
- Park Board Commissioner for 6 years.

1. The Park District is often criticized for needing to improve its Intergovernmental cooperation. What would you do to improve Park District relationships with other local bodies?

A: While there is always room to improve in any area, I believe the Park District has worked on and developed good relationships with other local bodies. Recently, the Park District has worked closely with the Village in the areas of storm water improvements at McCollum and Washington Park. Many years ago, probably 10, the Park District worked with the Village in order to put up the water tower that is now in McCollum Park. The Park District has also worked closely with the Village during the recent snow storm by opening several buildings as warming centers. The Park District has worked with School District 58 for many years, at least 15, in an agreement to use field space in exchange for lawn mowing District 58 property. In addition, the Park District uses gym space at many of the neighborhood District 58 for program needs for the younger children. The Park District has a long standing agreement with District 99. This agreement has District 99 athletes using outdoor field space and the golf course at no charge while the Park District uses gym space for various programming. As a Board member, it is my position that because of the land locked nature of Downers Grove, we should all be working together to have quality facilities without much overlap or duplication.

2. After the current projects at Fishel Park, Barth Pond and McCollum have been completed, what do you see as the most pressing capital needs for the district?

A: The Downers Grove community is in need of more indoor space. The Rec Center gym space is being used at about capacity. There is need for indoor field space for programming sports such as soccer, la cross, winter practice space for softball and baseball, and other field sports. Other capital needs include, additional parking at many parks, renovating old tennis courts, upgrading lights, while doing these projects with a green or earth friendly focus.

3. What are MOU's and what is the purpose of them? Who benefits from them?

A: MOU's are Memorandums of Understanding that the Park District has with nonprofit and/or volunteer groups who provide team sport opportunities for the youth in our Downers Grove community. The purpose of these MOU's is that they manage, run, and in many cases upgrade fields to provide the best possible playing fields for their sport. The Park District benefits from the MOU's because these resident volunteer groups provide this service which otherwise would be provided by the Park District using taxpayer dollars. The MOU's maintain the fields at a higher level of play than the Park District would for recreational play. The MOU groups provide a more competitive sport program than the Park District does therefore allowing many more of our kids the opportunity to enjoy

playing at the level the kids like. Finally, the MOU's help to prepare many of the children for play as they move into high school sports. The MOU's are another example of how the Park District has developed and used relationships with other local bodies in order to provide the programs that the community is interested in while at the same time keeping taxes low.

4. What is the status of Sterling Park project? How would this be funded?

A: The Sterling North Park project is the third project after Washington Park and McCollum Park that the Park District and the Village were working on for storm water improvements. During the preconstruction phase, some of the soil samples came back with a small amount of contamination. Once the soil is disturbed the soil must be cleaned up before any further work can be done. The Village and the Park District are working through this problem which has to this point put this project on hold. If this project moves forward it would be funded in a similar manner as the storm water projects at Washington and McCollum. The Village would issue bonds for the work and the Park District would provide the land.

5. How should the Park District fund its services? How do user fees factor into funding its programs?

A: The Park District funds its services through tax dollars and user fees. The split is approximately 60% from tax dollars and 40% from user fees. The exception with in the Park District is the Golf Course. The Golf Course is an Enterprise Fund and by that the golf course does not receive any tax dollars to run its programs. The Golf Course is self sufficient and this service is at no cost to the taxpayers.

6. Given the multiple agencies in town and the shortage of field space, how do you address that problem and how do you fund any possible expansion?

A: I believe you address the shortage of field space by doing a complete assessment of current usage and future usage and then work together with all the agencies that are involved. The key to this work will be the ability to communicate accurately and have an attitude that the outcome will benefit the community. I would think there may be different solutions based on the agency and the particular type of field. It all comes down to how important it is to the respective Boards in order to work for a solution that benefits the community. As a member of the Park Board I look forward to finding solutions that benefit the whole community realizing that there will have to be give and take by all the parties involved.

7. With long time administrator Dan Cermak retiring, describe the qualities that you'll be looking for in a new Park District Administrator?

A: First and most importantly, Dan Cermak has not informed the Board of his plan to retire in any given time frame! Out of respect for Dan, I do not feel it appropriate to comment on what qualities I would be looking for in a new administrator. If and/or when that time comes, I will be more than happy to describe the qualities that will be on the top of my list as one of the Board members that will be involved in the process of looking for a new Park District Administrator.

8. What is the Park District's policy on land acquisition? What is your opinion of this policy?

A: The Park District does not have any funds allocated on a budget basis for land acquisition. This has worked well during my past six years on the Board. The Park Board has used a variety of ways to fund land acquisitions based on the amount of the purchase. Some purchases required bonds to be issued while others could be funded from within. I support this process at this time.

9. What is your favorite park? Program?

A: My favorite park has changed over the years as my interests change and my family interests change. Currently my favorite Park and its associated programs is the Golf Course.