

Hinsdale still waiting on state regarding proposed KLM Park improvements

Suburban Life Publications

November 11, 2010

By Don Grigas, dgrigas@mysuburbanlife.com

Hinsdale, IL –

Hinsdale officials say the silence coming from Springfield regarding the village's 2010 Open Space Land Acquisition and Development grant application is prompting some anxious moments.

"They say no news is good news, and I really hope that is true in this case," said Gina Hassett, director of parks and recreation for the village. "But nobody in the recreation field has heard anything from the IDNR about this year's applications, and we are starting to get a little nervous."

In late June, the village filed its first OSLAD application with the state, and expected to hear from state officials on the application status by now.

"Usually park districts and recreation agencies hear from the state by now on when they can be expected to travel to Springfield and make mandatory presentations to a review board," Hassett said.

Hassett said she was uncertain whether the IDNR would proceed with awarding funds without conducting the review sessions.

Telephone calls to IDNR spokesman Chris McCloud were not returned by press time.

In past years, the IDNR has scheduled the reviews in early fall, and notified applicants of the schedule by early October so applicants could make travel arrangements, said Todd Stanton, designer with Naperville-based Design Perspectives.

Design Perspectives assisted Hinsdale in developing the park renovation plan, and in preparing the OSLAD grant application.

"Usually by now the IDNR would already have had their review of applications, and be well on its way to making award decisions," Stanton said.

Awards are typically announced as early as December and as late as February, Stanton said.

"You'd like to know by January or February so you can move forward with bids and get the work started by the summer," Stanton said.

Hassett said the recent election may have delayed the award announcements.

"I was hoping that (the election) was it, but we still have not heard from the IDNR as of Nov. 9, although we have placed some calls," Hassett said.

In June, Hinsdale officials applied for \$147,350 in OSLAD funding, half of the estimated \$294,700 cost to make various improvements at Katherine Legge Memorial Park at 59th Street and County Line Road.

The OSLAD grant is a matching grant, and applicants must guarantee funding at least half of grant

projects from their own budget.

The village plans to use a \$150,000 grant from Lyons Township as its matching portion, Hassett said.

“The beauty of this is we won't spend the village's money if we get the grant,” said Hinsdale Village President Tom Cauley. “We are using grant funds to chase other grant funds.”

If the village does not receive an OSLAD grant, it still will reconstruct the existing south pavilion using the Lyons Township grant, officials said.

Other projects identified in the application would have to wait.

“We'll move forward on the picnic pavilion project regardless, because we already have the funding from Lyons Township secured,” Hassett said.

Hassett said bid specifications for the pavilion are being drawn up, and bids could go out in late winter or early spring for beginning the project in 2011, weather permitting.

A conceptual rendering of a new pavilion has been developed, but the parks and recreation department still must submit more detailed plans to village staff for a plan review, and the plan commission would have to approve plans as well.

In addition to the proposed new picnic pavilion, a nature playground, 9-hole disc golf course and lacrosse field also are being planned.