

Godfrey Rec Center Proposals Sought Following Split Vote

by Dalton Brown, News Reporter
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GODFREY - After a lengthy debate at Tuesday's [Finance Committee meeting](#), Godfrey trustees voted 3-2 to allow the Parks and Recreation Department to seek proposals for a rec center or gym to be built somewhere in the village.

No money has been spent yet; the department will simply ask architectural firms for design ideas and cost estimates.

Parks and Recreation Director Christopher Logan explained the goal with the facility in question is not for the village to start hosting large-scale athletic tournaments, but mainly to give sports teams from local high schools more space to play and practice.

The current plan is for the facility to house two or four basketball courts, which could also be used for other sports, as well as restrooms, a concession area, and possibly more, depending on the proposals that come forward and their associated cost estimates. An exact square footage or location is still unknown at this stage of the project.

Plan vs. Proposals

The main debate centered around what to do first: complete a new Comprehensive Plan for the village or allow the parks department to seek proposals for a rec center. Trustees Rick Lauschke and Craig Lombardi said the Comprehensive Plan should come first to create a roadmap for the village's long-term future - then, a facility like a rec center could be incorporated into the village's vision for the next five to 10 years.

Trustee Mike Fisher said local sports teams may need the extra space sooner than a comprehensive plan can be completed. Trustee Sarah Woodman added that a comprehensive plan could take more than a year to complete, to which Lauschke replied a building likely wouldn't be completed much sooner.

Mayor Mike McCormick said the village's last comprehensive plan, as well as a Parks Plan completed two years ago, both already call for a rec center, and didn't see the need to wait for a third study to say the same thing before pursuing the project.

Uncertainty Causes Split Vote

While Logan stated in his memo and multiple times at the meeting that details wouldn't be known until the department was allowed to meet with architectural firms, some trustees expressed hesitation to support the project without a clearer idea of the cost and overall requirements.

"We don't have a clear statement of what the requirements are," Lauschke said. "If we make this investment now, it should last for the future ... we should have a plan for how we're going to grow it."

Trustee Jeff Weber expressed concern that it was still unclear exactly which facilities would be included in the proposed rec center. Logan reiterated that those details and more, especially the estimated cost, would be more clear once the department has met with architectural firms.

“All we're doing is asking to talk to architectural firms to see what they could do and what that might cost,” Logan said. “I can’t tell you what it's going to cost, no - but that's why we are trying to take one more step, slowly, into contacting somebody that will be able to provide that information.”

Following the debate and discussion, village trustees voted 3-2 to allow the parks department to seek proposals for cost estimates and possible designs for a rec center. Trustees Lauschke and Weber cast the two votes against, while Woodman, Fisher, and Lombardi voted in favor. Trustee Karen McAtee was absent from the meeting.

A recording of the Finance Committee meeting and the Village Board meeting that followed on April 2, 2024 is available at the top of this story or on [Riverbender.com /video](https://riverbender.com/video).