ROLL CALL. The meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m. Present were Committee members Andre Lerman (Chair) and Vice President Max Retsky. Also present was Commissioner Bob Kimble. Staff present included Executive Director/Secretary Don Van Arsdale, Director of Operations Steve Nagle, Director of Finance/Human Resources Carol Mensinger, Director of Recreation Cheryl DeClerck, and Executive Assistant Nancy Symonds.

Members of the public in attendance included Glencoe residents: Helen and Willie Boris, 790 Bluff; Catherine Cooper, 374 South Avenue; Shawna Drobny, 1070 Hohlfelder; Walt Eckenhoff, 255 Hazel; Pat Eden, 354 Woodlawn; Scott Feldman, Village President, 1040 Sheridan; Kelly Glauberman, 1229 Fairfield; Brian Homans, 271 Hawthorn; Janet Lerman, 244 Hazel; Larry Levin, 803 Sheridan; Ila Lewis, 246 Vernon Avenue; Nancy Pollack, 700 Redwood; Barton Schneider; Eileen Sirkin, 782 Glencoe Drive; Lewis Tang, 724 Vernon; Dudley Underdunk, 228 Randolph; and Robert and Roberta Ury, 263 Dennis Lane.

Also in attendance were John Fitzgerald, 1114 Franklin, Buffalo Grove, and Alex Moritz, 2970 North Sheridan, Chicago.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES. Vice President Retsky moved to approve the minutes from the July 14, 2011 meeting as presented. Commissioner Lerman seconded the motion which passed by unanimous voice vote.

Committee Chair Lerman welcomed those in attendance at the meeting. He said one of the main purposes of the meeting was to discuss the Strategic Plan “Road Map” and then Matters from the Public. He said this was opportunity for the Committee to listen and he wanted to keep residents’ comments to three to five minutes with comments focused around the “Road Map” and no comment is good or bad.

Vice President Retsky asked each attendee to sign in on a sign in sheet.

Mr. Lerman then introduced Vice President Retsky, a member of the Special Projects and Facilities Committee, and Board Commissioner Kimble and staff members in attendance at this meeting. He indicated that Board President and Committee Member Cornell will be arriving later.

DISCUSSION OF STRATEGIC ROAD MAP. Committee Chair Lerman stated the Strategic Plan “Road Map” has been on the District’s website for public review and input since August.
At that time it was discussed at the regular Board meeting and the Board wanted to hear public comments. Mr. Lerman then asked for comments from the audience.

The first to speak was Walt Eckenhoff a 30 year resident of Glencoe. He stated he was a neighbor of Kalk Park which he considers a very active park and well maintained. He has found the District staff to be accessible and responsive and has no complaints about the Park District at all. He stated he is on the Village of Glencoe Plan Commission and the Village’s Sustainability Working Group set up by the Plan Committee to look into sustainable initiatives with Mr. Lerman. As such, he stated that Mr. Lerman asked the Village Plan Commission members and the members of the Sustainability Working Group to review the draft Strategic Plan Road Map.

Mr. Eckenhoff has run his own architectural firm for 28 years and served on a couple of not for profit organizations, specifically on the Chicago Architectural Foundation, an non profit needs a benchmark and stated there is no blueprint or road map to set goals, strategies, to review benchmarks, and priorities for accountability, and transparency. He stated it was a good document and great blueprint and a necessity for any organization to have to evaluate itself and to comeback and re-evaluate. He felt this document could be used for benchmarks for some organizations. He stated it was a positive document to let the Board forward and set goals in a way to make things move. He stated this was a platform for evaluation.

He wondered what the dissatisfaction with surveys about the District was; was it an issue or something else? He wanted to know what the dissatisfaction of the District was and at what point does the dissatisfaction become an issue? He stated there was no appendix that shows the dissatisfaction. He stated it was a positive document for the District to go forward to make discussions and set goals for the District to become more successful and more responsive for Glencoe.

Committee Chair Lerman then recognized Board President Cornell who arrived at 7:40 p.m.

The next person to speak was Eileen Sirkin stated; she is a 24 year resident of the District and an active user of the parks. She stated it was an active plan. When she got the document she stated it was almost content free and just a bunch of buzz words; she wanted someone on the Committee to address what the plan is and how it is transparent. She wanted to know if there is an actual plan.

Lewis Ting was then recognized. He stated he was a co-chair of the past caucus nominating committee and was on the committee that selected many of the candidates that are now commissioners. He said as he reflected on some of the caucus discussions, and that many of the thoughts and concerns of members of the most recent caucus nominating committee are reflected in the Strategic Road Map. He continued by stating there was lots of detail and because of that could be confusing to some. He stated transparency and accountability with the Park District is very important and each citizen of the Village should be able to fully participate in discussions regarding programs being considered and those not considered, what costs are considered. He stated transparency and process as emphasized in the plan is
important. He reviewed the process for building the new building and stated that it left somewhat of a question mark in the minds of many. He stated the plan had much to accomplish in a year, it is a good document, and the items need to be prioritized. He stated the document could be messages into a document for staff, Board and residents.

Willie Boris was the next to speak. He stated he read the 48 page document. He said the District has an excellent reputation with good programs, excellent people and the best employees. He stated the document had a lifetime of work. He stated the document needs to be more specific. He would like to have a level playing field for vendors, Glencoe Junior Kindergarten and Nursery School (GJK), Early Learning Center; the vendors offer similar programs, but different. He expressed his concern that GJK can add enrichment programs. He extended kudos to GJK and the District for good programs and doing programs in the name of the District. He continued by stating the District has a good, dedicated staff. If programs are not good, he wants to correct them.

The next person recognized was John Fitzgerald. He stated he is Commodore of the Glencoe Boat Club and not a resident of Glencoe. He has kept his sailboat at Glencoe Beach for 40 years. He appreciates that the parks and beach are made available to non residents. He realizes that fee based programs are necessary. He stated there are 50 boating families in the Glencoe Boat Club and many of the members are working professionals who appreciate the safe harbor for sailing and boating. He stated that the Glencoe Beach offers many of the amenities offered at Caribbean Islands and along the Florida and California coasts. He continued by stating it was a safe season. He expressed concern about the number of boats that are stored at Glencoe Beach but go unused. He was concerned that when beach is closed the boating beach is still open but with limited rescue services even though this is now a good sailing time.

Committee Chair Lerman then introduced Village President Scott Feldman and Village Trustee Larry Levin.

Scott Feldman was the next resident recognized. He stated as Village President, Mr. Levin and he were invited by Mr. Lerman to attend this meeting and he thanked Mr. Lerman for the invitation and he said that happens to be a fairly unusual thing and that was terrific because sometimes in the past the Village and Park District seemed as if they were completely independent and not always working together. He stated Village and District representatives have started having discussions regarding combining services to try and come up with avenues for governmental agencies to save money for all residents. He noted that this initiative of the Village and Park District finding ways to work better together is specifically mentioned in the plan. Mr. Feldman explained one item which is a current Village concern is street end beaches and in particular Dell Place beach and it might be appropriate to have one or two members interested in the item included in further discussion. He continued by stating that the plan is a spectacular document and its important to now think about prioritizing -- a similar process that the Village has gone through when it completed its comprehensive plan. Mr. Feldman continued that overall, its an incredible document, he thought it was great and he commended the board for doing it.
Shawna Drobny was the next to speak. She stated she has been a resident of Glencoe for 9-1/2 years and has three small children who have been in District and GJK programs. She said there was lots of information about preschool programs. She said she is in the Takiff Center frequently. She appreciated the opportunity for community input. She feels the new building is a nice addition to the Park District. It is a great location for birthday parties, open gym time, and she appreciated being asked for public input.

At this time Committee Chair Lerman asked if there was anyone else who wanted to speak. Committee Chair Lerman the recognized Mr. Moritz.

Alex Moritz was the next to speak. He said he a boater at the beach and was a former employee of the District working at the beach and at Watts. He thinks it is a great plan for the District and the community by which the District can become more engaged with the community and boaters and clearly designs plan. However, he was concerned that some employees are incapable of operating rescue vehicles employees’ issues are not always heard by the appropriate people. He echoed Mr. Fitzgerald’s concern that during the excellent sailing time now, there is no rescue service available. He stated it was a first step for step for more collaboration between the District and the community.

Bart Schneider said he read the Road Map and appreciated the financial operations and efficiencies and cost issues mentioned in the document.

One woman stated she read the document and thought it was extremely helpful for all residents. She knows the District and schools work very closely. She felt that was important to help maintain properly values. She thinks this is an important step moving forward to build on the things that need to be worked on. She stated it was an outstanding plan and it is a long range plan.

Board President Cornell stated he appreciated the comments from the residents. It is important to prioritize the comments and it will be difficult to say what will be important in two years; this is up to the Board and staff. He stated the Board wants Input from the residents. He would like the residents to telephone, email and mail comments to Board members so they continue to get input from the residents through more meetings. He continued by stating some items are more important than others and he looks forward to more public input.

Vice President Retsky said this document will require more action and this document is to look forward for the District.

Committee Chair Lerman thanked those in attendance for taking the time to come and express their views. He realizes that the community are the customers and they pay taxes. In addition non residents support programs. He stated this is a competitive environment. He wants to make the process transparent. He realizes it is important to get input and this document is the framework. Items need to be prioritized first and that process is never done; more discussion is necessary. The District should work better for all with programs and connecting to the customer base. This document lays the
groundwork. He stated all the Board Commissioners are volunteers and appreciate the time and commitment.

President Cornell stated there is no agenda. The five Commissioners work together and it is important to hear from the residents.

Committee Chair Lerman stated said he is here to listen.

President Cornell said the Takiff Center is complete; now it is important to get people in the building using programs.

Committee Chair Lerman stated there is a customer satisfaction survey done last year as part of the Strategic Plan Survey and how the District is doing is important.

Mr. Fitzgerald was recognized again. He said he has been coming to Glencoe Beach for many years and has made many friendships. He said there have been other area beaches which have put up road blocks and making those beaches unfriendly.

Committee Chair Lerman stated non resident participation in District programs helps to offset costs for programs and helps the community; there is a financial benefit to make things better for all customers. He continued by stating it helps tax revenues as well. He stated that is competition in the area and we need to target market to determine who goes elsewhere.

This concluded the discussion of the Strategic Plan “Road Map.”

Matters from the Public Discussion ensued. One resident mentioned the procedure for registering for classes. She indicated she has registered for many classes and has to complete information again for each registration. She continued by stating it is easier to register at other Park Districts.

Commissioner Kimble stated this could be a software issue and he knows staff is committed to improving it.

President Cornell stated he has heard this comment before. He stated the District will be looking for new software.

Another item addressed was the process for mailing acknowledgement cards for programs to confirm registration in a program.

Committee Chair Lerman stated if customers cannot register for programs or find it difficult, they will not. He continued by stating that residents are able to contact Executive Director Van Arsdale or any Board of Park Commissioner at any time about any issue.

President Cornell indicated the email addresses of the Commissioners are on the District’s website.
Ila Lewis then was recognized. Ms. Lewis stated she is a user of the fitness program and she feels it is a good program.

Mr. Boris was again recognized. He said in said most residents come to the Takiff Center and non residents might give up trying to register on line.

Commissioner Kimble indicated senior staff members will be attending a national conference soon when they will get the opportunity to look at new computer software systems.

Ms. Helen Boris was the next to speak. She indicated that years ago the Community Center was first stated of as only a preschool building. Residents are going outside Glencoe for other services. She wants to target residents to get them in the building and let residents know the Takiff Center has more to offer than preschool and children's programming. She stated it was important to change the image of the District from just serving children.

Committee Chair Lerman inquired about the demographics of program users and wanted an email data base to do a better job of communicating and to extend the reach of the target markets. He continuing by stating Oasis is offering programming for seniors at the Takiff Center which will help bring people in the door.

President Cornell stated that other Glencoe organizations use the Takiff Center as Family Service of Glencoe uses it.

Committee Chair Lerman feels the District can partner with other Village governmental agencies, like the Library and the schools.

Commissioner Kimble indicated it takes time to pull things together and to look at the number of rooms being rented.

Continuing the wide ranging discussion, Mr. Schneider inquired about the swimming area at Glencoe beach and thought it had gotten smaller in recent years and thought the moorings had been moved.

President Cornell stated it was the right size when he is there with his family and important to have the correct lifeguard coverage for patrons.

Committee Chair Lerman indicated that a recent big storm impacted the beach.

The discussion continued among the Commissioners and audience with many of them remembering there was a raft and a slide in the water at the beach.

Mr. Fitzgerald stated there should be more than two lifeguards at the beach.

President Cornell indicated the size of the swimming area might be published and marketed for next year.
Next to speak was Nancy Pollack; she began her comments by stating she retired from the District several years ago as an enrichment teacher. She stated one program from years ago was “What’s Cooking” when different people would buy food and prepare it to share with others. She said cooking demonstrations were given and she enjoyed it. Ms. Boris was recognized again and thanked the District for the 4th of July activities. She said the fireworks are great and she appreciates the support of the District for this event each year and the community loves it. She likes being able to go down to the sand to watch the fireworks.

Committee Chair Lerman stated the Village cosponsors the fireworks.

Discussion continued. It was mentioned that the Oasis program already has good programs and now many of its programs are being held at the Takiff Center and these programs will bring both residents and non-residents to the Center.

Discussion then was about the natural aspect of the District, concern about buckthorn and the Green Bay Trail.

Committee Chair Lerman stated it is important to take care of open space and the pocket parks.

President Cornell stated there is a Master Plan to take care of pocket parks and larger parks and each year these are prioritized. He continued by stating there are five Board members and if a resident has a concern about a park to let the Board and staff know.

Residents expressed an interest in having a dog park in Glencoe, but that would change the look of a park. There is a financial process involved.

Mrs. Roberta Ury was recognized. She stated she lives near a park and recently some park trees were removed and so far they have not been replaced. She also is concerned about buckthorn and what will be planted in its place. One member of the audience stated the Village has a program to buy trees to share the cost of the trees.

At 9:10 p.m. Commissioner Kimble left the meeting.

President Cornell stated it was important to look for private funding. He continued by stating he knows neighbors of parks feel they have ownership of the park and discussions cannot be made for the benefit of only one neighbor.

Mr. Fitzgerald stated that other area park district have donor programs.

Ms. Pollack inquired about the elimination of the 6-month passport program for an independent contractor. Discussion ensued and it was mentioned that each independent contractor sets its own fee structure.

This ended discussion of Matters from the Public.
Other Committee Chair Lerman again thanked the audience members for their participation at this meeting; he appreciated getting their input. He stated it was important to connect with the residents and get their thoughts and desires. He stated it was an opportunity to listen and learn.

President Cornell again stated that he would like to have residents contact the Board with concerns. He heard that patrons were not greeted when they entered the Takiff Center; he continued by stating there have been changes in personnel so that matter has been addressed. He stated it was important to let Executive Director Van Arsdale or the Board know about issues so they can be corrected.

Adjourn With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m. on a motion from Vice President Retsky and a second by President Cornell.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]

Donald P. Van Arsdale
Secretary