

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OF THE PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE, ILLINOIS
536 EAST AVENUE, LA GRANGE, ILLINOIS**

FEBRUARY 12, 2024

President Opyd called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

PRESENT: Commissioners Vear, Chvatal, Opyd
*Commissioner Posey arrived at 6:04 P.M.

ABSENT: Commissioners Lacey

STAFF PRESENT: Executive Director Jenny Bechtold
Director of Recreation Kevin Miller
Director of Parks Maintenance Eric Krueger
Recording Secretary Linda Muth

OTHERS PRESENT: Attorney Derke Price
Marian Honel-Wilson

President Opyd welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for any announcements or changes to the agenda and there were none.

Communications, Presentations & Declarations

Public Comments

None

Consent Agenda

President Opyd asked for a motion to approve Item 3.1 Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of January 22, 2024; Item 3.2 Approval of the Financial Reports dated January 31, 2023; and Item 3.3 Approval of the Consolidated Vouchers for February dated February 12, 2024.

Commissioner Vear asked for clarification of the Gordon electric expense on the report summary. Director Bechtold stated that it includes electric for the walking path, which is lit every night, and it also includes field lights for a couple of months.

The motion was so moved by Commissioner Vear, seconded by Commissioner Chvatal, and passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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AYES: Commissioners Vear, Chvatal, Opyd
NAYES: None
ABSENT: Commissioners Lacey and Posey

Staff Reports

Executive Director Jenny Bechtold

- Director Bechtold stated that she is excited to announce that we received an OSLAD grant in the amount of \$600,000. The award letter will take 2-3 months to arrive, but we can hire our professional services and would like to move forward with Wight. They are creating a proposal for the Board. Once it is secured construction plans and bid documents will be produced with construction most likely to begin in spring of 2025. Vendors typically bid lower in January and we want the best prices, and this timeline allows us to get all the documents we need. We have two years from receipt of the award letter to complete the project.
- Jenny stated that she has been working with Eric to meet with playground vendors to obtain quotes for Stone Park. We are waiting for drawings and are not required to go out to bid. The playground and concrete curbing can be done. NuToys suggested the option of a gaga pit instead of a basketball court.

Commissioner Chvatal questioned the removal of the basketball court. Director Bechtold stated that the backboard pole is teetering and refooting it may be a possibility; it is still being explored.

- Director Bechtold stated that we are working on the budget and staff have completed their spreadsheets which have been submitted to Selden Fox to develop the final document. She is meeting with them this week.
- Jenny reported that Selden Fox has filed for a 30-day extension to issue 1099s. There are issues with the W2s this year with the Incode to Paycom conversion, and we will have to send out some corrections, which we will do as quickly as possible.
- She stated that we are working to secure a vendor for the new ACA requirement for online filing. We want to secure the most affordable option and estimate the cost to be between \$500-\$2,000. PDRMA completed this filing in the past but cannot continue to do so with the new filing process.
- Jenny stated she is excited to announce that Natalie Fackelmann has been hired as our part-time business services coordinator. She has a master's degree in business and finance and previously worked at Standard & Poor's.
- She reported that the task force meeting on January 29th went very well. There was a lot of great discussion and staff took the feedback and put together updates for Wight. We listened to residents' concerns and developed an option for a multi-use field with turf at Sedgwick. The plan comes at a cost, and we are looking at a supersized plan of over

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11 million dollars. We will ask PMA and Wight to provide us with additional numbers which we will present at the meeting on February 21st. This meeting is open for two commissioners to attend. Jenny asked President Vear and President Opyd if they had any feedback on the January meeting.

President Opyd stated the meeting was very well attended and there was civil discourse with some tough questions, but he felt everyone collaborated in a positive way. It is such a big plan that includes many smaller projects that it took a long time to go through it. Commissioner Vear described it as shock and awe. He received feedback that people were overwhelmed, but it is good to put the ideas out there for input. Jenny stated that we will work with our marketing specialist to best present the plan to the public.

Director of Recreation Kevin Miller

- Director Miller reported that our athletic supervisor Zach Price is no longer with us and has moved on to a higher position with the Lisle Park District. He is currently overseeing the responsibilities of this position.
- Kevin stated that LTHS informed us of construction at south campus which will close the gymnastics gym to us for 16 months, and they indicated we may not be able to come back after. We pulled gymnastics from the summer brochure and are working on solutions for fall.
- He reported that he continues to work with affiliates and has their requests. They have been cordial and it is going well. We agreed to Babe Ruth's request to remove the language in the agreement regarding fall ball. Their season will run from May 4th through August 11th, and we will have their practice schedule in April. The language regarding the batting cages will be added back to the agreement and they will be kept locked. There is a high speed pitching machine in the cages that they do not want accessible to the public. We agreed to give them storage space on the first floor of the clubhouse for smaller items, but not for equipment. They will remove all unnecessary items and will use the upstairs to scorekeep and play music. In lieu of fees for use of the clubhouse they agreed to a higher per game fee from \$56.25 to \$73. The sticking point is they do not want to have any liability for the clubhouse or provide insurance. Their phrase was "the devil is in the details" and they want to know exactly what they are insuring.

Attorney Price explained that commercial liability insurance is necessary if you invite people to your non-home. There are risks with people coming to the premises including trip hazards, acts of violence, and hazardous substances being brought in. He stated that Babe Ruth's pushback is not reasonable and that anytime you invite the public somewhere you need to manage the risk. They must provide insurance or not invite people to the premises. When they control the premises we should not front the cost to get out of a situation when it is not our program. Their insurance would provide the District tort immunity for any kind of claim.

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President Opyd stated that he agrees with Attorney Price's position. He owns a business and pays for insurance which is not expensive. It is the cost of doing business and must be done. The amount was knocked down to \$500,000 and they have everything they need to get a quote. Director Bechtold stated that we will explain this to them again and present it to the Board next month for approval. The Board gave consensus for the insurance requirement for Babe Ruth.

- Director Miller stated that he spoke with the soccer affiliates and they prefer to book Countryside fields through us and deal with one entity instead multiples, but they have concerns with the conditions at City Park and Countryside Park. He researched the registration numbers from Countryside and provided the following:
Summer camp 2023 had 21 total registrations with 7 unique participants.
Summer 2023 general programming had 55 registrations with 37 unique participants.
Fall 2023 had 50 registrations with 40 unique participants.
Winter/Spring 2024 has 43 registrations with 40 unique participants as of 1/31/24.
Countryside residents paid \$15,354.55 for the enrollments detailed. If they were charged the neighborhood network fee the total would be \$16,890.01. The discount they received was \$1,350.00.
Kevin added that we have 77 Countryside memberships for La Grange Fitness and that those fees vary with membership options. This includes 12 Silver Sneakers members and 3 Renew Active members.

Director Bechtold stated that Silver Sneakers and Renew Active members are insurance based and the members do not pay us. The insurance pays us directly per visit so these memberships are not subject to a discount. She added that when she emailed Countryside to update them on our last meeting they started asking questions about registration numbers similar to what Kevin presented, but we have not heard back from them.

Commissioner Vear asked for details on the fitness numbers and how much we receive for scheduling fields. Jenny stated that the difference in fitness memberships is approximately \$2 per member and the total ballpark is \$1,500. Kevin noted that the amount for scheduling fields varies year to year with last year at approximately \$13,000-\$15,000 between spring and fall.

Commissioner Chvatal stated that there has been no conclusion after months of discussions. We schedule their terrible fields and then we get blamed and they will not take responsibility. Commissioner Vear stated that per the contract we do not have to fix the fields. Jenny concurred and added that they must maintain the fields but there is no language in the agreement defining it. Jenny stated that we are stuck for spring because we must provide a 90-day notice for termination, but the Board could put it on a future agenda to be changed.

Attorney Price explained that they are required to give us notice if there is field damage above normal wear and tear and then fix it and bill the District, but they do not do this. The soccer groups have said the fields have large ruts.

Commissioner Posey stated that our only involvement is scheduling soccer and Countryside knows they must maintain the fields per the agreement, and it is their responsibility to close them when necessary. If the affiliates report that the fields are terrible they should say they do not want their kids playing on them per their affiliate agreement. She questioned why it is our responsibility. We need affiliates to have teeth in the game. The fields are not up to their standards but they are not participating in negotiations and still want us to do the scheduling while blaming us for field conditions.

Attorney Price stated that the Board must come to a consensus on the direction to proceed. They are in breach of the contract. Countryside should be told to make the fields acceptable for affiliates to play and be given the affiliates' contact information or otherwise be given notice.

There was Board consensus for Director Bechtold to inform Countryside that they must close the fields when necessary and maintain them properly to standards acceptable to the affiliates or we will give notice of non-renewal.

Director of Parks Maintenance Eric Krueger

- Director Krueger reported that they are getting vehicles and equipment ready for the upcoming growing season by performing inspections, maintenance, and safety checks through IDOT.
- Eric stated that they have been helping the facilities and operations crew with projects including painting at the recreation center.
- Recent maintenance has included replacing 49 lightbulbs on the northwest side of the building which took a couple days with use of the lift.
- Eric stated that with the rise in temperature there is increased usage of the parks resulting in extra time spent on park clean up.
- January playground inspections revealed minor issues that they are working to repair or replace.

Director Bechtold added that we are moving forward with hiring an athletic fields specialist which will replace a position that was eliminated in 2023. This position will focus on fields, and we hope to have someone in place by the end of March. President Opyd inquired about landscaping around the new parking lot. Jenny stated that dormant trees have been planted, and Jeff is developing a punch list to include plantings in the spring.

Attorney Report

Attorney Price encouraged everyone to keep the pressure on the commissioners in Cook County for the upcoming vote.

Treasurer Report

Director Bechtold stated that there were no updates.

Action Items

Discussion and/or Approval of Section 126, Naming Rights Policy

Director Bechtold explained that this policy went to Ancel/Glink and this is what they recommended. It has been reviewed by staff and we would like to move forward with it for the naming of parks, recreation areas, and facilities. It includes a consideration period of 60 days.

President Opyd had no issues with the changes. Commissioner Vear asked if there was a minimum sponsorship and Jenny answered there was not.

Commissioner Chvatal motioned to approve Section 126, Naming Rights Policy. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Vear and passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Chvatal, Vear, Posey, Opyd
NAYES: None
ABSENT: Commissioner Lacey

Director Bechtold added that Little League sent information on the person they would like to name something after, and she and President Opyd discussed it. We want to look back at the history of areas named for someone, particularly at Sedgwick and Gordon, to give some backbone to our policy. We want to stay away from allowing the naming of fields. She will send it all out to the commissioners for their feedback.

Discussion and/or Approval of Amendment No. 2 to License Agreement for Storage Space, Rotary Club

Director Bechtold stated that this is an extension with everything exactly as it was. Amendment 1 was in July and this amendment extends the agreement another year.

Commissioner Vear motioned to approve Amendment No. 2 to the License Agreement for Storage Space, Rotary Club. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Posey and passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Vear, Posey, Chvatal, Opyd
NAYES: None
ABSENT: Commissioner Lacey

Discussion and/or Approval to Rescind Prior Board Action of January 22, 2024 Amending Section 234, Personnel Policies, Concerning Time Off

Director Bechtold explained that last month we discussed the updated policy developed with Ancel/Glink and it was approved prematurely. An amendment

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is going to the Cook County committee on February 28th and then to their board on February 29th. There are approximately 9 commissioners in favor of it and we hope it will go through. We would like to rescind the January 22nd approval and revisit it after the February Cook County meetings.

Commissioner Posey motioned to Rescind the Prior Board Action of January 22, 2024 Amending Section 234, Personnel Policies, Concerning Time Off. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chvatal and passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Posey, Chvatal, Vear, Opyd
NAYES: None
ABSENT: Commissioner Lacey

Board Business

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Committee Reports

Administration Committee

Commissioner Vear reported nothing additional to the task force meeting discussed earlier tonight.

Parks and Facilities Committee

No report at this time.

Recreation & Cultural Programming Committee/ Arts & Cultural Affairs Committee

No report at this time.

Public Comments (Board Manual Section #152)

None

Board Comments

Commissioner Posey congratulated the Park District on receiving the OSLAD grant and thanked staff for all the work they put into it.

Commissioner Vear seconded Commissioner Posey's comment.

Commissioner Chvatal echoed the OSLAD grant comments. He added that he knows we are shorthanded and appreciates staff taking on additional duties.

President Opyd thanked staff for attending the task force meeting and listening

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to the community. It is important to see what folks view as important. Being present was a great visual and message to the community that we care.

Executive Session

At 6:44 P.M. President Opyd asked for a motion for the Board to move to executive session for Item 12.4 Personnel, 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1). The motion was so moved by Commissioner Posey, seconded by Commissioner Vear, and passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Posey, Vear, Chvatal, Opyd
NAYES: None
ABSENT: Commissioner Lacey

At 7:50 P.M. Commissioner Vear motioned the Board arise from Executive Session and Commissioner Posey seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by Voice Vote.


The Board resumed the regular meeting at 7:50 P.M.


Action on Items Discussed in Executive Session

None

Adjournment

Commissioner Chvatal moved for adjournment at 7:51 P.M. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Posey and passed unanimously by Voice Vote.



Brian Opyd, President

Jennifer Bechtold, Board Secretary
Approved March 11, 2024