

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

MARCH 10, 2025

President Opyd called the meeting to order at 6:04 P.M.

PRESENT: Commissioners, Lacey, Posey, Weber, Opyd

ABSENT: Commissioner Vear

STAFF PRESENT: Executive Director Jenny Bechtold
Director of Finance & HR Jamie Hollock
Director of Recreation Kevin Miller
GM of Parks Maintenance Larry Buckley
HR & Administration Coordinator Madonna Giampietro

OTHERS PRESENT: Linda Pluto, John Pluto, Ray Sipla, Marge Sipla, Tish Bernhardt, David Bernhardt, Phil Moore, Brad Carter, Katie Vercellino, Jean O'Brien, Virginia Delaney, Clyde Anderson, Joy McAdams, Marian Honel-Wilson, Bill Engels

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

President Opyd asked for a motion to approve Item 2.0 to allow Commissioner Vear to join the meeting remotely. The motion was so moved by Commissioner Posey and seconded by Commissioner Weber, and passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Posey, Weber, Lacey, Opyd

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

Commissioner Vear-Joined via phone as approved

Communications, Presentations & Declarations

Public Comments (Board Manual Section 152)

President Opyd explained that the public comments are limited to three minutes and commentors should state their name and address prior to their comment.

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Katie Vercellino, 209 S. Madison, La Grange, expressed her concerns regarding the summer camp registration on March 5, 2025 and the IT readiness, as the system went down. She thanked Director Miller for handling a difficult situation that day. She also shared feedback about the time of registration starting at 8am being difficult for parents dropping their kids off at school around that time to be logged in and ready to register.

Bill Engels, 621 S. 10th Ave, La Grange, stated that 30 years ago there was an agreement about moving the basketball courts away from the current location at Sedgwick Park. He expressed his concerns about the plans for the multi-sport court regarding the option to keep the courts near the current location. He mentioned how the plans presented during the referendum meetings reflected moving the courts from their current location and the referendum with the plans presented was widely supported.

Joy McAdams, 300 S. Catherine Ave, La Grange, reiterated the concern about the summer camp registration process and thanked Director Miller and his staff on how they handled the difficult situation. She echoed the sentiment made earlier that 8am is not the optimal time to start the registration and also suggested moving our registration up in the calendar year.

Jean O'Brien, 701 11th Ave, La Grange, expressed her support for the proposed multisport court at Sedgwick to be located near where they are now. She feels they would be more accessible to people who would want to use them in the current location rather than along East Ave.

Phil Moore, 613 10th Ave, La Grange, explained that he lives 20 feet from the current location of the basketball courts at Sedgwick Park. He supports moving the courts as proposed during the referendum meetings to the east side of the park.

John Pluto, 718 East Ave, La Grange, agreed with Mr. Engels regarding the proposed location of the multi-sport court. He offered his opinion that the option to move the courts north of the volleyball courts seems like a happy medium for all residents surrounding Sedgwick Park. He expressed that his main concern was with the overall plans for the park as it pertains to the flood issues.

Tish Bernhardt, 755 11th Ave, La Grange, has advocated in the past to leave the courts near their current location at Sedgwick Park due to accessibility and safety issues, however, she appreciates the concerns of the 10th Ave. residents and agrees that the location off East Ave. north of the volleyball courts is the better option for those neighbors most impacted.

Marian Honel-Wilson, 950 8th Ave, La Grange, seconded John Pluto's sentiments on wanting to see the Park District do all it can to investigate flood

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mitigation efforts for Sedgwick Park.

Consent Agenda

President Opyd asked for a motion to approve Item 4.1 Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of February 10, 2025; Item 4.2 Approval of the Minutes of the Executive Session Meeting of February 10, 2025; Item 4.3 Approval of the Financial Reports dated February 28, 2025; and Item 4.4 Approval of the Consolidated Vouchers for March dated March 10, 2025. The motion was so moved by Commissioner Posey, seconded by Commissioner Lacey, and passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Posey, Lacey, Weber, Vear, Opyd
NAYES: None
ABSENT: None

Staff Reports

Executive Director Jennifer Bechtold

- Director Bechtold presented her report.

Finance & Human Resources Jamie Hollock

- Director Hollock presented her report.

Director of Recreation Kevin Miller

- Director Miller presented his report. He wanted to highlight summer camp registration and planning. He mentioned that the office staff did an amazing job handling a difficult situation when challenges arose from server issues for online registration. Director Miller added that he worked with Molly Downing to assess the numbers and they were able to increase the maximum number of participants in the two most popular camps.

Commissioner Posey added that it is great that we have a sought-after program, the downside was that it was difficult to register. Some feedback she received was to possibly have BASE families have a priority for registration. She said that consistently what she heard was that staff was tremendous in really trying to figure out a solution right away.

Director Bechtold mentioned that the staff did a phenomenal job, and she felt for the families who were desperately trying to secure care for their children for the summer. She added that we have been in contact with our IT provider, and we are increasing our storage and working on solutions for future registrations.

President Opyd stated that he also received feedback of glowing reviews for the staff for their flexibility and willingness to find solutions.

Parks & Maintenance Larry Buckley

- General Manager Buckley presented his report.

Action Items

None

Board Business

New Business

First Reading of the General Operations Budget and Capitol Budget for Fiscal Year 2025/2026. Allowing the Budget to be Put on Display (Minimum 30-Day Requirement).

Director Bechtold thanked the staff for turning in their budgets on time and thanked Director Hollock for her extensive work on the 2025/2026 budget. She then turned it over to Director Hollock for the first reading of the 2025/2026 budget.

Director Hollock presented the 2025/2026 budget draft.

She noted the deficit for our BASE program; with a direct competitor in most of the schools we service, the Park District is looking at ways to change our program to be competitive in our offerings and pricing. While we will be responsible in spending for the program, as it is presented it will be operating at a deficit.

She mentioned that there shows a slight decrease in recreation revenue. With the upcoming park improvements some parks will be closed and programming impacted.

Another notable item for this budget is the IMRF contributions will be less than the previous year because director Hollock's calculations were based on actual IMRF eligible salaries, not all employees' salaries.

Director Hollock explained that her methodology for budgeting is taking past historical data and being more realistic with the budget and not overinflating numbers.

Director Hollock presented the Capital Projects Plan Analysis for fiscal year 2025/2026. Items of note, the \$850,000 in revenue from the other sources section was derived from an OSLAD grant for Gilbert Park and \$250,000 that has been allocated from Illinois State Senator Porfirio. She also noted that the OSLAD park renovations line-item is carry-over money from this year for the Viola OSLAD because the park project did not get up and running until late in this year's fiscal year.

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President Opyd asked about the splash pad improvements in the list of capital budget. The Splash Pad needs some equipment repairs and Director Hollock explained that from a strategic standpoint it makes sense to close the splashpad while Gordon Park is undergoing improvements and work on the repairs so that when the park re-opens, the splash pad will have had the necessary repairs completed.

Director Hollock gave an overview of the capital budget projects for 2027, 2028, and 2029. She noted that the projected spending for 2027 looks high because there is a potential roof replacement expected in 2027. With the budget for the roof project being slated for 2027, the spending in the following two years will be less.

Director Hollock presented the analysis of proposed budget for all funds, excluding capital projects funds for fiscal year 2025/2026. She explained that revenue would be down in several areas as we accommodate the projects at our parks and offsite buildings. She also noted that bank merchant fees have gone up substantially as most fees are paid for with credit cards. Professional fees were elevated last year as we had to hire a finance consulting firm, and that cost was eliminated by having a finance director in place. It was also explained that the utilities expenditures will increase from the numbers presented as the pricing for electricity has increased significantly from what was anticipated. She explained that the pension spending was inflated by the consultation firm last year and the numbers presented for the 2025/2026 budget are more realistic.

President Opyd asked about why revenue for special events will be down. It was explained that this was due to the closure of Gordon Park for improvements, our biggest special event, Country Jam, would not be happening this year.

Commissioner Vear commented that he appreciated Director Hollock's approach to the budget with a much more realistic attitude than what was done previously. President Opyd echoed that sentiment.

Reminder of the Public Hearing Meeting to be Held on April 21, 2025, at 6:00pm Prior to the April board Meeting.

President Opyd reminded everyone of the public hearing meeting prior to the April board meeting. This will be regarding the budget.

Discussion and/or Approval of Updates to Board Policy Manual (Section 542, Motorized Vehicles and Section 740, Whistleblower Policy).

Executive Director Bechtold explained that section 542 has been rewritten. With the advancement of electronic vehicle technology, evolving safety standards, and regulatory changes, this update ensures that the policy aligns with current legal requirements and best practices. She added that the policy

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section 740 has undergone minimal updates, with the only revision being the addition of the Illinois Whistleblower Act to ensure compliance with state regulations. It was also asked to move this to section 280 to align with our policy manual.

Commissioner Posey asked how we will enforce the motorized vehicle policy. Director Bechtold explained that we can call the police if our policies are violated.

Commissioner Weber motioned to approve updates to the Board Policy Manual (Section 542, Motorized Vehicles and Section 740, Whistleblower Policy, now Section 280) as presented. Commissioner Posey seconded the motion which passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Weber, Posey, Lacey, Vear, Opyd
NAYES: None
ABSENT: None

Discussion and/or Approval of the Grant Agreement Between the State of Illinois, Department of Natural Resources and the Park District of La Grange, Agreement No. OS-25-2623.

Executive Director Bechtold stated that the Park District of La Grange was awarded an OSLAD Grant for Gilbert Park. The OSLAD program is state financed. The Park District must now enter into a Grant Agreement between the State of Illinois, Department of Natural Resources and the Park District of La Grange.

Commissioner Posey motioned for Approval of the Grant Agreement Between the State of Illinois, Department of Natural Resources and the Park District of La Grange, Agreement No. OS-25-2623. Commissioner Weber seconded the motion which passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Posey, Weber, Lacey, Vear, Opyd
NAYES: None
ABSENT: None

Discussion and/or Approval of Resolution R25-01 a Resolution Declaring Surplus Property.

Executive Director Bechtold stated that staff have determined that certain items are no longer of value or use to the district and that because of age and condition of the property cannot be utilized for the Park District's current needs. Staff are seeking to dispose of or sell the items listed in Exhibit A.

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Commissioner Lacey motioned to Ratify the trade-in value for the Aaladin Power Washer at \$800 and Approval of Resolution R25-01 a Resolution Declaring Surplus Property Listed in Exhibit A. Commissioner Vear seconded the motion which passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Lacey, Vear, Posey, Weber, Opyd
NAYES: None
ABSENT: None

Discussion and/or Approval of Temporary Construction License Agreement, La Grange Little League.

Director Miller explained the proposed updates to the bullpens by La Grange Little League at Sedgwick Park and implications for safety. Executive Director Bechtold presented that the staff recommends the Board approve the Temporary Construction License for the Proposal from Do It All Fences, Inc. dated 02/13/2025 to enhance four bullpens on Field A and B at Sedgwick Park in the amount of \$15,560 and annual spring maintenance by Simmons Landscaping Estimate Number 0010194 in the amount of \$11,400 so La Grange Little League can move forward with these projects.

Commissioner Weber motioned to approve the Temporary Construction License Agreement, La Grange Little League. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lacey, and passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Weber, Lacey, Posey, Vear, Opyd
NAYES: None
ABSENT: None

Old Business

Discussion and/or Approval of Updated Referendum Site Plans & Site Furnishings.

President Opyd explained that this is regarding the proposed location of the multi-sport court at Sedgwick Park. He mentioned that the board was voting for either option 2 or 4. He stated that there was some additional information that was gathered regarding the feasibility of soccer field in the area with option 2 north of the proposed multisport court with some regrading. Executive Director Bechtold stated that staff still recommend option 2, which is a compromise with still being consistent with what was presented throughout the referendum meetings, and moving it further north from the residents on the south end of the park near 49th Street and East Ave.

There was a discussion about the possibility of adding a soccer 7v7 or 9v9 field in the area proposed for the multisport court in option 2. Commissioner Vear expressed that if we kept the multisport court near its current location then we

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could possibly add a 9v9 field. Director Bechtold said that Wight and Co. presented a plan where a 7v7 field could be feasible with option 2.

Commissioner Posey expressed being uncomfortable with option 4 as it is not consistent with the plans shared with the public during the referendum meetings. She still feels that option 2 is the best option.

Director Miller stated that with the completion of all the field renovations we will be adding more 9v9 fields.

Commissioner Vear asked if we have had many complaints about the activity at the basketball courts in the last couple of years. President Opyd understands the reasoning for the question but explained that the condition of the current baskets does not make the current area a desirable area to play.

Commissioner Vear reiterated that most complaints he heard, references the adult players later at night. He feels that we will have better use of our space if the multisport court remains near the middle of the park close the current location. His last thought is that he does not want to congest the area around 49th and East Ave. where there is a busy truck route like East Ave.

Commissioner Weber commented on how he looked at the park and although he does not love the location near East Ave. for the multisport court, he recognizes that it is farther away from residents than the other options and he is now leaning toward voting for option 2.

President Opyd has concerns about moving the proposed location for the courts after having received 74% approval for the referendum. He is in favor of option 2.

Commissioner Lacey heard all the arguments and is in favor of the option the people voted for in the referendum.

Commissioner Posey motioned to approve option 2 for the multisport court at Sedgwick Park. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lacey which passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

Executive Director Bechtold presented the plans for bathrooms, a pergola and other equipment and features for the park plans. She also explained that we have obtained quotes for park signs.

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Commissioner Vear asked about the multi goal poles and the safety of the posts and asked for the dimensions of the multigoal.

Director Bechtold asked for a motion for approval for the Community Center pergola, the Rotary & Spring Park Shelters, the Denning & Sedgwick Park Bathrooms, park signs, site furnishing, disc golf, ping pong table, drill pickle, multi goals, bleachers, and planters. The motion was so moved by Commissioner Posey and seconded by Commissioner Lacey and passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

Discussion and/or Approval of Playground Designs for Gilbert Park, Rotary Park and Spring Park.

Executive Director Bechtold presented the staff recommendations for the Board to approve the Little Tykes Playground for Gilbert Park (Blue/Green color scheme), the Burke Playground (Blue/Green) for Rotary Park, and the Little Tykes Playground (Green/Brown) for Spring Park.

Commissioner Opyd asked for a motion to approve the playground designs for Gilbert Park, Rotary Park and Spring Park. The motion was so moved by Commissioner Posey and seconded by Commissioner Weber and passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Posey, Weber, Lacey, Vear, Opyd
NAYES: None
ABSENT: None

Discussion and/or Approval of the bid for HVAC upgrades, and ratification of the HVAC unit purchase through Sourcewell in the amount of \$236,784.

Director Bechtold reviewed the bids for the HVAC upgrades. The lowest bidder was RJ O'Neil, who is our current HVAC provider. The bid does not include the units, which is an additional \$236,784.

Executive Director Bechtold asked for a motion to approve the HVAC upgrades bid through RJ O'Neil for \$145,320 and ratify the purchase of the units for \$236,784 for a total amount of \$382,104. The motion was so moved by Commissioner Lacey and seconded by Commissioner Weber and passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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AYES: Commissioners Lacey, Weber, Posey, Vear, Opyd
NAYES: None
ABSENT: None

Committee Reports

Administration Committee

Commissioner Vear stated that he met with Executive Director Bechtold and Director Hollock regarding the 2025/2026 budget. He expressed his appreciation for the work put forward on the budget.

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)

No comments

Board Comments

Commissioner Weber stated his appreciation for the residents who came out for the meeting, and he also thanked Director Hollock and staff for their work on the budget.

Commissioner Lacey thanked residents for coming out to the meeting. She felt that this meeting was a learning experience for her in hearing what residents want.

Commissioner Posey thanked Director Miller and staff for their patience and diligence during the summer camp registration through the technical issues experienced that day.

Commissioner Vear thanked all for being at the meeting and the staff and board for putting a good effort forward for our fields and budget.

President Opyd added that he is glad we got feedback regarding the summer camp registration. He also stated that we are aware of the flood issues at Sedwick. He expressed his feelings regarding all the changes coming up for our parks and facilities that over the next couple of years we are making “generational improvements” and there will be growing pains that come along with the changes. On the other end of all the construction there are wonderful things to come even though it will be tough.

President Opyd announced that there would be no executive session tonight and asked for a motion to adjourn.

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Adjournment

Commissioner Lacey moved for adjournment at 7:57 P.M. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Weber and passed unanimously by Voice Vote.



Brian Opyd, President



Jennifer Bechtold, Board Secretary
Approved April 21, 2025