

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

APRIL 11, 2022

President Vear called the meeting to order at 6:02 P.M.

PRESENT: Commissioners Opyd, Posey, Lawrence, Vear

ABSENT: Commissioner Lacey

STAFF PRESENT: Executive Director Jenny Bechtold
Superintendent of Finance Leynette Kuniej
Superintendent of Facilities Chris Finn
Superintendent of Recreation Kevin Miller
Superintendent of BASE Leanna Hartung
Park Foreman Claudia Galla
Recording Secretary Linda Muth

OTHERS PRESENT: Attorney Derke Price
Jeffrey Braun from Cody/Braun & Associates
Todd Abrams from WT Group
Marian Honel-Wilson
School District 105 board members

President Vear welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for any announcements or changes to the agenda.

Communications, Presentations & Declarations

Public Comments/Participation (Board Manual Section #152)

Marian Honel-Wilson, 950 8th Avenue, La Grange stated she is the president of the Community Diversity Group and has been in conversations with the Park District regarding the community center and she appreciates the work done there; the kitchen looks great. She is concerned that making the washroom there accessible is on the back burner. Accessibility is important for the community, and she would like us to do this sooner rather than later.

Cody/Braun & Associates 610 East Ave Site Plan Review

The presentation was delayed to later in the meeting due to technical difficulties.

Consent Agenda

President Vear requested a change to the regular March meeting minutes. On page 6, line 3, *revenue guarantee* should be amended to *revenue projection*.

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Commissioner Opyd motioned to approve Item 3.1 Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of March 14, 2022, as amended; Item 3.2 Approval of the Minutes of the Executive Session Meeting of March 14, 2022; Item 3.3 Approval of the Financial Reports dated March 31, 2022; Item 3.4 Approval of the Consolidated Vouchers for April dated April 11, 2022. Commissioner Lawrence seconded the motion, which passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Opyd, Lawrence, Posey, Vear

NAYES: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Lacey

Staff Reports

Executive Director Jenny Bechtold

- Director Bechtold reported that she is still watching natural gas prices, which are increasing. The one-year rate is about 60 cents and the two-year is at 65 cents. We will continue to wait and hope for a decrease. Jenny explained how the swing and fixed rate options work.
- Jenny reported that she continues to work through the CMP and hopes to wrap it up soon. She sent the Board the survey results and asked for any feedback.

President Vear commented that the graphs are repetitive and difficult to review. They could be organized better with the charts combined, and for a (compiled) figure of 100% it could be put in one bar instead of five different bars.

- Jenny explained that she emailed out the tree management plan for the grant. It will be in the next board packet for approval, which is required to submit the final paperwork. It is a great plan, and she is excited to implement it.
- Chris has been working on the aboveground tanks, and we received the permit. The Village is now requiring all contractors to register with them, so it is taking a bit longer.
- Jenny stated she would like to schedule a special meeting for the bus tour of our parks and facilities that was discussed. The Board and staff agreed on August 29th at 5:00pm.

Cody/Braun & Associates 610 East Ave Site Plan Review

Jeffrey Braun and Todd Abrams were in attendance to present an overview of the latest architectural and engineering site drawings for the new parking lot at 610 East Ave.

Jeff explained that the new lot has 137 stalls. Four fenced pickleball courts will be to the west with large gates that can be opened when the area is needed for additional parking. He stated that several alternates are included so that the project remains within budget. There are alternates for the main lot, pavers, and for two short-term auto charging stations. The driveway entrance will now be on the north end with vehicles moving south to allow patrons to be dropped off from the correct side of the car without crossing in front of vehicles. The

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entrance by the underground gas tanks will be closed and the new entrance will line up with Sahler Avenue. Per Village requirements, there will be bushes all the way around the lot which will be 6-feet high in the front and 3-feet on the other sides. The pond will have special native plants. There will also be a pathway going around the parking lot.

Todd Abrams introduced himself as the civil engineer working on the development and referenced the drawing of the site grading plan for the south portion of the project, with the detention pond located in the far south. There is a little bit of fall in the bottom of the pond but not enough for Kentucky blue grass; the turf would need to be a native mix. Everything from the new lot will be routed to storm structures in the lot and then to the detention pond. It will discharge out to East Avenue with a restrictor to meet requirements of MWRD and Cook County highway. Several handicap stalls near the front entrance do not meet ADA requirements so changes will be made to the existing grades, which will be considered maintenance. We cannot change how the drainage works or we would be required to put in detention, per MWRD.

There was brief Board discussion on the existing problem of standing water in the front lot, which would remain the same or slightly improved. Solving that problem would change the scope of the project. There is not sufficient storm sewer drainage capacity on East Avenue.

Todd explained the drawing of the storm sewer layout. There will be separate volume control for the project. Two separate systems are required since the ground water is so high. There will be a 2-foot-deep layer with stone and many voids for water to fill up, which is required by MWRD to trap contaminants. The depth is at 3-feet, and the pond will be dry except during very heavy rains.

Commissioner Lawrence had several questions and comments for Jeffrey Braun and Todd Abrams regarding the site drawings.

Are the three trees in the middle of A1 being maintained or removed? The architectural and engineering drawings conflict.

Jeff and Todd will coordinate together, and they plan to save as many trees as possible, including the three large trees.

There are curbs around the lot, but she would like to confirm that there will be buried curbs flush at the edges of the pickleball courts.

We do not need to bury the curbs because the fence will act as a barrier. Concrete barriers cannot be used there because they are a trip hazard. This is the most economical solution.

Can we have curbs in the front without concrete bumpers?

The bumpers must remain due to the tight angle parking and Village requirements for wheel stoppers.

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How heavy are the rolling gates and do they lock?

They are standard 16-foot long on wheels that can be easily pushed. Jeffrey will check on the locking mechanism.

She would like to see more diversity than just the two shrub species specified and landscaping along the building.

Jeff explained this was done to stay within budget and that additional landscaping could be added in the future. The bushes on the street side will be the required 6-foot height. They can come up with a landscape plan as an alternate.

Are there detectable warnings near the walkways?

There will be tactile warnings in all areas where they are required.

Will there be flat space along the edge of the walkway to the pond before it goes into the basin?

The grade should be even. There is a 3-foot flat spot which could be increased, or the path could be shifted a couple of feet for safety.

Will the coloring on the courts extend to the outer edge? She would like the coloring to extend to the surrounding asphalt around the courts.

The colors will be selected during construction and can extend to the edges.

The drawings show portable nets, but she would like us to consider portable ground sleeves. We could also shift the courts to the outer edge, creating more space in the middle to separate the courts.

Director Bechtold commented that we do want to look at ground sleeves.

Commissioner Opyd commented on the limited parking spaces the courts would provide and how often we would need them. Jenny indicated it would be significant and estimated 30-36 weekends would require the parking.

The path is asphalt, but the drawing shows asphalt along the parking lot edge where it should be concrete, and there are sections of the pavement that do not line up.

President Vear thanked Jeffrey Braun and Todd Abrams for their presentation.

President Vear asked Director Bechtold what the status was on the emergency system. Jenny was pleased to report that after much communication with Johnson Controls, we got them to strike the subrogation and were able to sign the contracts.

Staff Comments

Superintendent of Finance Leynette Kuniej

- Superintendent Kuniej had nothing to add to her written report.

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Superintendent of Recreation Kevin Miller

- Superintendent Miller reported that the four egg hunt events this past weekend were successful and well attended.
- Kevin stated that the Park Pride event is on May 21st. Work is planned at the community center, Sedgwick, Waiola, Gilbert and possibly Gordon.

Commissioner Opyd complimented the tween egg hunt event which was moved indoors to the gym due to the weather. His daughter had a great time indoors at this flashlight hunt.

La Grange Fitness Report

- Director Bechtold stated that fitness is picking up and there are just under 1,800 members. They reactivated 27 members through a two-week promotion and hope to recruit more members at an open house to be held on Wednesday.
- Jenny was excited to report that the fitness center should surpass \$200,000 bottom line this year.

Superintendent of BASE Leanna Hartung

- Superintendent Hartung stated that she had a camp planned for March 18th but was unable to run it due to low enrollment.
- Leanna reported that BASE will provide care at St. Francis for the next school year. St. Francis requested that the program return, and she will meet with them this week.

Director Bechtold explained that SFX BASE was added back into the budget and will provide a good revenue boost. Leanna feels comfortable with staffing for the program.

Superintendent of Facilities Chris Finn

- Superintendent Finn stated that the season has begun for outdoor facility use and indoor rentals continue.
- Chris reported that the wet spring weather has delayed field use for baseball and soccer groups.

President Vear thanked Chris for the detailed rental reports. He was surprised with the areas our renters come from. Chris stated that we attract renters from all over because we are centrally located and near expressways.

Park Foreperson Claudia Galla

- Foreperson Galla reported that they are struggling to get outside to work on the fields due to the wet weather.
- Claudia stated that the Community Garden at Denning is almost filled.
- The native garden event is on April 23rd and the Arbor Day event is on April 29th.

President Vear asked if we were still planning to apply biosolids to the fields. Claudia stated they may try for later in year. It must be applied when the ground is dry and the weather not too hot.

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Attorney Report

Attorney Price stated that OSLAD received record funding, which is good news. He has been working his way through various issues with Jenny.

Treasurer Report

Supt. of Finance Kuniej had nothing additional to report.

Action Items

Discussion and/or Approval of Ordinance 22-01 the Combined Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for the Park District of La Grange Fiscal Year 2022-2023

Director Bechtold stated that a few items were revised, which are listed in the memo, and the budget is strong. Keep in mind that St. Francis BASE was added back in, and we applied for a ComEd grant. We should hear back on the grant in a week or two. Supt. of Facilities Chris Finn added that it is a big project, and the grant would benefit the District. It is difficult to budget for because the grant is not annual; ComEd offers it sporadically. Supt. of Finance Kuniej stated that she is happy with the budget. Several items were tweaked but we are still making money. She made minor adjustments to a few funds. IMRF and Social Security/Medicare were coming out of BASE and fitness, and she moved those expenses, so there will be a boost in revenue for those two items. IMRF is 108% funded as of December.

President Vear asked for a motion to approve Ordinance 22-01 the Combined Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for the Park District of La Grange Fiscal Year 2022-2023. The motion was so moved by Commissioner Posey, seconded by Commissioner Opyd, and passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

Discussion and/or Approval of 2022-2023 MBO's & Capital Budget

Director Bechtold stated that there were some curve balls at the last meeting and staff wanted to revisit the capital plan, which they did. We feel strongly that this year needs to be a planning year since we have so much deferred maintenance. We need to work on internal capital planning and the CMP. We removed the pads for the basketball courts, and per the CMP we added money for park plans. Facility repairs have been adjusted and we feel some of Tria's estimates are high, but we would like the funds available for those projects. We are applying for a ComEd grant and are working on a new agreement with DeSitter Flooring for carpet in the banquet room. We would like to make some additional updates in the banquet room to increase rentals. The budget has a projected balance of \$126,743 and we must plan carefully based on where the District is headed.

There was brief discussion on the potential for future OSLAD grants, beginning

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work on park master plans, and removing some of the items from the MBO list that have not been funded. Others will be removed because they fall under operations but will not be forgotten. The Board may consider moving away from the MBO process in the future, but not until a new system is developed.

President Vear asked for a motion to ratify the application for the ComEd grant and \$20,000 in the Capital Budget for new LED lights at Sedgwick and Gordon, pending grant approval. The motion was so moved by Commissioner Lawrence, seconded by President Vear, and passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

President Vear asked for a motion to approve the 2022-2023 MBO's as presented. The motion was so moved by Commissioner Opyd, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, and passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

President Vear asked for a motion to approve the 2022-2023 Capital Budget as presented. The motion was so moved by Commissioner Posey, seconded by Commissioner Opyd, and passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

Board Business

Old Business

Discussion and/or Approval of Leynette Kuniej Remaining Interim Treasurer
Supt. of Finance Kuniej stated she is willing to remain as treasurer. President Vear asked for a motion for approval of Leynette Kuniej remaining interim treasurer. The motion was so moved by Commissioner Opyd, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, and passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

Discussion and/or Approval of the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) By and Between the School Board of Education, District 105 and the Park District of La Grange Regarding Open Space
Director Bechtold reported that we met with District 105, some of whom are

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here tonight. They got to know the wants and needs for PDLG and the school district and talked about potential PDLG use of indoor space at District 105. The tennis courts are used by the community, but neither the school nor PDLG use the courts for programs. District 105 would like to extend the agreement for another year and use the time to work it out. We have concerns with extending it because it is not currently beneficial to PDLG. The contract is dated, and we would not take much from it for a new contract.

Commissioner Opyd also attended the meeting with District 105. He stated it was great to have an open dialogue and fact finding. They discussed that currently the fields are used primarily by AYSO and Little League, and the timing only allows for a limited six weeks of open field use for PDLG. We could benefit from using their indoor facilities but the language in the contract today does not reflect this. He appreciates their offer for a one-year extension, but it should make sense for both sides and he is not sure there is a reason for PDLG to do it. He would like to continue to work with District 105 but 1992 is very different than 2022. More conversation is needed and if we could do more with taxpayer money it would be a win-win.

There was brief discussion that indoor space could benefit our YDL program and dance recitals. President Vear thanked the representatives from District 105 for coming and stated he would like to work with them further. Further discussions are needed to explore a new contract with due diligence.

Commissioner Lawrence stated that she would like to explore a lease agreement for the fields so that OSLAD grant opportunities would apply. Attorney Price stated that the language in the contract is old. He has been working with Jenny on long-term capital planning for assets that PDLG does not own but that fit our mission. Whether we consider an IGA or intergovernmental cooperation with a shorter time frame, it must be determined who takes care of capital life cycle issues. We want an agreement that accomplishes our goals.

New Business

Discussion and/or Approval of Board Policy Updates and Affiliate Agreements

Director Bechtold stated that we have been going through the policy manual, and Section 728 was lacking details, which made it difficult to determine who does what. We upgraded this section with current language and added the affiliate agreements for soccer groups and Babe Ruth that specifies who is responsible for what. The Little League agreement is still being worked on. The new agreements eliminate confusion as the presidents of these organizations turn over frequently. Section 732 includes only soccer athletic field fees, and we would like to delete it as the fees are in the agreements. Section 738 was added to outline the policies and procedures for field use by resident and non-resident groups and individuals. The reason we are implementing these changes is to improve the quality of the fields and put a structure in place for maintaining them.

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The Board asked what the affiliates' responses were to the changes and if there were any sticking points. Chris answered that the soccer groups and Babe Ruth had few comments. Little League had a lot of questions and requests. Their situation is different because in addition to their home field use at Sedgwick, they also utilize space at Waiola, Gilbert and Gordon. Their biggest concern is the user fees, which will go into effect for their 2023 season.

President Vear stated that he receives the most complaints about baseball fields. It would be best for all parties involved to control the quality of the fields in a continuous way instead of the inconsistent peaks and valleys we have had. Chris agreed and stated that over the years Little League put their money in Sedgwick and spent very little on the fields at Waiola, Gilbert and Gordon. Soccer pays for the green space they use at those parks, and those fees, which are considered recreational, were mimicked for Little League. Commissioner Opyd asked if we need to increase staff for field maintenance. Jenny stated that this year will be a learning curve, and there is money in the budget if we need to bring in outside contractual help next year. Staff has taken an online training certification and we would like to maintain the fields and get Gordon in shape ourselves.

Director Bechtold reported that aside from the agreements, we are receiving pressure from Little League for permission to put in a third field at Sedgwick, south of the lot at 48th & 10th. Staff has concerns about green space being taken away for their exclusive use. The basketball courts would have to be removed, and support for their removal was inconclusive in the (CMP) survey. There is also the matter of potential construction at Sedgwick for underground tanks that the Village may put in. This is a planning year for us to determine what the District and the community need, and Little League wants to put in the new field in 2022. Jenny asked the Board for their thoughts.

Commissioner Posey asked if they have shown that they have the need and the numbers to support another field. Jenny answered that Little League has said they need a softball field. They previously used fields in Countryside and lost some space there, and do not want to pay for lights for additional evening games. Kevin stated that he used to coach Little League and they got all their games in with less fields. Chris agreed and stated they made it work, without the additional field use they now have at Gordon. Commissioner Opyd questioned if there is a need or a scheduling problem and stated there are a lot of different needs in the community and there should be something for everyone. President Vear stated he was not for or against it at this point but that the timing is not right. The Board would like more information on their scheduling and a demonstrated need.

There was discussion on our pricing and how other communities handle Little League, as well as the potential to share fields with them. It is concerning that the fields at Sedgwick are kept locked, and it is public land.

Commissioner Opyd referenced Section 728.4 in the policy manual and suggested that *to affiliate* be added after the word available under number 3 to

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be consistent with numbers 1 and 2. He also asked if the affiliates typically carry insurance, which is required in the policy. Attorney Price said that they do and that PDRMA has a program to assist them with obtaining insurance.

Commissioner Lawrence asked if the agreements should state that the affiliates must comply with ADA and whether verbiage should be in the agreements regarding consequences if issues arise with their field use. Attorney Price explained that ADA compliance is our responsibility as we own the facilities, which is why we are requiring them to talk to us about any potential facility improvements. He also stated that we must consider if we want to be judge and jury and impose fines for noncompliance. There are costs associated with disciplining them including legal costs. The other option is to give the executive director the authority to fine them, but then they will complain to the Board. Jenny suggested leaving it as is and we could do an amendment if protocols are not followed. Commissioner Opyd stated it was not in the right spirit to add fines to the contracts.

There was additional Board discussion that the Park District advertises for the affiliate groups, and we would like the affiliates to promote the Park District. They also further discussed the locked fields at Sedgwick Park, and whether a non-profit classification should be added to Section 738. Jenny preferred to leave Section 738 as is and revise it later if necessary. This will not come up often and she will work with these groups as needed.

The amended items discussed were 728.4 section 4, add *to affiliate* after available; page 6 soccer organizations listed Babe Ruth and Little League which have been changed to *soccer organizations*; and page 4 of the soccer affiliate agreement will have a subtitle added under field lighting for other amenities. President Vear asked for a motion for approval.

Commissioner Opyd motioned to approve Item 8.3 Board Policy Updates as amended and Affiliate Agreements. Commissioner Posey seconded the motion which passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

Discussion and/or Approval of the Deletion of Section 400, Job Descriptions, from the Board Policy Manual

Director Bechtold explained that Section 400 in the policy manual includes the Park District job descriptions, many of which have not been updated in a long time. Job descriptions focus on operations, but currently if we make a change, we must bring it to the Board. In the current climate it is important that we can update job descriptions quickly. There are about 50 job descriptions, and we have 18 full-time staff and would like to clean them up. If a change is budgetary, it would be brought to the Board, but other changes are considered operational.

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Commissioner Posey motioned to approve the deletion of Section 400, Job Descriptions, from the Board Policy Manual. Commissioner Lawrence seconded the motion which passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

Committee Reports

Administration Committee

None

Parks and Open Lands

Commissioner Lawrence reported that she circulated the draft of the CMP to the committee for feedback.

Finance & Capital Project Committee

President Vear had no report at this time.

Arts & Cultural Affairs Committee

Commissioner Posey reported that she and Jenny met with members of the Community Diversity Group and Andre Peterson from the Village at the community center. It was an exploratory meeting regarding a potential public art project at that location and there will be ongoing discussion.

Attorney Price urged the Board to remember that if we turn over space for a project like this, it turns it into a public forum and then we cannot say no to anyone for similar spaces. If we instead reach a partnership agreement, we can tag the government speech base and the doctrine protects the District from having to turn over space to anybody, except for protected classes.

Marketing/Social Media Committee

Commissioner Opyd reported that the group is progressing well, and the minutes from their last meeting are in the board packet. He hopes to have an announcement soon as the job search continues for a marketing person.

Public Comments (Board Manual Section #152)

None

Board Comments

Commissioner Opyd thanked Commissioner Lawrence for her help with the parking plan. He thanked staff for the great events, including the Touch-A-Truck which was a great success even with the rain. He thanked the Board for the open and honest dialogue and the public and District 105 for coming tonight.

Commissioner Lawrence agreed on the Touch-A-Truck event and thanked staff

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for the egg hunts. She heard good things about them.

Commissioner Posey acknowledged all the work done to review the board policy manual and purge 200 boxes of old records. She sees consolidation and efficiency and a lot of positive momentum.

President Vear seconded the comments. He commended everyone for their hard work and looks forward to the parking lot getting started.

Executive Session

At 8:20 P.M. President Vear asked for a motion for the Board to convene to executive session pursuant to Item 12.2 Acquisition of Real Property, 5 ILCS 120/2 (c)(5) and Item 12.4 Personnel 5 ILCS 120/2 (c)(1). The motion was so moved by Commissioner Opyd, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, and passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

At 8:45 P.M. Commissioner Opyd motioned the Board arise from Executive Session and President Vear seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by Voice Vote.

The Board resumed the regular meeting at 8:46 P.M.


Action on Items Discussed in Executive Session

None

Adjournment

Commissioner Opyd moved for adjournment at 8:46 P.M. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Posey and passed unanimously by Voice Vote.



Robert Vear, President

Jenny Bechtold, Board Secretary
Approved May 9, 2022