

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OF THE PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE, ILLINOIS
536 EAST AVENUE, LA GRANGE, ILLINOIS
HELD AT THE COMMUNITY CENTER
200 S. WASHINGTON AVENUE, LA GRANGE, ILLINOIS**

APRIL 17, 2023

President Opyd called the meeting to order at 6:13 P.M.

PRESENT: Commissioners Vear, Lacey, Posey, Chvatal, Opyd

ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Executive Director Jenny Bechtold
Director of Parks, Planning & Maintenance Blake Ertmanis
Director of Finance & Human Resources Cassandra Todd
Direction of Recreation Kevin Miller
Recording Secretary Linda Muth

OTHERS PRESENT: Attorney Erin Monforti
Charles Gilbert, Nancy Bramson, Ann Wohlberg
Becky Lorentzen, Marian Honel-Wilson, Regina McClinton
Freddie Dickerson, Bessie Boyd, Alice Woodson,
Patricia Topps, Cheryl Anderson, Douglas Sims,
Bernadine Sims

President Opyd welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for any announcements or changes to the agenda. He thanked the public for joining us at the Community Center and stated it was great to see them in a facility that so many of them use.

Director Bechtold congratulated Commissioners Opyd, Chvatal and Posey on their election success and thanked them for their dedication.

Communications, Presentations & Declarations

Public Comments/Participation (Board Manual Section #152)

Regina McClinton, 208 East Avenue, La Grange, stated that she is a long-time resident and knows that the District has plans to put grass in and reiterated that it is not a good use of that area, which is used for outdoor socializing during events including ice cream and popcorn stations. It is a diagonal corner and will become muddy from all the foot traffic including kids trampling through after school and cutting across from the playground. There could be

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landscape adjacent to the building, but the remainder should be paved. She added that when colleges are planning, they find out what path students are taking and that's where they pave. She provided pictures to show how the area is used.

Freddie Dickerson, 208 East Avenue, La Grange, stated that the area is not feasible for grass with the traffic and year-round events held at the center. Grass would have more upkeep with weeds and asphalt may cost more to install but the upkeep is minimal.

Alice Woodson, 112 Sawyer, La Grange, stated that with grass people walk their dogs and don't carry bags. She lives on Sawyer near the park where they have bags, but people still allow dogs to poop in her yard and on the Village side.

Dr. Bessie Boyd, 234 Sawyer, La Grange, questioned whether the Board has visited the center before. If they haven't been here to see what happens then why change it. She stated that she has rented it multiple times and the community uses it for repasses, and that the area is where people come together and talk. Promises were made for the center, including a pool, and never received. Before making a decision to take something away from them, improve it.

Patricia Topps, 114 East Avenue, La Grange, stated she has been in this town for almost 71 years and has held funerals for her family at the center, and the area has always had blacktop. She questioned if people in the neighborhood were made aware of the meeting and the plans to install grass. She brings her grandson to the playground and has to watch out for dog poop, which will increase with grass.

Bernadine Sims, 117 Washington, La Grange, stated that a lot of functions for the neighborhood are held here and people with walkers and handicaps sit in that area. It makes it easier for them to sit outside and enjoy each other when they may not be able to get into the building. They have had an ice cream truck set up there in the past. Grass would make it harder to enjoy the facility.

Regina McClinton, 208 East Avenue, La Grange, questioned when the fencing along the swings would be replaced. Kids play and run and may run into the street without it. Commissioner Lacey stated that the fencing was removed to make the park homier, and like our other parks which do not have fences around them. Regina stated she agrees with the aesthetics, but other things could be installed for safety since the park is on a busy street.

President Opyd stated that the plan to replace the asphalt area with grass was discussed at last month's meeting and the decision was delayed so the group could come here tonight to see it and hear from the community. He thanked everyone for coming and their input.

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A member of the public asked how meetings held throughout the Park District are communicated to the residents, including those without computers.

President Opyd clarified that technically during public comments the Board does not have to respond to comments, and the Board abides by rules which require that agendas are published so that the public knows. Commissioner Vear stated that agendas are published every month and are online, and there are no secrets. Meetings are open to the public and we welcome your opinions, and we are one park district for all our parks. Director Bechtold added that a copy of the Monday meeting agenda is available on Friday afternoon at the recreation center and that email blasts also go out on Fridays. The agenda is posted at the facility where the meeting is being held, so tonight's meeting was posted here. This item was presented to the Board in March of 2022 during capital planning. When you came to a board meeting, we stopped the process and did not move forward. We heard you and appreciate you coming tonight. Commissioner Lacey stated that the monthly meetings are listed at the beginning of the year and are normally the second Monday of the month. Tonight's meeting was changed to avoid conflicting with the Mason's meeting so we could hold it here. Everybody is welcome and we are always looking for ideas and we have committees that residents may serve on.

Bessie Boyd, 234 Sawyer, La Grange, asked what had caused the conversation to happen to make the change to the asphalt area. Director Bechtold explained that staff evaluated it and when we did our CMP it revealed 6 million dollars in facility upkeep and repairs. It was a smaller area and we thought grass would be nicer aesthetically with lower maintenance costs, but we have learned that the community is using it in a different way. The installation cost for asphalt is \$10,000 and sealcoating would be required every 2-3 years, compared to a cost of \$5,000 to remove the asphalt and replace it with grass. There was brief discussion regarding asphalt expenses for large parking lots at other parks compared to the lesser expense at the community center.

President Opyd reminded everyone of the protocol for public comments.

Becky Lorentzen, 103 E. Cossitt, La Grange, thanked the public for coming out and expressed appreciation for the Park District's openness to listening. They learned that if you don't say something the District will think everything is okay. Historically, certain voices have not been heard, and it builds trust in the community by listening to the voices today and changes history by all of us working together.

Marian Honel-Wilson, 950 8th Avenue, La Grange, stated that last year she mentioned handicap accessible washrooms would be nice at the community center and the District said the cost was exorbitant. She questioned if grants were explored for the process, and if not, recommended considering a handicap accessible porta-potty.

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A member of the public questioned if the Board looked at the coat room, washrooms, and kitchen, and stated that the tables and chairs are awful. They encouraged comparing the District's other facilities to this one and asked when a decision would be made and how the community would be informed. President Opyd stated that the discussion is on tonight's agenda and the public is welcome to witness the conversation.

Ann Wohlberg, 39 S. Waiola, La Grange, stated that she made a presentation at the December meeting about pickleball with suggestions for the community and would like to find out if anything has been done. We had beautiful weather, and we are the only park district without permanent outdoor courts. She plays in La Grange Park, Western Springs, and Oak Brook. It is a wonderful family oriented free activity and she urged that it be put to the top of the District's agenda.

Consent Agenda

President Opyd asked for a motion to approve Item 3.1 Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of March 13, 2023; Item 3.2 Approval of the Minutes of the Executive Session Meeting of March 13, 2023; Item 3.3 Approval of the Financial Reports dated March 31, 2023; and Item 3.4 Approval of the Consolidated Vouchers for April dated April 17, 2022; and Item 3.5 Approval of the Updated Urban Forestry Tree Management Plan. The motion was so moved by Commissioner Vear, seconded by Commissioner Posey and passed by unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

Staff Reports

Executive Director Jenny Bechtold

- Director Bechtold stated that there was previous discussion with LGBA to eliminate the fireworks at Endless Summerfest to cut costs and spend money on popular bands to increase Sunday revenue. When LGBA spoke with the carnival they said doing that might reduce revenue. Fireworks increase labor expenses for fencing and reduce parking, and after discussion our staff prefers that the District continue without them as planned but wanted to bring it to the Board's attention for their input.

Commissioner Chvatal questioned whether an outside sponsor was sought for the fireworks and how businesses responded. Director Miller answered that we only had a fireworks sponsor for the first year of the fest, but not for lack of trying. There is a lack of corporate interest, and we are a small community with the same businesses hit up for dollars from many groups. Last year we secured Uber as a sponsor, but not for fireworks.

Commissioner Vear stated that he loves fireworks, but not the cost. He

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suggested a laser light show as a cheaper alternative, which could be amazing, and agreed with not pursuing fireworks. Commissioner Posey stated that when she worked at the ticket booth, they sold a lot of tickets because people wanted to be on the ferris wheel during the fireworks.

President Opyd asked if LGBA wants to spend the dollars on fireworks. Director Bechtold answered that LGBA wants to investigate further to see what other events have lost in revenue without fireworks. Last year we had rain and shot them off early, and prior to that was COVID, so it is difficult to determine what our hit would be. She added that we have 16 Candles on Sunday as a strong band and that adding a wristband special on Sunday could attract more people. Staff would like to move forward and feel that the expense and lost revenue would be about the same, and we could evaluate the outcome of no fireworks this year and reevaluate it if we take a significant hit. We would be happy to investigate it further if the Board prefers it when we meet with LGBA again in three weeks.

President Opyd and the Board agreed that there was consensus for Director Bechtold to investigate further with LGBA and bring the information back to the next meeting.

- Jenny updated the Board on the Community Diversity Group donated art piece. They are having a design meeting on April 19th and have invited groups of people to participate that they are familiar with and have history in this neighborhood. They did not invite the Park District because they feel it is a gift that they would like to present to us. They hope to have a follow-up meeting on May 4th so that it can be presented at our May board meeting. It is a quick turnaround, but it is important for transparency to present the art to the community.

Commissioner Posey stated that Jenny contacted her for her thoughts on the District not being part of the design meeting and personally she has no issue with it. We have made the parameters clear as a public body in the initial agreement and she is excited to see the community's creative input.

- Jenny referenced the 2023-2024 goals and objectives that follow each director's written report for the Board's review.

Director of Finance & Human Resources Cassandra Todd

- Director Todd reported that she has been working to improve use of the ERP system. It is important to use the G/L system to update and justify transactions efficiently.
- Cassandra stated that the Form 941 tax filings are complete for first quarter.
- She reported that we finally received \$800,000 in property tax money in March for 2022.

Director of Recreation Kevin Miller

- Director Miller reported that the new Facility and Operation Manager Dan Schaffer has started, and the recreation department is now fully staffed. Dan has been evaluating the storage area, program rooms, rec center use, community center use, and current agreements and he has a lot of ideas.
- Kevin stated that the agreement with Hinsdale he spoke about last month has been changed. Their director spoke too soon and did not have authorization from their village to execute it. Instead of giving our residents their resident rate of \$62 for swim lessons they will receive a neighborhood network rate of \$72 which is \$5 less than their non-resident rate of \$77. They will evaluate it this year and we will bring it back to the table next year to try to reduce the cost.
- He reported that he reached out to Lyons Township High School and spoke with their AD. They are in early talks regarding what the two partners can do with using their aquatic facilities and their AD was open about the difficulty in using their facilities. Kevin will develop a proposal in the next few weeks to present to them. LTHS begins accepting applications on July 1st for aquatic use for the next school year.
- Kevin stated that he evaluated the barriers put up during COVID between the equipment in the fitness center with Dom and his staff, and everyone is comfortable with them being removed next week. They will be repurposed as barriers between the track and courts to add pickleball courts in the gymnasium.

Director of Parks, Planning & Maintenance Blake Ertmanis

- Director Ertmanis reported that work started today on the south parking lot at 610 East Ave with removal of the fencing. Parking in front of the main building entrance will not be closed until the end of May and we will E-blast and post it prior. The project is anticipated to take 10-12 weeks and his hope is completion by July 4th.
- Blake stated that he and Zach met with the Celtics soccer group. Their group has concerns about the condition of the Gordon fields which have been neglected. They were happy to hear that we will have new equipment this fall that will allow us to completely renovate the field and they offered their assistance. There is a meeting tomorrow with the AYSO soccer group.
- He reported that he has been meeting with Little League regarding various items at Sedgwick Park including bleachers.

Commissioner Vear asked if the track at the Babe Ruth fields was sprayed. Blake answered not yet, due to the cold. Commissioner Vear commended Little League for the work they did on their fields. They have a new guy who is a professional landscape architect, and he was out working on the fields on Easter. They also repaired the flag pole.

Director Bechtold congratulated Blake for passing his two certifications.

Attorney Report

Attorney Erin Monforti introduced herself and stated she is filling in for Attorney Price tonight. She had nothing to report.

Treasurer Report

Director of Finance Todd had nothing to add to her previous report.

Action Items

Discussion and/or Approval of Ordinance 23-01 the Combined Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for the Park District of La Grange Fiscal Year 2023-2024

Director Bechtold stated that the budget was presented last month and has remained relatively the same with a few edits. Director Todd reported that a new HR platform has been included to replace the outdated software used for timekeeping and the accounts reduced to capture the funds needed are listed in the memo. The new bottom line is approximately \$19,000 which is actually higher than last month.

Commissioners Posey and Vear commended staff for their work on a job well done on the budget process.

Commissioner Vear motioned to approve Ordinance 23-01 the Combined Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for the Park District of La Grange Fiscal Year 2023-2024. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Posey and passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Vear, Posey, Lacey, Chvatal, Opyd

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

Discussion and/or Approval of 2023-2024 Capital Budget

Director Bechtold stated that expenses are changing daily, and we made several adjustments based on updating pricing we received. She referenced her memo which details an addition of \$20,000 for an OSLAD application to obtain a matching \$500,000 grant to replace the playground at Waiola Park, which is next on the list for replacement. \$20,000 was added for repairs at Denning including rolling over carpet installation from last year, \$10,000 was added for fencing repair, and \$15,000 was added for a contingency fund. \$30,000 has been allocated to paving projects which will cover the three lots at Sedgwick. It also includes either option for the Community Center project, based on the Board's direction, for asphalt at \$10,000 or grass at \$5,000.

President Opyd opened a discussion on the Community Center asphalt project. Commissioner Posey stated that while there is a savings of \$5,000 in the spirit of fiscal responsibility with grass, in light of the comments heard thus far tonight her opinion has changed based on the feedback and seeing the space. She understands there are no windows in the building to watch children and

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the desire for an outside space for people to gather. Given the limitations with the age of this building it would be helpful to have a paved space and we should respond to what the community is saying.

Commissioner Chvatal stated that he appreciates staff presenting the cost savings. We have a lot of work to do and a small budget but in this case \$5,000 is a no-brainer to keep the area asphalt. Eventually there will be hard cuts and he looks forward to additional suggestions in the future.

Commissioner Vear suggested the installation of planters along the wall to protect the murals by providing distance between people and the art. Director Ertmanis stated that annuals are inexpensive and would grow well there and add a pop of color while other plants would not do well with the heat generated by the asphalt. Commissioner Chvatal clarified that the District could not promise funding for planters or landscaping along the building. There was brief discussion of the height at which the art would be hung.

Commissioner Vear stated that it sounds like the consensus is for the area to remain asphalt. President Opyd stated that he has learned a lot in the last 4-6 weeks about how that space is used by the community, and it makes sense to keep it. The renderings were nice with the grass installed but do not reflect how the community uses the area. He also likes the idea of planters, so it is not just a brick wall meeting asphalt. He added that he has been to this building many times and has seen the kitchen and bathrooms. President Opyd stated that he hears a consensus from the commissioners for paving.

Director Bechtold opened the floor to additional questions on the capital budget of which there were none.

President Opyd asked for a motion to approve the 2023-2024 Capital Budget. The motion was so moved by Commissioner Lacey, seconded by Commissioner Chvatal, and passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

Discussion and/or Approval of Policy Section 820, Employee Classification and Compensation Plan

Director Bechtold stated that with approval of the budget we have a few changes to Policy 820. With the changes in restructuring, we removed the building supervisor and changed it to a custodian which is a Grade 1. We added the newly approved marketing position but are not yet sure whether this will be a supervisor position. We also added the facility & operation manager under Grade 4 and are working on differentiating between Park 1 and 2. All staff are currently at Park 1 and the top of Park 2 would be \$60,000, however, we are not ready to split them out based on skill set yet.

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President Opyd asked if there were risks of any current staff running outside of these ranges. Director Bechtold replied that as discussed several months ago some people will hit a ceiling, but we have offered opportunities for them to grow and will evaluate it that way and consider bonuses.

President Opyd asked for a motion to approve Policy Section 820, Employee Classification and Compensation Plan. The motion was so moved by Commissioner Chvatal, seconded by Commissioner Vear and passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

Discussion and/or Approval of Resolution R23-02 a Resolution Authorizing the Transfer of Funds (\$650,000 from General Fund to the Capital Fund)

Director Bechtold explained that with the approval of the capital budget a transfer of \$650,000 from General to Capital is required. We are projecting the general fund balance to be approximately 1.2 million at the end of the year and after the transfer a \$630,000 balance will remain which covers four months of expenses. We are confident that the transfer is necessary to move capital projects forward.

President Opyd asked for a motion to approve Resolution R23-02 Authorizing the Transfer of \$650,000 from the General Fund to the Capital Fund. The motion was so moved by Commissioner Posey, seconded by Commissioner Chvatal and passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

Board Business

Old Business

Discussion and/or Approval of Affiliate Agreement Updates

Director Bechtold reported that we received the signed agreement from Little League from last month's meeting and we continue to work with Babe Ruth. Babe Ruth's agreement from last year is in the packet. When Blake came in, he felt some maintenance items should be updated and we also clarified the light fee. They recently came back with questions about the lights. Currently they are responsible for the lights, which is consistent with Little League. Babe Ruth requested documentation that they were the ones that put the lights in. A review of our records indicates that the minutes from February of 1983 reference a letter from Babe Ruth in favor of installing lights and their willingness to contribute to the cost. In March of 1983 the District went out for bid for baseball field lights and a bid of \$51,000 was approved. It appears we put the lights in, so therefore Babe Ruth is stating they should not be

responsible for them. Jenny stated she has been trying to get history as she was under the impression that they installed them. When the lights needed repair Babe Ruth would schedule it and pay. They are currently unresponsive to our emails and phone calls. We have requested their 3-year plan and what will be done this year and have been trying to schedule a walk-through since November. They may be overwhelmed with the changing field responsibilities.

Blake reported that he was there last week dragging the fields and they are not concrete but are close to being unsafe. The outfields are not level, and a lot of work and funds are needed to get them up to standard. Jenny stated that the agreement has always been that Babe Ruth is responsible for the infield and outfield inside the fence and that we take care of the warning track and outside the fences. We understand their financials are not as strong as Little League, but we need an understanding of what they are planning to do, and we are struggling to get a response. At this point the District has three options. Option 1 is to leave it as it is and try to have Babe Ruth continue to maintain the fields, although we do not believe they have the financial backing to do so. Option 2 is to consider renting the fields to Babe Ruth next year with the District taking over maintenance; it is too late for the current year. This would cost a lot of money and we would need to get pricing and have Sportsfields come out. Option 3 would be for the District to take over Babe Ruth's programming and run it in-house. The preference of staff is to rent the fields to them next year, followed by taking over the programming, and last is to leave it as it is. Options 1 and 2 would require hiring another full-time staff member to maintain the fields. We will try to get through this year as best we can but wanted to bring this discussion to the Board.

Commissioner Chvatal asked if the fields are unsafe and who is responsible if there is an injury and stated the poor conditions reflect against the District's image. Kevin answered that he would not have the fields played on as they are today. Blake added that from a risk management standpoint, Babe Ruth signed an agreement to maintain the fields during their season, which are locked so only they can use them, so it falls on them. We have also told them that when people drive down East Avenue and see them, they think it's the District's infrastructure. We would like to get control of the fields back. Attorney Monforti added that with control comes the risk of liability and that while local governments are protected there are two sides of the coin, and if we take responsibility, we should make sure the fields are playable. Kevin stated that while they are not up to our standards or the standards of neighboring towns, they are playable.

Commissioner Posey questioned how successful the program would be to run it in-house if they have dwindling numbers and stated that Little League would like to expand their program and could potentially use those fields. We need to know how often Babe Ruth and the men's group use the fields and should consider telling them they must bring the fields up to our standards or they have to leave.

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Jenny stated that based on how things were run in the past we have no idea how much time Babe Ruth is using. If we keep the fields as they are now and begin renting next year, we can generate revenue to put into the fields and we will be able to see the hours they use. The men's league pays \$5,000 for their hours, which is about \$20 per hour and a very economical rate. Kevin stated that there are opportunities to rent the fields for tournaments if they are improved but with Babe Ruth's blanket permit we do not know when they are actually using the fields for practices or games. Renting the fields to Babe Ruth would let us know when they are using them and allow us to rent them to other groups. Jenny added that Little League also submits blanket permits, and we must ask them every month how much time they actually used.

President Opyd suggested video monitoring of the fields as an option. Commissioner Posey stated that it should not be difficult for them to tell us when they are using the fields since they are scheduling teams and know when their coaches are there. We have accommodated them and asked for information in many ways, and they have not answered, and the fields now need extensive maintenance. We are at a critical point and must make a decision since it is becoming a safety issue. Commissioner Chvatal agreed that they are choosing not to tell us, and we have to react.

Jenny stated that she had a conversation earlier today with President Opyd and discussed that \$130,000 has been budgeted for fencing but we may need to reallocate it if we need to fix the fields this year and delay fencing until next year. The fields would still not be good but would be playable and safe. She stated that she left a message for the president of their board asking about the lights and telling him we need active participation and to hear back from him, and he did not respond. There is a \$300,000 difference if we take over the lights, and if the lights break, fixing the lights is not our priority. Their intentions are good, but their numbers are dwindling.

President Opyd stated that options have been discussed, and asked the Board how they would like to proceed. Jenny recommended that we work off the agreement we have this year and evaluate a new structure for next year, keeping in mind that renting the fields would require the addition of another full-time staff member. We will do our best to get the fields in shape but getting contractors to come out is difficult, and we know that Babe Ruth will not have money to put into the lights. Blake stated that the new LED lights should be fine this year, but we would need a structural engineer to assess the poles.

The Board came to consensus to operate with the current contract this year and explore renting the fields next year.

New Business

Discussion and/or Approval of OSLAD Application and Firm Selection

Director Bechtold stated that the approved budget includes applying for an OSLAD grant for Waiola Park. We did not select a larger park because the

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District does not have the financial means to match a larger grant, and Waiola was last updated in 1995-1996 and is next on the list. She reached out to several firms regarding the grant. Hitchcock completed our CMP and has landscape architects but subcontracts other areas. Cody/Braun is the architect we are currently working with, and they also operate with subcontractors. Wight is a firm that is all encompassed with in-house architects, engineers, and landscape architects and is a one stop shop. Upland Design is similar to Hitchcock with landscape architects, and they subcontract any other work. To remain consistent, we also reached out to these three firms for park planning for a proposal for a referendum plan. Upland Design informed us that they would not be able to support a proposal at this time. One of the reasons we were looking at different firms is that per park district code we must build a relationship with a new company before we move into larger projects, and this is a great way to build a relationship with a new firm. If we enter into a contract with a new firm such as Upland Design or Wight, we can build a new relationship. The OSLAD proposals came in with Wight at \$17,700; Upland at \$18,200; and Hitchcock at \$20,700. Director Ertmanis stated that he worked with Wight during his time in Darien and they are very responsive. He has a relationship with their architects and engineers and having a one stop shop is beneficial, especially with larger projects. He has run into issues with some of Cody/Braun's subcontractors.

Jenny stated this is a good opportunity to work with a new firm. She checked the references for Wight and received very positive reports from Darien, Bloomingdale, South Elgin and Carol Stream. Wight pushed Darien to apply for an OSLAD and they completed two grants in two years. Bloomingdale stated that Wight met their expectations, and they were happy to have their expertise. Wight's park analysis plan for South Elgin was very thorough. White offers construction managers in their firm, which helps with cost estimates as at times landscape design estimates are lower because they are not as in tune with pricing. As much as we have enjoyed working with Hitchcock this is a good opportunity to build another relationship. Jenny passed out rendering drawings and built plans from Wight for the Board to review. She stated that if the Board approves a referendum in the near future, one of the pieces is a community engagement firm and the firm most highly recommended is Paul Hanley of Beyond Your Base. Paul is well known in the park district industry, and she checked his references as well. He recently passed three referendums in Glenview at the same time and one in Park Ridge for an ice rink. He works under an umbrella with Wight and is part of their firm and we feel this would be a good bridge to plan for the future.

President Opyd stated that the goal is to select one firm and Jenny agreed, stating that the grant application is due August 31st. Commissioner Vear stated that he is agreeable to one firm doing it all. Commissioner Posey stated that based on the research done and the recommendation of staff she has no reservations going with Wight. President Opyd agreed and stated the work product Jenny passed out looks like quality work.

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President Opyd asked for a motion to approve working with Wight on the OSLAD Grant. The motion was so moved by Commissioner Posey, seconded by Commissioner Chvatal and passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

Committee Reports

Administration Committee

No report at this time.

Parks and Facilities Committee

No report at this time.

Recreation & Cultural Programming Committee/ Arts & Cultural Affairs Committee

Commissioner Posey had nothing additional to the discussion earlier in the meeting.

Public Comments (Board Manual Section #152)

Freddy Dickerson, 208 East Avenue, La Grange, stated his grandson loves fireworks and asked that they remain as part of the Endless Summerfest and suggested using the business community and residents to sponsor them, possibly with a Go Fund Me with a target instead of one corporate sponsor.

Bessie Boyd, 234 Sawyer, La Grange, thanked the Board for the decision to continue with the asphalt and stated she looks forward to having a relationship with the Park District Board. She echoed the support for fireworks and understands the cost but urged being creative for the dollars. The bands at the fest the last three years have not interested her but she enjoyed The Spinners years ago.

Pat Thompson, 114 East Avenue, La Grange, asked that someone come to the center to see what needs to be done when budgeting for next year. She is concerned about the floors, bathrooms and kitchen and stated it is the last to get anything done compared to other locations, especially Gilbert. Director Bechtold replied that we have a lot of facilities and parks that are not in good condition, and we hear your feedback. President Opyd added that this facility is much nicer than Gilbert.

Alice Woodson, 112 Sawyer, La Grange, stated she lives next to the tot park and asked what would be done about the rusted pavilion and whether it is safe for kids and requested that a no baseball sign be installed to avoid damage to her windows. Director Ertmanis stated that due to limited access to the pavilion all the playground equipment would have to be removed to replace it. It is on our radar but there are a lot of moving parts, and he suggested moving the pavilion to the front in the future. He stated that the park is inspected

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monthly, and it is safe. He will check into a no baseball sign.

Bessie Boyd stated she lives on Sawyer behind the old lumber yard and asked what is planned for the area. She heard that the Park District owns the land now. President Opyd stated the area is privately owned. Director Bechtold explained that we do not own the land, but a donation was investigated, and environmental testing revealed that the land is not suitable for a park. The owner would need to remediate the land before coming back to us, which is very expensive.

Regina McClinton, 208 East Avenue, La Grange, expressed appreciation that the meeting was held here so the public could come, and the Board could see the facility. She hopes there is another opportunity to hold a meeting here. Director Bechtold stated that another meeting would be held here on the third Monday in August.

President thanked the public for participating in the meeting this evening.

Board Comments

Commissioner Chvatal stated he appreciates staff bringing tough decisions to the Board which allows for community discussion. The Board visited every building and park, and he knows facilities need updating throughout the community. He would love to update all of them, but we have tight budget constraints.

Commissioner Posey echoed Commissioner Chvatal's comments. She stated she has been on the Board for almost two years, and we have a lot of new faces at the Park District. A lot of work has been done that she is excited about with leadership and creative thinking going into improvements in the parks. She is thrilled with this meeting, which is the most engaged meeting she has ever attended, and that is what local government should be about. She is happy staff made arrangements to meet here a couple times a year because we do want to engage the public, and the commissioners and staff cannot do their jobs without them, including the OSLAD grant and referendum.

Commissioner Vear apologized for delaying the committee meeting due to a schedule conflict. He enjoyed having the meeting here with the public and would like to meet in different locations in the future. If we can't get the public to come to us, then we'll bring the meetings to them. He stated he likes people to be present and encouraged the public to come to the meetings at the recreation center.

Commissioner Lacey said ditto, she is so glad to see the public and for the different opinions she heard tonight. A survey showed the difference between Rotary Park and the Community Center, and people want the same things in each neighborhood. She urged the public to come out and send emails; we are listening and making changes to satisfy the community.

REGULAR BOARD MEETING – APRIL 17, 2023

President Opyd stated he is impressed with how much this Board tries to learn during the process. He gave credit to Director Bechtold for finding a memo from 1983. Staff do their homework so the Board can make decisions based on fact. He added that we are still looking at pickleball and thanked the public for coming. It makes a difference to hear from them in their own words. The Board is 5 people representing 15,000 and he appreciates their efforts so that the Board gets it right.

President Opyd announced that the Board was moving to closed session and the public was welcome to rejoin the meeting afterward.

President Opyd asked for a motion for the Board to move to executive session for Item 12.4 Personnel and Item 12.7 Selection of a Person to Fill a Public Office Vacancy.

Executive Session

At 8:24 P.M. Commissioner Vear motioned for the Board to convene to executive session pursuant to Item 12.4 Personnel 5 ILCS 120/2 (c)(1) and Item 12.7 Selection of a Person to Fill a Public Office Vacancy 5 ILCS 120/2 (c)(3). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chvatal and passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

At 9:00 P.M. Commissioner Vear motioned the Board arise from Executive Session and Commissioner Chvatal seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by Voice Vote.


The Board resumed the regular meeting at 9:00 P.M.

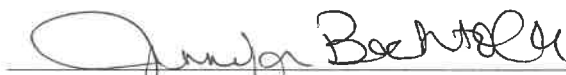
Action on Items Discussed in Executive Session

None

Adjournment

Commissioner Lacey moved for adjournment at 9:01 P.M. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Posey and passed unanimously by Voice Vote.



Brian Opyd, President

Jennifer Bechtold, Board Secretary
Approved May 8, 2023