

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OF THE PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE, ILLINOIS
200 SOUTH WASHINGTON AVE, LA GRANGE, ILLINOIS**

JULY 15, 2024

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

PRESENT: Commissioners Vear, Lacey, Weber, Opyd

ABSENT: Commissioner Posey

STAFF PRESENT: Executive Director Jenny Bechtold
Director of Finance Jamie Hollock
Director of Recreation Kevin Miller
Director of Parks Maintenance Eric Krueger
HR & Administrative Assistant Adam Kopera

OTHERS PRESENT: Attorney Erin Monforti
Patty King Wight & Company
John Pluto
John Links
Mony Chabria
Rose Naseef
Linda Christianson
Molly Price
Becky Lorentzen
Harold Gibson
Curt Hansman
Gloria Stephenson

Convening the Meeting

President Opyd welcomed everyone to the meeting and according to the agenda, initiated the vote for appointment of Adam Kopera to Recording Secretary; so moved by Commissioner Vear, Seconded by Commissioner Weber.

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

Communications, Presentations & Declarations

Public Comments (Board Manual Section #152)

President Opyd mentioned to limit comments to three minutes and state your name and address. No Public Comments were made at this time.

2024 Park Plan Proposal Updates; Patty King (Wight & Company)

Executive Director Bechtold and Patty King opened with a presentation of the updated 2024 park plans, all of which were entailed on Memorandum M24-031.

Patty King reiterated the plan to not remove any trees but is a realist in terms that some trees may not survive around construction activities, but they will do whatever they can to do the least amount of harm.

It was stated that if any trees are on the invasive species they are to be removed and replaced with noninvasive trees.

Discussions on the need for asphalt or crushed limestone were brought to the table. Director Bechtold shared the cost estimates to asphalt the pathway is \$648K, limestone with edging is \$738,600, limestone without edging \$482,000. Director Bechtold clarified that asphaltting the path will not trigger detention due to the pathway being less than 14 feet wide, although limestone pathways are ADA approved, they are difficult to maneuver when they are wet for strollers, wheelchairs, as well as just general walking. The upkeep of the limestone pathway includes edging, spraying & weeding, as well as repairing pathways due to washouts from the rain. She also added that we do plow the limestone pathway in the winter. Bechtold stressed that we do not have the manpower to maintain the limestone pathway with our current staffing level. Bechtold stated that staff would recommend keeping the asphalted path in the plans.

President Opyd brought up the possible need on additional detention/retention for Sedgwick within the plans. Patty King from Wight & Company stated that with the latest information from MWRD and recent determination letters from other projects, Wight & Company feels additional detention or retention will not be required. There are some water quality items that will need to be included, examples given were rain gardens or perennial gardens that will help absorb the water.

Director Bechtold explained we need consensus for the plans for the Referendum Resolution and the OSLAD Grant.

Commissioner Weber inquired what multi-generational recreation games would be installed at Gilbert Park. Director Bechtold explained the specific type of

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games would be decided at a later date. Commissioner Weber suggested the restrooms at Sedgwick Park be moved over by the Little League fields. Director Bechtold explained that we were keeping them close to utilities as well as centrally located for all park users.

Commissioner Vear brought the discussion towards the paths at Sedgwick, mentioned that many runners prefer limestone to asphalt, and that asphalt harms the runner more than limestone. There are more runners than baseball or pickleball players and feels we should have a resource for runners to use. Commissioner Vear would like to keep the pathway limestone.

Director Bechtold explained that there are concerns about being able to maintain the limestone pathway and we may need to hire additional staff, and informed the Board that if it is left limestone there will be financial implications for wages and repairing the limestone pathway regularly.

President Opyd also stresses the importance of keeping a resource for runners and would prefer to keep limestone, while he understands asphalt is less maintenance, he would like to keep it limestone.

Commissioner Vear stated that once the limestone pathway is properly constructed, he feels maintenance should be reduced.

Director Bechtold deferred to Patty King to inquire if that was a correct statement. Patty said that the fact that our limestone pathway is not compacted at this stage makes her pause. She stated the pathway is old and the fact we are still having washouts makes her pause. Constructing it properly, along with keeping it level will help. She stated that the limestone pathway is always going to need maintenance. She referenced the survey and the high priority of residents wanting pathways.

Director Bechtold stated that we can move forward with whatever pathway surface the board decides but they need to understand if left limestone there will be additional costs for maintenance and wages.

Commissioner Weber brought up the restrooms again and inquired if they could be split, putting two closer to Little League attaching to the Little League building. Patty King said they would not recommend attaching it to their current building as what is priced is a prefabricated building. Attaching to the current building would cause more problems in the long run. Director Bechtold stated that the goal is to keep them centrally located within the 22-acre park.

Director Bechtold stated that we do need to firm up the plans and the location of the restrooms would make a difference. President Opyd stated that he feels keeping the restrooms centrally located is in the best interest of the plans. Commissioner Weber commented that it is a good first step having a restroom

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facility for families to use.

President Opyd mentioned he had a lot of reflection after the last meeting on the dog park proposal. He brought up that the dog park was a high priority in previous surveys but struggles with it being so low on the current survey. He inquired if keeping the soccer field would be more beneficial for the community.

Director Bechtold reminded him that we are adding a soccer field at Denning, so it is being replaced. Director Miller mentioned keeping the soccer field at Gordon would help with field restoration and rotating which fields can be closed for repairs. Director Miller also explained that from a coaching perspective the affiliates prefer to have their coaches in one location so they can easily coach at one location on different fields.

President Opyd stated that the ballot language is neutral and would not require us to put a dog park in but just wanted it to be on people's radars. He wants to make sure that we are adding amenities the community wants.

Director Bechtold reminded the Board that on the current survey it ranked 8 out of 13 amenities, and moved down to 11 out of 13 with the ones and twos added in. The survey showed the dog park was a lower priority for residents coming in 47% compared to 34% for a high priority. Patty King revealed that the cost estimate for the dog park is approximately \$250K.

Consent Agenda

President Opyd asked for a motion to approve Item 3.1 Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of June 10, 2024; Item 3.2 Approval of the Financial Reports dated June 30, 2024; Item 3.3 Approval of the Consolidated Vouchers for July dated July 15, 2024.

The motion was so moved by Commissioner Weber, seconded by Commissioner Vear and passed unanimously by roll call vote.

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

Staff Reports

Executive Director Jenny Bechtold

- Director Bechtold presented her report.

Director of Finance, Jamie Hollock

- Director Hollock presented her report.

Director of Recreation Kevin Miller

- Director Miller presented his report and addressed questions.

Director of Parks Maintenance Eric Krueger

- Director Krueger presented his report.

Attorney Report

No Report

Treasurer Report

No Report

Action Items

Discussion and/or Approval of Facilities License Agreement with the Catholic Bishop of Chicago (Saint Francis Xavier BASE Site).

Director Bechtold explained that we are presenting the term sheet that will be plugged into the agreement. Staff are asking the Board to approve the term sheet with final approval of the agreement by the Executive Director and Legal Counsel. Director Bechtold mentioned the only areas that have changed are the fee and the district request. The fee has increased from \$250 per month to \$300 per month.

Director Miller explained that there are new administrative staff in place at SFX and we expect to continue to see increases in the fees.

President Opyd motioned to approve the term sheet with Catholic Bishop of Chicago (Saint Francis Xavier BASE Site) for the amount of \$2,700 with the final agreement approval by Executive Director and Legal Counsel. It was so moved by Commissioner Vear, seconded by Commissioner Weber and passed unanimously by roll call vote.

AYES: Commissioners Vear, Weber, Lacey, Opyd

NAYES: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Posey

Board Business

Old Business

Discussion of 2024 Park Plan Proposal

Director Bechtold reminded the Board that we need consensus on the park plans so we can move forward with the Referendum Resolution at our August meeting. Director Bechtold ran through each plan to obtain consensus.

Sedgwick Park: Commissioner Vear, Commissioner Weber, President Opyd all agreed that limestone pathways should be kept with or without edging for the trail pending the budget. There was also consensus to leave the restrooms

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centrally located but to try to move them closer to the preschool building and pending budget add a path from the Little League fields to the restroom. Community Center Park: Commissioners gave consensus to the plan as present.

Denning Park: Commissioners gave consensus to the plan as presented.

Elm Park: Commissioners gave consensus to the plan as presented.

Gilbert Park: Commissioners gave consensus to the plan as presented.

Gordon Park: Commissioners gave consensus to the plan as presented.

Rotary Park: Commissioners gave consensus to the plan as presented.

Spring Park: Commissioners gave consensus to the plan as presented.

Discussion of Referendum Resolution and Ballot Language

Director Bechtold explained that Chapman and Cutler updated the ballot language to use general improvement language leaving room for changes to the plans in the future. Commissioners agreed with the general ballot language which allows flexibility and prefer the debt reform act form which will be presented in a Referendum Resolution at our August board meeting.

New Business

None.

Committee Reports

Administration Committee

No report currently.

Parks and Facilities Committee

No report currently.

Recreation & Cultural Programming Committee/ Arts & Cultural Affairs Committee

No report currently.

Public Comments (Board Manual Section #152)

John Pluto, 718 East Ave, La Grange, John suggested infrastructure improvements to help with stormwater management and discuss our plans with the Village. He suggested a combination restroom with the preschool building versus building a new restroom as presented in the 2024 Park Plan Proposal. Last he requested the park district put out signs for fertilizer and herbicide spraying, along with keeping logs and taking pictures of the flags that are put out.

Becky Lorentzen, 103 E. Cossitt Ave, La Grange, Becky stated that flooding is a big issue for the Village, and she was surprised there were no plans for stormwater management. She thinks the park district should talk with the village to work together to come up with a plan to mitigate that issue.

Rose Naseef, 911 S. Stone Ave, La Grange, she agreed that she would like to see grading included in the plans and native plants to aid with absorbing water. She also agreed that herbicides and pesticides should be marked and stay for three days or a rain. She requested the park district put together an annual asset inventory. She feels the dog park should stay within the plan and likes natural color playgrounds. She suggested zero waste special events from the park district. She suggested signs on our garbage cans to help promote recycling. She thanked the Park District for listening and protecting the green space of the parks, that she appreciates it and many generations down the line will benefit from it too.

Gloria Stephenson, 1510 41st, La Grange, Gloria is still concerned with the added four parking spots and states the parking lot is empty 99% of the time. She does not feel the money should be spent on expanding the parking lot. Gloria wants to make sure that no trees were being cut down because of any parking lot expansions. She would like to see two shuffleboard courts left at Gilbert and would like to see the building at Gilbert used for something other than preschool. She also inquired if we reuse perennials. She suggested we survey the community when we are doing big projects in the community.

Linda Christensen, 131 S. Edgewood, La Grange, Linda is grateful to know that the parking lot at Gilbert Park is not extending any further and happy no trees will be removed. She thanked the District for their hard work.

Board Comments

Commissioner Weber had no comments.

Commissioner Lacey has thanked everyone and is glad to be back after seven months. Lacey then stated that Jen has been excellent and checked in with her all the time to make sure she was okay; moreover, Jen has been assisting with the work in the department for Lacey. Commissioner Lacey reassured the public that everything that was said tonight, Jenny will get on it and let the public know as soon as there are updates.

Commissioner Vear thanked everyone for coming out and told Commissioner Lacey that it is good to have her back and is very happy to see her today. Commissioner Vear then again thanked the public and reiterated that the park district does it's best to accommodate the majority and make good decisions, sometimes they both don't coincide, but we try our best.

President Opyd thanked the public for coming and sharing their ideas and it helps them make their decisions. He reminded the public that this will ultimately be their decision because it will need to be approved by a referendum that they vote on.


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Adjournment

Commissioner Lacey moved for an adjournment at 7:55pm. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Weber, which passed unanimously by Voice Vote.



Brian Opyd, President



Jennifer Bechtol, Board Secretary
Approved August 12, 2024