

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

**NOVEMBER 14, 2022**

**President Opyd called the meeting to order at 6:01 P.M.**

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

**ABSENT:** None

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

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Attorney Derke Price  
Jan Reagan, Marian Honel-Wilson

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

Director Bechtold announced that tonight is Leynette Kuniej's last board meeting. She is retiring after over 15 years and has been a tremendous asset to the Park District. Jenny presented Leynette with a certificate and stated that we also have a gift of funds to go traveling for her.

**Communications, Presentations & Declarations**

*Public Comments/Participation (Board Manual Section #152)*

None

*La Grange Art League, Jan Reagan, Executive Director, Yarn Bomb Presentation*  
Jan Reagan introduced herself and provided information on her background and affiliation with several art focused organizations. She stated that she met with Commissioner Posey on how to bring art to the parks with yarn bombing and presented detailed information with visual graphics. Yarn bombing is a fun temporary form of art where trees are covered with colorful knitted and crocheted squares to make a statement, especially during the winter. It adds color and personality to a park after the holiday lights are down and is easy to put up and take down. She added that it has a positive impact as a social

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activity that brings in all ages and skill levels, and it would be done from January through March when it is safe for trees while they are dormant. Community knitting groups would be involved, lessons could be offered, and it is a great way to upcycle donated yarn. Yarn bombing often grabs press attention and she recommended choosing a park with trees that have high visibility. The Art League could also add support with their marketing person. She asked that our Board consider approving the project so it can move forward.

Commissioner Posey stated that this is a great program to begin art in the parks in an inexpensive, sustainable way. It is a surprising and delightful thing to do with good visibility and provides the opportunity to develop new partnerships and get people to use the parks in a different way.

There was discussion that yarn bombing is safe for animals and trees during the winter months, and an outdoor activity such as a hot chocolate event could be held at the park. The parks were discussed, and it was agreed to start the project at Gilbert Park which has high traffic and visibility.

There was Board consensus to move forward, and Jenny stated she will bring an agreement for approval to the next board meeting.

### **Consent Agenda**

President Opyd asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda.

Commissioner Lacey moved to approve Item 3.1 Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of October 10, 2022; Item 3.2 Approval of the Financial Reports dated October 31, 2022; and Item 3.3 Approval of the Consolidated Vouchers for November dated November 14, 2022. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Vear and passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

### **Staff Reports**

#### **Executive Director Jenny Bechtold**

- Director Bechtold stated that we moved forward with the restructure which is reflected in the organizational chart and job descriptions are being updated. She congratulated Kevin on his promotion to Director of Recreation.
- Jenny reported that we must comply with new PDRMA cyber security requirements which will include moving to Microsoft Office 365 and transferring email accounts.
- She stated that she, President Opyd, and Commissioner Posey met with Little League. It was a positive meeting with a lot of emphasis on a third field and we are working on an alternative. They discussed PDLG taking on more of the infrastructure maintenance at Sedgwick such as the

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fencing and implementing user fees at other fields. Based on this year's actual usage the fee would be nominal at approximately \$5,000. They are utilizing less than 25% of the field hours they book, and we want to maximize our space but cannot do that now because they blanket book. Gordon was booked for 1700 hours, and they only used 220 hours. We could program the space or offer soccer groups more time with the unused hours. Little League is concerned about changing their operations from blanket booking so we will give them some wiggle room as they change their structure. Commissioner Posey agreed that it was a positive meeting with some movement on both sides.

### **Supt. of Finance Leynette Kuniej**

#### **Director of Finance & Human Resources Cassandra Todd**

- Director Todd stated that the rollover bonds were processed, and Republic Bank was the winner at 3.6%, which is a much higher rate than last year.
- Cassandra reported that we received our agency tax rate on November 4<sup>th</sup> and unfortunately with the reassessment our EAV went down 62 million dollars. We anticipate having the second installment from tax bills in December or January.
- She stated that the admin team met to kick off the budget and she has been working on the budget worksheet.
- There is a benefits meeting tomorrow for staff for open enrollment.

#### **Director of Recreation Kevin Miller**

- Director Miller reported that the Tree Lighting event is December 6<sup>th</sup> at Waiola Park from 6-7pm and invited the commissioners to attend.

Commissioner Vear asked if the transition was going well, and Kevin stated that it was and that there is a lot to take in with learning about BASE and facilities.

#### **Director of Parks, Planning & Maintenance Blake Ertmanis**

- Director Ertmanis reported that the outdoor tennis and volleyball nets and the portable toilets are being removed as the parks are winterized. The Gordon bathrooms have also been closed.

President Opyd asked for clarification of the photo included with Blake's written report and how much money would be brought in by selling the items on the surplus list. Blake explained that the aerial photo depicts where tree trimming will occur at Sedgwick Park and the color coding is for tree health. He estimated that the surplus items could bring in anywhere from \$5,000-\$15,000. He will develop another surplus list after this one is complete.

#### **Attorney Report**

Attorney Price had nothing new to report.

**Treasurer Report**

Supt. of Finance Kuniej stated that she will sign off on the bond documents and is gradually moving everything over to Cassandra.

**Action Items**

*Discussion on Staff Presenting the Draft Proposal of Levy and Assessment of Taxes of the Park District of La Grange for the 2022 Tax Levy Year at the December Board Meeting*

Director Todd reported that we received 3.2 million for tax year 2021 and we received the report Friday for use in making our calculations for the 2022 tax levy. We have considered several scenarios to maximize our tax levy dollars for this year based on 5 million dollars in new growth confirmed by the Village of La Grange. We decided to maximize the special recreation fund at .0034 cents with a levy request of \$263,000 as the driver to provide an increase outside of the capped funds. We also decided to seek an increase of 3.7% from last year which will put our new levy at 3.3 million. We anticipate receiving an automatic 3% increase from the county and approximately \$25,000 from the county property tax recovery law, which can change year to year. We are also subject to PTELL which we considered in our calculations and recommendations.

Director Bechtold stated that no action needs to be taken tonight; this is just a presentation. Attorney Price clarified that we remain under the PTELL limit and the requirement for a public hearing under Truth in Taxation. President Opyd stated that this item will be on the agenda for a vote next month.

*Discussion and/or Approval of SEASPAR Tax Levy for 2022*

Supt. of Finance Kuniej stated that the SEASPAR tax levy is based on our EAV and membership in SEASPAR. The amount is only up 1.4% since they did not know our EAV at the time it was prepared, and the estimate uses last year's CPI. It is up to \$115,804 from last year's \$114,205. We need to approve this for them for their budget.

President Opyd stated that SEASPAR offers great services and fully supports them. Commissioner Vear asked if our contribution would go down since our EAV went down. Supt. Kuniej answered that it will go down next year.

President Vear motioned to approve the SEASPAR tax levy for 2022. 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

Attorney Price clarified that the special rec levy is excluded in the tax cap but must be included for Truth in Taxation. Director Todd confirmed that we did not go over the 4.99 max for Truth in Taxation including the special rec fund.

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### *Discussion and/or Approval of Policy 820, Employee Position Classification and Compensation Schedule*

Director Bechtold stated that this policy has been updated due to the reorganization. The past employee and compensation schedule was broken up into each position. The revised policy groups like positions together. The admin team researched the industry and Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the admin team looked at minimums and maximums. We have some staff reaching the maximums, so we built in one more raise for every staff member, with three reaching the cap this year. If you reach the max, you would be compensated with a bonus instead of a salary increase. Legal agreed it was good practice to put caps in place, and the schedule will be evaluated again in 2024.

President Opyd asked for a motion to approve the policy. Commissioner Posey motioned to approve Policy 820, Employee Position Classification and Compensation Schedule. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lacey and passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

### *Discussion and/or Approval of Policy 312, Purchasing*

Director Bechtold stated that this policy should be updated as park code has changed the competitive bid process from \$25,000 to \$30,000. If a purchase is under \$30,000, we can move forward without a bid process. Ancel/Glink wrote the policy so that it will update automatically.

Commissioner Posey motioned to approve Policy 312, Purchasing. Commissioner Chvatal seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

### *Discussion and/or Approval of 2022-2032 Comprehensive Master Plan*

Director Bechtold stated that staff feel much better about the completed CMP and asked if the Board had any edits or questions. Commissioner Vear suggested that the final spelling edits be made prior to printing the plan.

Commissioner Lacey motioned to approve the 2022-2023 Comprehensive Master Plan. Commissioner Vear seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

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### *Discussion and/or Approval of Appointment of Authorized IMRF Agent Due to Retirement*

Supt. of Finance Kuniej stated that the Board needs to formally approve removing her from the account and appointing Cassandra as the representative for the pension fund.

Commissioner Posey motioned that the Board appoint Director of Finance and Human Resources Cassandra Todd as the Authorized IMRF Agent. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lacey and passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

### **Board Business**

#### **Old Business**

##### *Discussion and/or Approval of 2023 Board Meeting Schedule*

Director Bechtold stated that this was discussed at last month's meeting and staff is presenting the 2023 meeting schedule. The October meeting was moved to the third Monday due to the NRPA conference and the second Monday being a holiday. The April 17<sup>th</sup> and August 21<sup>st</sup> meetings are also the third Monday and will be held at the Community Center.

After brief Board discussion Commissioner Chvatal motioned to approve the 2023 Board Meeting Schedule. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Vear and passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

#### **New Business**

##### *Discussion and/or Approval of Authorization of Delegates/ Alternates for the 2023 Annual IAPD Meeting*

Director Bechtold stated that we need to select a delegate and alternate for the upcoming conference in January and staff recommends designating her as the delegate and Kevin Miller as the alternate.

After brief Board discussion Commissioner Vear motioned to approve the authorization of Jenny Bechtold as the delegate and Kevin Miller as the alternate for the 2023 IAPD meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chvatal and passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

**Committee Reports**

*Administration Committee*

Commissioner Lacey had no report at this time.

*Parks and Facilities Committee*

President Opyd and Commissioner Vear had no report at this time.

*Recreation & Cultural Programming Committee/ Arts & Cultural Affairs Committee*

Commissioner Posey had nothing to add to the arts discussion earlier in the meeting.

**Public Comments (Board Manual Section #152)**

None

**Board Comments**

Commissioner Chvatal congratulated Kevin on his new position and thanked Leynette for her 15 years of service.

Commissioner Posey congratulated Leynette on her retirement and Kevin on his promotion. She thanked the staff for all the time spent developing the CMP and wrapping it up tonight.

Commissioner Lacey stated that she appreciates the relationship she has had with Leynette and wished her good luck in the future; she will be missed. She offered hats off to Kevin.

Commissioner Vear congratulated Leynette on her retirement and the job she did with great integrity. He hopes she will enjoy her time, and she will be missed. He looks forward to working with Cassandra.

President Opyd reminded the Board of the holiday party on the 16<sup>th</sup>. He thanked Leynette for an amazing run and all the accolades from the auditors. There have been many changes, but he is confident in the team that has been put together and where the organization is going; keep up the good work.

President Opyd stated that there would be no executive session this evening.

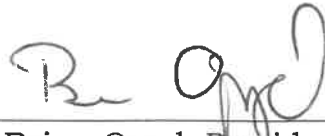
**Action on Items Discussed in Executive Session**

None

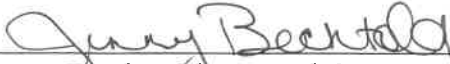
**Adjournment**

Commissioner Chvatal moved for adjournment at 6:55 P.M. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Vear and passed unanimously by Voice Vote.

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Brian Opyd, President



Jenny Bechtold, Board Secretary  
*Approved December 12, 2022*