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

# JUNE 14, 2021

# President Vear called the meeting to order at 7:01 P.M.

PRESENT:

Commissioners O'Brien, Jacobs, Opyd, Lacey, Vear

ABSENT:

None

STAFF PRESENT:

Interim Executive Director Jenny Bechtold Superintendent of Finance Leynette Kuniej Superintendent of Facilities Chris Finn Superintendent of Recreation Kevin Miller Superintendent of BASE Leanna Hartung

Recording Secretary Linda Muth

OTHERS PRESENT:

Attorney Derke Price

Jeff Braun from Cody/Braun & Associates

Todd Abrams from WT Group

Lacey Lawrence, Marian Honel-Wilson, Nancy Bramson

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)
None

# Consent Agenda

Commissioner O'Brien motioned to approve Item 3.1 Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of May 10, 2021; Item 3.2 Approval of the Financial Reports dated May 31, 2021; Item 3.3 Approval of the Consolidated Vouchers for June dated June 14, 2021. Commissioner Lacey seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES:

Commissioners O'Brien, Lacey, Opyd, Jacobs, Vear

NAYES:

None

ABSENT:

None

# Staff Reports Interim Director's Report

- Interim Executive Director Jenny Bechtold stated that she hopes everyone likes the new board packet format.
- Jenny reported that she is working on the comprehensive master plan. PRI will hold a public workshop on 6/29 and has requested that the Board not attend the workshop, which can promote better input. The Board will receive a full report afterwards. They will also meet virtually with stakeholders on July 7th or 8th. PRI would like to meet with the Board, as stakeholders, at a 6pm special meeting prior to the regular July board meeting.
- She stated that it is great to see La Grange Fitness picking up. They have been busy and currently have 1,651 members with 93 new members added in June to-date. Only one out of the four outdoor classes ran but she will keep trying to promote them, as well as outdoor personal training.

Commissioner Jacobs asked why La Grange Fitness classes are 45 minutes instead of an hour. Jenny stated that they are trying to differentiate fitness center classes from specialty fitness classes. The time frame also allows for the required cleaning and helps with the availability of class space.

Commissioner O'Brien inquired about the public's response to the meet-the-planners meeting for the master plan. Jenny stated that 12 have signed up so far, and it will be pushed out again in social media. The public workshop has 15 people signed up and details will be sent out to stakeholders, LGBA will include it in their newsletter, and Community Diversity Group is spreading the word. Our web analytics indicates the web page is averaging between 20-62 hits.

President Vear stated there is a Facebook page promoting a pool and asked Jenny if she has been contacted by any pool proponents and whether there was any news on the OSLAD grant. Jenny said she had not been contacted by them, but some are signed up to come to the meetings. She stated the OSLAD grant is not open yet and hopes PRI will have some data for us; it will depend on the timing. We must also have the finances required for the matching grant, which is a max of \$400,000.

Commissioner Jacobs reminded the Board of the GIGO grant which promotes green infrastructure and would cover permeable pavers for the parking lot. Jenny stated it is not open yet. There is 5 million to be split between 2-11 districts with a minimum of \$75,000 and maximum of 2.5 million at up to a 75% match.

President Vear stated that he likes the idea of using biosolids. Jenny reported that she is still researching them and that Western Springs is having a delivery this week. Tinley Park and Western Springs both use irrigation and we do not,

so if it is too hot and you put it down it can burn your fields. She will evaluate their process.

# **Staff Comments**

# Superintendent of Recreation Kevin Miller

- Superintendent Miller stated that Zach Price is the new athletic supervisor. He started last week and he is an amazing addition to staff.
- Kevin reported that Andrea has developed a couple upcoming events for IPRA Unplug Day. There will be a Chalk the Park event at Waiola Park with participants given chalk to create designs on the pathways and sidewalks, and a Touch-a-Truck pop-up event on July 21 at Sedgwick Park.
- He stated that they are busy with day camp and the enrollment numbers for summer are very good. Athletics is the best it has been since 2016-2017; we are in a good spot.

Commissioner Opyd stated that he loves the chalk event idea. There is not a lot of expense, and it is good outreach in the community. If it is a success, it could be offered at another location.

# Superintendent of Facilities Chris Finn

- Superintendent Finn reported that the recreation center is busy with people coming in, rentals, and inquiries. Rentals are picking up for our buildings and parks. He has meetings coming up with the soccer groups.
- Chris stated he is reevaluating memberships and open gym use.
- He is waiting on a response from the Village to proceed with the new Gordon Park signs. It is technically their land now. We have not installed a park sign since the late 90's and the location on Ogden is being assessed and will include stone, bricks and shrubbery.
- He is working on capital projects including the exterior of buildings.
- He conducted interviews to fill Andrea's rental coordinator position.
- The splash pad opened Memorial Day weekend and is running well. Our camps have a time slot to use it Monday through Thursday.
- The Field of Honor event at Denning Park closed today. It was sponsored by Operation Support Our Troops and was a beautiful event. They appreciated all the work we did and they sold 497 (later corrected to 397) flags out of 500. It was publicized on channel 32 and elsewhere and involved many businesses. Many local people and others from the Chicagoland area attended.

Commissioners Jacobs stated that she spoke to the co-chair and was told what a great job Chris did on the event.

# Superintendent of Finance Leynette Kuniej

• Superintendent Kuniej reported that we received notification that we

- earned the GFOA award for excellence in government financial reporting again for the year ended 2020.
- Leynette stated that the month of April is closed and that the auditors will be coming in this week. She hopes there will be no additional changes so that we remain in the positive for last fiscal year.
- The new server in capital projects has been ordered.

President Vear stated that it is good that the GFOA award has become mundane to us and Leynette agreed.

# Superintendent of BASE Leanna Hartung

- Superintendent Hartung stated they are busy and the enrollment numbers for the coming school year are amazing. Schools are full across the board with wait lists. She hopes that she will be able to accommodate the wait lists if we can open to full capacity at the schools and is excited to see the kids this fall.
- Leanna reported that summer camp is full almost every week.
- She stated that they are holding a fundraiser beginning June 21 for Enzo's pizzas and their famous beef rolls which will be promoted on their website.

# **Attorney Report**

Attorney Price stated he has nothing new to report.

# **Treasurer Report**

None

# **Action Items**

None

### **Board Business**

### **New Business**

Election/Appointment of Officers

Board President – President Vear nominated at 5/10/21 meeting Robert Vear was elected unanimously by Voice Vote

Board Vice President – Commissioner O'Brien nominated at 5/10/21 meeting Tim O'Brien was elected unanimously by Voice Vote

Board  $2^{nd}$  Vice President – Commissioner Lacey nominated at 5/10/21 meeting Lynn Lacey was elected unanimously by Voice Vote

Board Secretary – Interim Executive Director Jenny Bechtold appointed at 5/10/21 meeting

Treasurer - Robert Metzger nominated at 5/10/21 meeting

Director Bechtold spoke with him and he accepted the nomination Robert Metzger was elected unanimously by Voice Vote

Discussion and/or Approval of Committee Appointments

Director Bechtold stated that we are missing some committee heads. The
Board discussed the committees. Director Bechtold stated the bylaws state
that the Board may create necessary committees and Attorney Price stated that
those committees that are not in the policy manual are considered ad hoc
committees and are established in the minutes. He stated that since the Parks
& Open Lands Committee holds official meetings, they need to post meetings
and prepare minutes.

The committee assignments were proposed as follows:

Administration Committee – Commissioner Lacey
Parks & Open Lands Committee – Commissioner Jacobs
Finance & Capital Projects Committee – President Vear
User Group Committee – Commissioner O'Brien
Marketing & Social Media Committee – Commissioner Opyd

All commissioners were in favor of the committee assignments. President Vear motioned for approval and Commissioner Opyd seconded the committee assignments which passed unanimously by Voice Vote.

Discussion and/or Approval of Park District Applying for MWRD Grant, Green Infrastructure Partnership Opportunity Program

Director Bechtold reported that this grant is open again with a due date of September 6. In reviewing the guidelines and requirements from MWRD it is apparent there are a few items to be aware of. We applied for a permit determination letter through MWRD and through that process we learned our project is being considered over three acres because they consider all holdings. Since the recreation center is next door, the area is considered five plus acres per the Cook County deeds, so MWRD requires detention and volume control. If we receive the grant, we cannot use the permeable pavers for volume control which is what we were trying to accomplish. Jenny stated that Jeff Braun and Todd Abrams are in attendance to explain more about volume control and its impact on the grant.

Todd Abrams introduced himself as the principal engineer at WT Group. He provided drawings of the plan done thus far. He explained that looking at the parking lot preliminary grading and utility plan, the initial design thought was to provide detention and volume control within the detention pond. The theory behind detention is when you develop property you are disturbing the land and less water gets in the ground, so you make sure you are not creating flooding downstream. The Village and MWRD allow the release of only so much water after development. In this case we drain to the pond and choke off with a restrictor which restricts water from going over the allowable release rate and

then the pond gets water. Volume control is water that environmentalists want you to capture at first flush so that the first rain, which runs with contaminants, is directed to the rain garden with native plantings and then to the drain below to slowly percolate out of the drainage system. The rain garden has a stone trench for water infiltration and allows water to drain slowly out of the system. MWRD has a rule that a combined system must have separation from the bottom of the control system and seasonal ground water level. The seasonal ground water level is high and we cannot get the required 3½ feet of separation. There is only one foot in some areas, so we need a different system. The permeable pavers being discussed would allow water to drain into the slots in the pavers, and stone can be used beneath the pavers as volume control. The other volume control option is to bury stone beneath the parking lot to meet the separation requirement. The stone would have underdrains to allow water to percolate and drain slowly. If we did pavers in the lot, we would need approximately 13,000 sq. ft. of paver area to provide the volume control, which is approximately 15-20% of the parking area. If the lot is all asphalt and no pavers, the buried the stone trench would be 60x60x4 feet deep with a detention pond.

President Vear asked if the expense is higher if we dig for volume control. Todd answered that the increase in cost would be for the stone. The depth of the hole could be reduced between 6-12 inches.

Commissioner Jacobs stated that her understanding is we could use permeable pavers in the grant, but it would not fund that part of the project. She questioned why the size of the pond would not be reduced considerably with pavers and stated that another engineer told her pavers would negate the need for a pond. Todd disagreed and said per the Village and MWRD, we need it. The run-off coefficient for paving is 98 and is 75 for permeable pavers. There is a difference, but it would provide only a 15-20% reduction in pond size.

President Vear stated that pavers can be installed at various depths and are 5-feet deep at LT North. Perhaps increased depth provides more volume control. Todd answered that we could go deeper with stone to eliminate the pond, but aggregate is the most cost effective. You could also put in large pipes and dig a 5-foot hole in the entire lot to eliminate most or all of the pond. Commissioner Jacobs asked if they considered using the existing gravel and why the detention pond is required when the lot did not have one previously. She also asked for alternatives to dealing with water runoff. Todd stated that you do not get credit for gravel and that the pond is required because once you change the use of the property you must bring it up to today's standards. Even if we were below three acres the Village would require detention. They require it for every project because La Grange has so many drainage problems. Other than detention, you could use aggregate ponds, underground vaults, a large cistern, piping, and buried stone. Ultimately you need a void area to store the water that backs up with either a pond or container.

Director Bechtold stated that since the MWRD grant cannot be used for volume control, we could do pavers and a buried stone area. Commissioner Jacobs added that we could look beyond pavers to find another way to use the grant. President Vear asked if you bury stone for volume control with pavers and built a 3-foot vs. an 18-inch base of stone for the vault, would it be acceptable to MWRD for volume control. Todd answered yes, and we would need 13,000 sq. ft. of pavers with a 1-foot-deep section. Additional depth beyond 1-foot could be used for the grant because it would be above and beyond the minimum. Normally you would get all the credit, but not in this case.

Commissioner Jacobs stated that we have to provide for whatever the water management ordinance says, and the grant does not provide for that. We thought we could be considered a 2.9-acre area and we cannot, nor can we use offsite detention in River Forest. The ordinance dictates the requirements based on a larger size lot, and it is harder to meet with asphalt. Pavers make it easier to meet the ordinance. It will be hard to go above and beyond with that site. The only way is if we do something when we remove the gas tank and make it permeable, which is a game changer for the flow of the parking lot. Director Bechtold stated she likes the idea but needs to check on the timing. The process with the gas tanks can be very long. She has a proposal from one company for removal but is waiting to hear about the above ground tanks. MWRD also has a multi-labor project agreement, and we must meet their requirements for union labor, bids, and affirmative action. It may not be achievable, but we must make a good faith effort. Attorney Price added that we should put up a web page that says we encourage this to publicize for the trades; we have a good faith duty.

Commissioner Opyd questioned what the next step is. Moving forward with the grant involves an overall increase in cost, but is it offset by a decrease in something else? If it is a net loss for the district, then we should not proceed. Todd explained that the grant covers the difference between asphalt and pavers. There is potential excavation savings since there is less detention digging, but you may pay a premium for the labor requirements, and there would be more engineering time. Attorney Price stated that prevailing wages are union scale. They have negotiated agreements with 20 trades and a couple trades would be involved here. Prevailing wage vs. union is a wash, so yes there is savings in excavation, but there would be more administration time to apply for the grant. Commissioner Jacobs added that excavation presents the opportunity to find seepage and contamination, so it is better not to excavate. especially in hot spot areas. Todd stated an analysis can be done with the difference between the two. There could be a \$30,000-\$40,000 savings in haul-off costs and possibly a small net gain cost-wise with the grant. Commissioner Lacey asked which option is more beneficial for the Park District. Todd said it is a tough question. Pavers are expensive and require a lot of maintenance with higher up-front costs, but they are better from an environmental perspective. Commissioner Opyd stated he talked to the arboretum and their experience is that maintenance is low even after 15 years,

and the Village loves their pavers. It is hard to understand the real truth with lots of different stories and we may need more comparison. Bricks do last, but he is concerned about the cost. Commissioner Jacobs stated that Riverside received an MWRD grant and did pavers with biofiltration, which are gorgeous and a game changer with aesthetics, but she agrees we have to consider the cost.

Director Bechtold stated that we need a site plan to apply for the grant. Commissioner Jacobs stated we definitely need a master site plan, and we should put out an RFP for the plan and include the OSLAD and MWRD grants. There is potential to include pickleball, a shelter, and garden. She asked if the Village has commented on the size of the parking lot. Jenny explained that the current plan includes 300 exterior and interior spaces which is 59 more than the 241 spaces required by the Village. Of the 59 spaces, the pickleball courts take up 37 spots, and another 8 spots are allocated for parking for pickleball patrons. That leaves 14 spots remaining, which we will need if we expand our services in the future. Jeff Braun added that he talked to the Village and their recommendation for pickleball patron parking is based on square footage and is higher, requiring 4 spots per court for a total of 16.

President Vear stated that the Board needs to decide whether to move forward with Option 1, 2 or 3 as detailed in Jenny's memo. Option 1 is to proceed with the application for the Green Infrastructure Partnership Opportunity Program with the assistance of WT Engineering in the amount of \$3,000. Option 2 is to explore other grant opportunities and extend the overall project timeline. Option 3 is to begin the bid process for this project without the use of additional grant revenue sources. Jenny added that she reached out to the Village regarding the zoning ordinance, and we must start the project by February 2022. She is working on getting it extended but there are factors to consider including construction costs.

President Vear stated that he prefers Option 1, and we should go as far as we can with the (Green Infrastructure Partnership Opportunity Program) grant. Commissioner O'Brien agreed with Option 1.

Commissioner Jacobs stated that the OSLAD grant should be considered and would be available this summer. Director Bechtold stated she has heard that the OSLAD grant is not a sure thing, and the Governor may not fund it. She spoke with a couple of firms who had concerns that our project did not have enough elements for OSLAD since it is a small project and mainly parking. Additional research and a solid site plan would be needed. Commissioner Lacey asked if the Board should defer to the next meeting. Jenny recommended that we proceed to explore this grant which, if offered, would be due September 6, but a decision should be made tonight regarding the site plan. Commissioner Jacobs stated that since we are doing a new comprehensive master plan, she would like to see community input on the site plan and would like us to bid a plan that includes community engagement as

well as the grant, which is an option not on the list.

Commissioner Opyd stated he is concerned that even if we do a new site plan utilizing the 14 open parking spots, we will not gain enough green space to influence an OSLAD grant. He is happy to try for the MWRD grant for the pavers which would look nice, and to save the district money, but he is not convinced we are going to benefit with OSLAD and leans toward Option 1.

Commissioner Jacobs stated that if we go with Option 1, we need a site plan, and she thinks we have to admit that long term we are moving the gas tanks and changing that area could be part of the parking plan. If we have that in mind with the MWRD grant we might change that area to pavers, which is what they want. President Vear asked if we could plan ahead for the area so that when the tanks are gone, we have a plan to best use the space. Jeff Braun recommended that we not use it to connect the two lots, which could create a bad traffic area and stated we could add parking there. President Vear stated it could be another area for people to drop off or meet their rides.

Commissioner Jacobs stated we should think about adding more green pieces in the lot where we are taking trees out and pull back a pickleball court or two to reduce parking and add something else. We could also pull back one row and keep the trees or move the pickleball courts. Jeff stated the trees in the middle must be removed for the pond area but several in the front will remain. Commissioner Jacobs stated the parking plan is 40% over max capacity and is excessive. The plan has been improved, but layout of the parking has not been done and we have not asked for resident input or provided them with much information, which is disappointing. We are doing it now with the master plan. She wants an RFP for the site design and is not sure we have a chance with the MWRD grant unless we make changes. She would reluctantly choose Option 1.

President Vear stated that we really cannot pull back on the parking and he trusts Jeff and Todd's calculations. The parking is not excessive with the current site plan. Director Bechtold added that the goal is to continue to grow and there is unused space in the facility. If we expand preschool, we will need the parking. The pickleball courts are a great way to add an amenity and retain the parking spots.

Commissioner O'Brien motioned that the Board approve Option 1 to proceed with the application for the Green Infrastructure Partnership Opportunity Program with the assistance of WT Engineering in the amount of \$3,000. President Vear seconded the motion.

Commissioner Jacobs stated that, to be clear, going forward with the grant in Option 1 is with the assistance of WT Engineering.

The motion passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners O'Brien, Vear, Jacobs, Opyd

NAYES: None ABSENT: None

Commissioner Lacey abstained from the vote.

610 East Ave. Property Updates/Discussion with Cody/Braun & Associates and WT Engineering and/or Approval to Create an Updated Site Plan
Director Bechtold stated that we need a site design and referenced the memo in the board packet. We have lost the rain garden and the plan has changed.
Going for the grant means we need a different site plan. Jenny asked if the Board wanted to move forward with additional stone under permeable pavers, which would be required for the grant. The new site plan for the grant will cost money, and if we do not get the grant, we will need a different site plan. Staff's recommendation is to approve the development of a new site plan including the pickleball courts for the grant application. Jeff Braun stated that a lot of the engineering has already been done. The \$3,000 fee is for work related to the grant application, and there would be a \$4,000 fee to redo the engineering for the new site plan.

Commissioner Jacobs motioned that the district put out an RFP for the site design for the Nicor property that includes community input and applying for the MWRD grant. She added that Jeff is welcome to apply, but she would like to open it up to other people for additional ideas. President Vear asked how long this would take and Commissioner Jacobs stated six weeks. Jenny added that the grant is due on September 6. Attorney Price stated that for an RFP, we would have to send out the criteria, review the submissions, and possibly conduct interviews. Commissioner Jacobs said the Board could hold a special meeting for proposals.

Jeff Braun explained that they have done a lot of the work already. Someone new would start on base 1. They (Cody/Braun) have a contract with us and have done 50-60% of the work already, WT has done the preliminary engineering, and he would like to continue. They came up with a new site plan for not a lot of money. They have been working on this project for 2-3 years. It would be a new ballgame for a new engineer and would cost more.

Commissioner Jacobs stated that this process was not transparent, and 1.5 million is a lot of money for this project. A lot of people do this kind of work. Commissioner Opyd stated that this Board has not gotten the information they asked for. Jeff worked with Dean, and it took six months to get answers on the parking spaces.

President Vear stated his opinion is that it is a little late to do an RFP. He stated that Commissioner Jacobs has a motion on the floor for an RFP and if someone wants to second the motion, they will take a vote. There was no

second to the motion.

President Vear motioned to approve a \$4,000 change order to prepare a new site plan. Commissioner O'Brien seconded the motion which passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Vear, O'Brien, Opyd

NAYES: Commissioner Jacobs

ABSENT: None

Commissioner Lacey abstained from the vote.

President Vear stated that communication is key as we proceed.

# **Committee Reports**

Administration Committee

No report currently. Commissioner Lacey will report at the next meeting.

Parks and Open Lands

None

Finance & Capital Project Committee

None

User Group Committee

None

Marketing/Social Media Committee

Commissioner Opyd encouraged everyone to like and share information about the Wednesday night meeting.

# Public Comments (Board Manual Section #152)

Marian Honel-Wilson, 958 8th Avenue, La Grange, stated she is the president of the Community Diversity Group. She stated the acoustics in this room are terrible and it is hard to hear, especially when the air kicks on. People are not using the mic. She would like better acoustics and it would be helpful if staff introduced themselves.

Commissioner O'Brien stated that we could change the room set-up for better acoustics.

### **Board Comments**

Commissioner O'Brien reported that Babe Ruth dedicated their building at Sedgwick Park to Dean Bissias. There is a plaque that looks really nice on the brick building, and he encourages everyone to a look at it. They are excited to get Dean out for a formal presentation.

Commissioner Lacey stated it was an interesting meeting. She thanked the

public for coming. They make our job easier by having eyes where we are not. She commended Jenny for doing a great job and appreciates the emails and more.

Commissioner Opyd stated he loves the new format for consolidating board reports. It is a more efficient read and he feels well informed. The takeaway from tonight's meeting is that transparency is key for the Board. Open debate and asking questions and getting answers helps the Board to make good decisions. He was glad to see debate in the discussion in open session, which is important.

Commissioner Jacobs thanked Commissioner Opyd for his positive comment. She stated that parks look good, and she appreciates the reports as well. She tries to ask questions when she feels we are not being transparent and we can do a better job. We are here to do better for our community. She appreciates all the efforts Jenny is putting out and thanked everyone for their hard work.

President Vear stated that today is Flag Day, and the Field of Honor at Denning Park was stupendous.

### **Executive Session**

At 8:57 P.M. Commissioner Opyd motioned the Board convene to Executive Session. Commissioner O'Brien seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES:

Commissioners Opyd, O'Brien, Jacobs, Lacey, Vear

NAYES:

None

ABSENT:

None

At 9:19 P.M. Commissioner O'Brien motioned that the Board arise from Executive Session and Commissioner Lacey seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES:

Commissioners O'Brien, Lacey, Jacobs, Opyd, Vear

NAYES:

None

ABSENT:

None

The Board resumed the regular meeting.

# Action on Items Discussed in Executive Session

Attorney Price stated it was not necessary to approve 13.1, Updated Personnel Policy Manual Section 200. Only the ordinance in 13.2 should be amended and restated for approval.

Commissioner Jacobs motioned to approve Ordinance 21-02 Adopting the Personnel Policy Manual as Amended and Restarted on June 14, 2021, for the Park District of La Grange. Commissioner O'Brien seconded the motion which

passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Jacobs, O'Brien, Opyd, Lacey, Vear

NAYES: None ABSENT: None

# Adjournment

Commissioner O'Brien moved for adjournment at 9:22 P.M. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lacey and passed unanimously by Voice Vote.

Robert Vear, President

Jenny Bechtold, Interim Board Secretary

Approved July 12, 2021