

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

**DECEMBER 8, 2025**

**President Opyd called the meeting to order at 6:04 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** Commissioners Vear, Posey, Weber, Carter, Opyd

**ABSENT:** None

**STAFF PRESENT:** Executive Director Jenny Bechtold  
Director of Finance & HR Jamie Hollock  
Director of Recreation Kevin Miller  
GM of Parks Maintenance Larry Buckley  
GM of Facilities and Operations Mike Hay  
HR & Administration Coordinator Madonna Giampietro

**OTHERS PRESENT:** John Pluto, Nancy Bramson, Marian Honel-Wilson  
Beck Lorentzen, Dr. Harold Gibson, Dr. Bessie Boyd,  
Sherry Robinson.

President Opyd welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for any announcements or changes to the agenda and there were none. He announced that there would be a tree lighting event at Waiola Park on Tuesday, December 9 at 6 PM.

**Communications, Presentations & Declarations**

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

Nancy Bramson, 4246 DuBois, Brookfield, was glad to hear the board would be discussing the renaming of the park adjacent to the Community Center and expressed her hope that the board reconsider the name change and take into consideration the comments from the community members at the November board meeting.

Marian Honel Wilson, 950 8<sup>th</sup> Ave. La Grange, agreed with Nancy Bramson regarding the renaming of the Community Center park and consideration to honor Ms. Penicook through a different location.

Dr. Bessie Boyd, 234 Sawyer Ave. La Grange, explained that she was in

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attendance to hear the discussion and/or vote regarding the name of the Community Center park. She reiterated the sentiments of the first two speakers that the community feedback from the November board meeting be considered.

Becky Lorentzen, 103 E. Cossitt Ave. La Grange, seconded all the previous speakers' statements regarding discussion of the naming of the Community Center park.

### **Consent Agenda**

President Opyd asked for a motion to Approve Consent Agenda: Item 3.2 Approval of the Executive Session Meeting of November 10, 2025; Item 3.3 Approval of the Financial Reports dated November 30, 2025; and Item 3.4 Approval of the Consolidated Vouchers for December dated December 8, 2025. The motion was so moved by Commissioner Posey, seconded by Commissioner Vear, and passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

Item 3.1 Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of November 10, 2025, will be moved to the January Board Meeting due to not all of the commissioners reviewing them.

### **Staff Reports**

#### **Executive Director Jennifer Bechtold**

- Director Bechtold presented her report and informed the Board that there were some questions about the exits from the multi-sport courts at last month's board meeting. She thanked the community members who brought it to our attention and explained that a second exit will be added to the multi-sport court at the Community Center, once weather permits, and the courts being installed at other parks are being assessed.

#### **Director of Finance & Human Resources Jamie Hollock**

- Director Hollock presented her report. President Opyd asked if we are still okay, cashflow wise with the tax disbursements being delayed. Director Hollock answered yes.

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

- Director Miller presented his report. President Opyd asked if the 10 a.m. registration start time made an impact. Director Miller responded that there were no issues and not much change from last year's first two hours. Commissioner Posey added that the change might have more impact when we start Summer Camp registration. She asked if any

additional measures have been put in place to mitigate some of the issues we saw last year during Summer Camp registration. Director Miller answered that registration has been moved up to February. He added that we will be working with our IT company, Noventech, to ensure the bandwidth is appropriate on our server for the anticipated traffic. President Opyd asked if the marketing push will be moved up with camp registration happening in February. Director Miller stated that the marketing materials will go out during the week of December 15<sup>th</sup>.

**GM of Facilities and Operations Mike Hay**

- General Manager Hay presented his report. President Opyd asked about programming location with our gym floor resurfacing project. Director Miller responded that School District 105 has agreed to let the Park District use their gyms for some of our travel basketball games and practices so that program will go uninterrupted during the resurfacing. President Opyd thanked the School District for making those facilities available.

**Parks & Maintenance Larry Buckley**

- General Manager Buckley presented his report.

**Action Items**

*Discussion and/or Approval of Ordinance 025-04, An Ordinance Levying and assessing Taxes of the Park District of La Grange, Cook County, Illinois for the 2025 Tax Levy Year; Ordinance 025-05, An Ordinance Directing the Cook County Clerk to Reduce the Park District; Ordinance 025-06, An Ordinance Abating the Taxes Heretofore Levied for the Year 2025 to Pay the Principal of and Interest on \$2,505,000 General Obligation Refunding Park Bonds (Alternate Revenue Source), Series 2020A of the Park District of La Grange, Cook County, Illinois.*

Director Hollock reviewed the Ordinances for the Board and stated that Ordinance 025-04 contains the breakdown of funds in the total amount of \$2,964,633. Ordinance 025-05 directs the county on how to adjust our request if the requested levy amount exceeds what is allowed to be levied by the tax cap calculation. She explained that Ordinance 025-06 is an ordinance to abate taxes on these bonds which we do not need to levy because we used the annual bond rollover to pay the December 1<sup>st</sup> payment.

Commissioner Weber motioned to approve the following ordinances: Ordinance 025-04 An Ordinance Levying and Assessing Taxes of the Park District of La Grange, Cook County, Illinois for the 2025 Tax Levy, Ordinance 025-05, an Ordinance Directing the Cook County Clerk to Reduce the Park District of La Grange's Real Estate Tax Levy 2025, Ordinance 025-06 an Ordinance abating the taxes heretofore levied for the year 2025 to pay principal of and interest on the \$2,505,000 General Obligation Refunding Park Bonds (Alternate Revenue Source), Series 2020A.

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Commissioner Carter seconded the motion which passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Weber, Carter, Posey, Vear, Opyd  
NAYES: None  
ABSENT: None

*Discussion and/or Approval of Reconsideration of Renaming Penicook Park (Formerly Community Park).*

The commissioners engaged in a discussion regarding reconsideration of renaming Penicook Park, formerly Community Park. Commissioner Posey responded to the sentiments about the naming process. She said that naming a park is a difficult responsibility. She took issue with comments saying that Mary Ellen Penicook had nothing to do with Community Center Park. Given her contribution to all of the parks in La Grange the honor of naming a park after her was/is warranted. With that being said, as a commissioner, it is part of her job to consider the feedback from the neighborhood. She is open to reconsidering the renaming of the park.

Commissioner Vear explained some history of naming rights of those who served the Park District and the current names of some of the parks in La Grange. He also reflected on Mary Ellen Penicook's service to the Park District of La Grange and why she is deserving of a park named after her. After the list of accomplishments and service to the Park District were read, commissioner Vear indicated that, in response to feedback, Mary Ellen graciously declined having the park named in her honor. He added that she is a wonderful person and indicated that she is the type of commissioner to aspire to be like. He also apologized for the quick decision.

President Opyd thanked Commissioner Vear for the in-depth account of Mary Ellen Penicook's contributions to the Park District of La Grange.

Commissioner Weber asked if the original motion included the name of the Community Center and it was answered that this amendment was for the park only.

Executive Director Bechtold asked for a motion to amend the action taken on June 9, 2025, renaming Community Park to Penicook Park and reverting to Community Park. The motion was so moved by Commissioner Posey, seconded by Commissioner Vear and passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Poesy, Vear, Weber, Opyd  
NAYES: Commissioner Carter  
ABSENT: None

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*Discussion and/or Approval of Resolution R25-07, A Resolution to Approve Amendments to the Joint Agreement for the Southeast Associations for Special Parks and Recreation (SEASPAR)*

Director Bechtold explained that staff recommend approval of the resolution amending the SEASPAR Joint Agreement to: Use the preceding calendar year's Equalized Assessed Valuation when calculating member contributions; and adjust the second installment payment due date to December.

President Opyd asked for a motion that the Board approve Resolution No. R25-07, amending the SEASPAR Joint Agreement to (1) use the preceding calendar year's Equalized Assessed Valuation when calculating member contributions, and (2) extend the second installment payment due date to December. The motion was so moved by Commissioner Vear, seconded by Commissioner Carter and passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Vear, Carter, Weber, Posey, Opyd  
NAYES: None  
ABSENT: None

*Discussion and/or Approval of the 2024 Referendum Outdoor Restroom Facility Design Plans.*

Executive Director Bechtold presented the updated bathroom design plans from Wight and Company for Denning Park and Sedgwick Park.

Commissioner Vear said he appreciated them adding the overhang.

Commissioner Carter asked if the bathrooms will have heat or air. Executive Director Bechtold responded that she will get him that information.

Commissioner Opyd asked if the bathrooms will be closed up for the winter. It was answered that they will be locked up during the winter.

Commissioner Weber asked about how the times they are open during the summer are determined and about how they are locked. It was explained that the bathroom locks are set on timers which coincide with our programming.

Commissioner Weber moved that the Board approve the updated Denning and Sedgwick restroom facility plans dated December 8, 2025. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Posey and passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Weber, Posey, Carter, Vear, Opyd  
NAYES: None  
ABSENT: None

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### *Discussion and/or Approval of the 2026 Board Meeting Schedule.*

President Opyd presented the 2026 Board Meeting Schedule.

Commissioner Carter motioned to approve the 2026 Board Meeting Schedule. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Weber and passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Carter, Weber, Posey, Vear, Opyd  
NAYES: None  
ABSENT: None

### *Discussion and/or Approval of Resolution R25-06 Authorizing the Release and Continued Retention, Respectively, of Certain Executive Sessions.*

Executive Director Bechtold explained the resolution permits closed executive session minutes eighteen months and one day prior to the date of the Resolution to be released and available. That staff recommend authorizing the release and continued retention, respectively, of certain executive session minutes and authorizing the destruction of verbatim recordings of certain Board executive sessions in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

Executive Director Bechtold asked for a motion that the Board approve Resolution R25-06, a resolution authorizing the release and continued retention of certain executive session minutes and authorizing the destruction of verbatim recordings of specified Board executive sessions. The motion was so moved by Commissioner Vear, seconded by Commissioner Carter and passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Vear, Carter, Weber, Posey, Opyd  
NAYES: None  
ABSENT: None

## **Board Business**

### **Old Business**

#### *Review of Bid #3 Results for 2024 Referendum Group B (Sedgwick Park and Gilbert Park)*

Director Bechtold presented the #3 Group B bids. She added that the bids do not include any remediation work at Sedgwick Park or the OSLAD scope. It was also discussed that Bid Package #27- Playground Equipment, was not included. The submission did not adequately meet the required scope; therefore, Bid was non-responsive. She answered President Opyd's question if the non-responsive bid would impact the timeline by explaining that many of the products were already purchased, this bid was mainly for the service so there would be minimal impact to the timeline. She added that no action is

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required as Wight & Company hold the contracts for the bid.

### **New Business**

#### **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*

No report at this time.

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

Dr. Bessie Boyd, 243 Sayer Ave. La Grange, thanked the board for their reconsideration of the name of Community Park. She also thanked the Board for providing information about Mary Ellen Penicook. She added that the Eastside Neighbors consider the Community Center as the heart of the community, and that the request to reconsider the name change was not against Ms. Penicook, but instead a reflection of the community having such a deep connection to the park and community center.

Nancy Bramson, 4246 Dubois, Brookfield, thanked the Board for the discussion regarding the reconsideration of the name of Community Park. She added the sentiment that the comments from last meeting were not indicative of Ms. Penicook not being deserving of honor, but more about the original decision to change the name was lacking consideration of the community surrounding the park.

Dr. Harold Gibson, 103 E. Cossitt Ave La Grange, thanked the board for the history of Ms. Penicook. He expressed his thoughts on the many individuals who have dedicated their time and efforts to the neighbors in the Eastside La Grange community, and those efforts seemed overlooked in the name change. He reiterated Dr. Boyd's sentiment that while the Community Park is part of the La Grange community, it is part of the Eastside of La Grange neighborhood.

### **Board Comments**

Commissioner Vear thanked the park district for the continued support of the Wisemen tree sales.

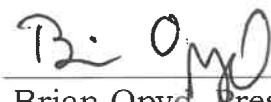
President Opyd commended the work of the referendum that is being done in the parks. He is glad to see the parks cleaned up and ready for use. He added a reminder to the public to attend the tree lighting on 12/11/25 at Waiola Park at 6pm.

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President Opyd announced that there would be no executive session tonight and asked for a motion to adjourn.

**Adjournment**

Commissioner Carter moved for adjournment at 7:03 P.M. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Year and passed unanimously by Voice Vote.

  
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Brian Opyd, President

  
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Jennifer Bechtold, Board Secretary *Approved January 12, 2026*