

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OF THE PARK DISTRICT OF LA GRANGE, ILLINOIS
536 EAST AVENUE, LA GRANGE, ILLINOIS
ELECTRONIC MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM**

APRIL 5, 2021

President Vear called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

The Board President has determined it is not feasible to meet in person under the terms of the Executive Order and therefore the Board will meet remotely as permitted by the Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation in response to COVID-19 (COVID-19 Executive Order 5) exempting the requirement of the Open Meetings Act for the physical presence of the Commissioners at the meeting and permitting Commissioner attendance by video, audio, or telephone access.

PRESENT: Commissioners Lacey, Opyd, O'Brien, Vear

ABSENT: Commissioner Jacobs

STAFF PRESENT: Executive Director Dean Bissias
Superintendent of La Grange Fitness Jenny Bechtold

OTHERS PRESENT: Marian Honel-Wilson, Marlene Schemmel
Becky Lorentzen, Harold Gibson

President Vear welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for any announcements or changes to the agenda. He stated that it would be a short meeting with two items for the Board to vote on.

Communications, Presentations & Declarations

Marian Honel-Wilson, 950 8th Avenue, La Grange, stated that she is the president of the Community Diversity Group and they met with Commissioner Jacobs on Friday and talked about the grant application that the Board is considering. They are excited about the idea and would like to hear more about it tonight.

Marlene Schemmel, 4215 S. Arthur, Brookfield, stated she is on the board of the Community Diversity Group. She missed the meeting on Friday but read the report and is at the meeting to hear how we can get this grant. She is excited about this project that is so well needed.

Staff Reports

Director Bissias reported that he is meeting with an individual tomorrow regarding the donation of a bronze statue.

Action Items

Discussion and/or Approval of an Agreement with Executive Decisions as a Search Firm for the Forthcoming Vacant Executive Director Position of the Park District of La Grange

President Vear asked the Board if there were any comments regarding this Action Item and there were none.

Commissioner O'Brien motioned for Approval of an Agreement with Executive Decisions as a Search Firm for the Forthcoming Vacant Executive Director Position of the Park District of La Grange. Commissioner Opyd seconded the motion which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners O'Brien, Opyd, Vear, Lacey
NAYES: None
ABSENT: Commissioner Jacobs

Discussion and/or Vote on the Application for Community Project Funding from US Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies

President Vear stated that he thinks there is a lot of public here in support of this and he thinks we should go through with it. The application is due on Friday, so it is a tight squeeze. He is looking for letters of support from various organizations including the Community Diversity Group, LeaderShop, schools, and the Village of La Grange. The EPA part of this funding would pertain to the District to cover wastewater and treatments and controlling water run-off into sewers.

Commissioner Lacey stated we should go for the grant. Commissioner Opyd stated that since we can get funding through the environmental side, the proposal includes a lot of work on vegetation and biosoils, and a lot of things that would collect rainwater. We should think about some landscaping that would beautify the open spaces. We have some limitations as to what the grant will allow, but vegetation and landscaping related to rainwater retention could add a lot to the park, and he is excited for this great opportunity. Commissioner O'Brien stated is he all for the grant.

Commissioner O'Brien motioned for Approval of the Application for Community Project Funding from US Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies. Commissioner Opyd seconded the motion which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners O'Brien, Opyd, Lacey, Vear
NAYES: None
ABSENT: Commissioner Jacobs

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Board Comments

Commissioner Opyd thanked everyone for showing up tonight. It really helps us when we go for a grant application that we have the names of those that attended and showed support.

Commissioner O'Brien thanked everyone for coming; it was great to see. He appreciates all the hard work on the grant application and looks forward to it moving ahead.

President Vear thanked all the public for coming. There are as many people as we get at our regular meetings and it is good to see you all. He does not know the odds of getting this grant, but it could be significant for the parks and for La Grange. He appreciates staff working fast to get this done.

Public Comments

Becky Lorentzen thanked everyone for working with them and looks forward to hearing the response to the letter they sent with all the requests for the Community Center. She appreciates the support and Commissioner Jacobs for reaching out regarding the grant. She looks forward to working together in the future. Director Bissias stated he received Becky's email and the answers to it will happen during the capital budget and regular budget process as it gets approved.

Commissioner Lacey thanked everyone on the Zoom meeting for their support so we can become an even stronger Park District and that all La Grange will look alike as far as the Park District is concerned.

President Vear addressed Becky and stated we have letters from each of you. As commissioners we are limited as to what we can legally say. Many times you will get letters back replying that we will put your thoughts forward to the Board. We can speak as individuals but not as a spokesperson for the board to some of these letters, so we must be careful. Please do not get upset that we do not always answer every question in detail, but you have our attention. We appreciate it and look forward to a collaborative relationship.

Adjournment

Commissioner Lacey moved for adjournment at 7:16 P.M. The motion was seconded by Commissioner O'Brien and passed unanimously by Voice Vote.

Robert Vear, President

Constantine Bissias, Secretary
Approved April 12, 2021