

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

**DECEMBER 10, 2018**

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

PRESENT: Commissioners Vear, Penicook, Lacey, Ashby, Jacobs

ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Executive Director Dean Bissias, Superintendent of Finance Leynette Kuniej, Superintendent of Facilities Chris Finn, Superintendent of Recreation Kevin Miller, Superintendent of BASE Leanna Hartung, Superintendent of La Grange Fitness Jenny Clark, Recording Secretary Ginger Zeman

OTHERS PRESENT: Attorney Jim Rock, Hank Beckman from *The Doings*, Tim O'Brien, David Bucaro, Len Matela, Brian Opyd, Pam and John Cianci, Beth Augustine, David Martin, Linda and Anthony Lobello

President Vear welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no changes to the agenda.

**Communications, Presentations & Declarations**

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

David Bucaro, 309 S. Brainard, La Grange, stated La Grange needs a dog park. He was looking forward to hearing the discussion later in the meeting. He hopes the Board will take the dog park under consideration as he hates driving miles to other towns to use their dog parks.

John Cianci, 333 8th Avenue, La Grange, stated he has lived in La Grange for over 18 years and feels the village deserves a dog park. He envisioned a specific place where dogs and people could interact.

Pam Cianci, 331 8th Avenue, La Grange, stated she has always seen dogs on leashes in the parks. She would like to move on with a dog park. She felt there are more dogs than kids in the area. She was hoping there would have been a dog park at the new Meadowbrook rehab facility. She suggested that older adults would love to watch the dogs from the facility. She understands there are issues of dogs hurting people, however, she assumes there are attorneys on

the Board that could be involved with the dog park.

Beth Augustine, 350 S. Madison, La Grange, was happy to hear the dogs on leashes and the dog park issue is moving forward with a healthy discussion and an investigation. She understands there are problems with this issue, however, she does not think it is as bad as it could be. She stated many people walk their dogs or put them in their back yard. A dog park offers different exercise for dogs and for people.

### **Consent Agenda**

Commissioner Penicook motioned to approve Item 3.1 Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of November 12, 2018; Item 3.2 Approval of the Executive Session Board Meeting of November 12, 2018; Item 3.3 Approval of the Financial Reports dated November 30, 2018; Item 3.3 Approval of the Consolidated Vouchers for December dated December 10, 2018; Commissioner Lacey seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Vear, Penicook, Ashby, Lacey, Jacobs  
NAYES: None  
ABSENT: None

### **Staff Reports**

#### **Director Dean Bissias**

- Director Bissias asked the Board to consider electronic board packets going forward. It will save staff time and money.
- Executive session information would be password protected.
- Only a few hard copies would be printed.
- Hard copies of the agenda would be available for the meetings.
- There was Board consensus to move to electronic board packets.

### **Staff Comments**

#### **Superintendent of La Grange Fitness Jenny Clark**

- There are 2130 members.
- So far in December 50 new members joined.
- She is working on more corporate memberships. Amita and Burke Beverage have signed up already.
- A Facebook page was started for La Grange Fitness.
- Moving forward the commissioners would like to see a graph every quarter comparing the original proforma with the operating numbers as well as age demographics.



**Superintendent of Recreation Kevin Miller**

- Fall programming is wrapping up.
- The holiday events are in full swing.
- Registration for the winter/ spring classes have begun.
- The Rec Department is brainstorming new programming for the summer brochure.
- Kevin is working on next year's budget.
- Commissioner Penicook asked for an update on the past brochure mailing problem. Kevin stated the address problem for the brochure mailing has been corrected. The correct number of brochures for households are sent to the post office. It is up to the carriers to deliver the brochures given to them.
- If a resident does not receive a brochure, they must take their complaint to the La Grange Post Office.

**Superintendent of BASE Leanna Hartung**

- Leanna is busy helping with holiday events, planning for summer camps and working on next year's budget.

**Superintendent of Facilities Chris Finn**

- With the SEASPAR Tournament this weekend and Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year's Eve and New Year's Day falling on Mondays and Tuesdays, the next few weekends are slower with rentals.
- He handed out photos of the new playground being installed at the Community Center. It is 75% complete and will have a mulch base.
- Only two of our playgrounds have the rubber pour and play base; Denning Park and Gordon Park. It is very expensive. Those were the only parks where we used grant money for improvements.
- Per Commissioner Lacey's request, Chris will check on outside painting of the Community Center and put it on the list for spring improvements.
- President Vear asked about the tennis nets. Chris said they will be loosened and will stay up all winter.

**Superintendent of Finance Leynette Kuniej**

- Leynette has been working on the ordinances for this meeting.
- She is working on year end reporting for payroll.
- She is working on next year's budget.
- Leynette is investigating new accounting software as our current software cannot be updated and is old code. She hopes to make her decision by year end.

**Attorney Report**

None



**Treasurer Report**

None

**Action Items**

*Discussion and/or Possible Vote on Ordinance 18-10 Ordinance Levying and Assessing Taxes of the Park District of La Grange, Cook County, Illinois for the 2018 Tax Levy Year*

Superintendent of Finance Leynette Kuniej stated there would be a 1.88% increase over the prior year tax levy. After Board discussion, Commissioner Penicook motioned to accept Ordinance 18-10 levying and assessing taxes of the Park District of La Grange, Cook County, Illinois for the 2018 Tax Levy Year. Commissioner Jacobs seconded the motion which passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioner Vear, Penicook, Lacey, Ashby, Jacobs  
NAYES: None  
ABSENT: None

*Discussion and/or Possible Vote on Ordinance 18-11 an Ordinance Directing the Cook County Clerk to Reduce the Park District of La Grange's Real Estate Tax Levy Year 2018*

Superintendent of Finance Leynette Kuniej stated this ordinance instructs the Cook County Clerk to reduce the General Operating Fund levy as necessary to comply with the tax cap. Commissioner Penicook motioned to approve Ordinance 18-11 directing the Cook County Clerk to reduce the Park District of La Grange's real estate tax levy year 2018. Commissioner Lacey seconded the motion which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioner Vear, Penicook, Lacey, Ashby, Jacobs  
NAYES: None  
ABSENT: None

*Discussion and/or Possible Vote on Ordinance 18-12 an Ordinance Abating the Taxes Heretofore Levied for the Year 2018 to Pay the Principal of and Interest on \$2,530,000 General Obligation Park Bonds (Alternate Revenue Source) Series 2012 C, of the Park District of La Grange, Cook County, Illinois*

Superintendent of Finance Leynette Kuniej explained that this payment will be made from the proceeds of the General Obligation Bonds issued last month. Commissioner Lacey motioned to approve Ordinance 18-12 abating the taxes heretofore levied for the year 2018 to pay the principal of and interest on \$2,530,000 General Obligation Park Bonds (Alternate Revenue Source) Series 2012C, of the Park District of La Grange, Cook County, Illinois. Commissioner Jacobs seconded the motion which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:



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AYES: Commissioner Vear, Penicook, Lacey, Ashby, Jacobs  
NAYES: None  
ABSENT: None

*Discussion and/or Possible Vote on Ordinance 18-13 an Ordinance Abating the Taxes Heretofore levied for the Year 2018 to Pay the Principal of and Interest on \$1,590,000 General Obligation Park Bonds (Alternate Revenue Source) Series 2016, of the Park District of La Grange, Cook County, Illinois*

Superintendent of Finance Leynette Kuniej stated that this payment will also be made from the proceeds of the General Obligation Bonds issued last month. Commissioner Penicook motioned to approve Ordinance 18-13 abating the taxes heretofore levied for the year 2018 to pay the principal of and interest on \$1,590,000 General Obligation Park Bonds (Alternate Revenue Source) Series 2016, of the Park District of La Grange, Cook County, Illinois. Commissioner Lacey seconded the motion which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Vear, Penicook, Lacey, Ashby, Jacobs  
NAYES: None  
ABSENT: None

*Discussion and/or Possible Vote on Board Meeting Dates for 2019*

Commissioner Penicook motioned to approve the following Board Meeting Dates for 2019: Monday, January 14; Monday, February 11; Monday, March 4; Monday, April 8; Monday, May 13; Monday, June 10; Monday, July 15; Monday, August 19; Monday, September 9; Monday, October 14; Monday, November 18; and Monday, December 9. Commissioner Ashby seconded the motion which passed unanimously by Voice Vote.

*Discussion and/or Possible Vote on Authorization of Additional Payment to IMRF for 2018*

After Board discussion, Commissioner Penicook motioned to authorize an additional payment of \$15,000 to IMRF for 2018. Commissioner Lacey seconded the motion which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Vear, Penicook, Lacey, Ashby, Jacobs  
NAYES: None  
ABSENT: None

### **Board Business**

#### **Old Business**

*Discussion and Possible Vote on a Dog Park or Allowing Dogs on Leashes in Some Specified Parks*



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- Superintendent of Facilities Chris Finn stated he had no updates on responses from the dog park survey from the neighboring communities.
- In his board report, Director Bissias printed the minimum requirements from the Cook County website for a dog park: a license is required, only dogs on leashes allowed, owners must pick up their dog waste.
- It was decided at the last meeting to select two parks for a trial to allow dogs on leashes only. Instead, staff recommends using all the parks except for Gordon Park and Sedgwick Park, due to the considerable programming at those parks.
- Commissioner Lacey was concerned about the financing of a dog park, membership, and clean up. She stated not everyone will be responsible and clean up their own dog waste.
- Director Bissias will work with Attorney Jim Rock to create a resolution amending the existing ordinance to allow dogs on leashes in our parks.
- The Board can discuss this resolution at the next meeting and recommend any changes they might have.
- Commissioner Ashby would like an annual review of the ordinance.
- Commissioner Jacobs stated that signage is important in the parks. The signs should read "dogs on leash only," and "dogs are not allowed in playgrounds and athletic fields."
- Director Bissias stated when construction is complete at Gordon Park, there is an area by the old tennis courts that could be used for a small dog park.
- Commissioner Jacobs stated that investigating an off leash dog park will continue, however, it is not in our budget at this time.
- Commissioner Jacobs recommended that a dog park user group should be formed.

Commissioner Lacey motioned to allow staff to write an ordinance to allow leashed dogs in our parks. It will be completed by the next meeting on January 14, 2019. Commissioner Jacobs seconded the motion which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Vear, Penicook, Lacey, Ashby, Jacobs  
NAYES: None  
ABSENT: None

### **New Business**

*None*

### **Committee Reports**

#### *Administration Committee*

Commissioner Ashby stated he will be working on the budget. Director Bissias explained that the MBO (management by objective) process evaluates a project by a point system and dollar value. A dog park must be investigated and



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evaluated before March and approved in April for next year's budget. Director Bissias explained that our village is land locked and it will be difficult to find an area for a dog park.

### *Public Relations Committee*

None

### *Finance & Capital Project Committee*

None

### *User Group Committee*

None

### *Marketing Committee*

None

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

Dave Martin, 624 7th Avenue, La Grange, asked if anyone cross checked with the village and the counties regarding rabies vaccinations. He stated not many animals are properly licensed and the village does little to enforce it. He asked about dog bites in the parks. Director Bissias stated he would be notified if it happened in our parks. Commissioner Jacobs stated that according to the Survey Monkey results, incidents of bites were low. President Vear added that the bigger problem is waste.

Tony LoBello, 108 S. Waiola, La Grange, asked the Board to look at Katherine Legge Park in Hinsdale. It is a very social park. President Vear noted the size of that park is very large.

Brian Opyd, 109 S. 8th Avenue, La Grange, suggested looking at the north corner of Sedgwick Park for a dog park.

## **Board Comments**

Commissioner Jacobs thanked the public for attending the meeting. She thanked staff for all their hard work. She asked the public to email her if they would like to be part of a dog user group.

Commissioner Ashby stated he would be stepping down as a commissioner of the Park District of La Grange. He thanked the Board and staff for all their hard work. He was proud of how much the Park District has evolved over the past years. It has been an enjoyable experience working on the Board and working with Director Bissias. He apologizes for stepping down midterm, however, he has personal obligations. He has been on the Board for 14 years but stated he will be happy to help and stay involved.

Commissioner Lacey stated she has learned a lot from Commissioner Ashby



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and she loves his lovely wife. She thanked the public for attending the meeting and being interested in what we are doing. She sees a dog park in her future. She complimented staff on the beautiful Christmas decorations at the Rec Center and the beautiful new playground at the Community Center.

Commissioner Penicook stated that Commissioner Ashby has been our finance voice for the past 14 years and despite some occasional frustration, all in all it was good. Bob was our voice of conservative spending from balancing taxes to maintaining our facilities. She hopes someone will continue his conservative outlook. Regarding the dog park, Commissioner Penicook stated the Board needs to carefully look at all sides of the issue. The District was sued in the past and we do not want that to happen again. She wanted the public to know there are many other things that staff is working on and we want to be able to afford a dog park. She stated the Board will still move forward with this project at a pace that is well thought out and fiscally responsible. The Board cannot be pressed into implementing something that only a few may want. Commissioner Penicook thanked the public for attending the meeting and letting the Board know who is supporting this issue. She stated many good things have happened this calendar year and we are moving along in the right direction.

Director Bissias added that there will not be an ice rink this year at Gilbert Park. No one has stepped up to volunteer for the Pond Posse and staff does not have the resources to maintain it alone.

President Vear noted that Commissioner Ashby was the one that got him here and he thanked Bob for his time. He thanked the public for their persistence advocating for the dog park. He thanked staff for all they do and wished everyone a very merry Christmas and happy holidays.

### **Executive Session**

At 8:40 P.M. Commissioner Lacey motioned the Board convene to Executive Session pursuant to Item 12.5 Review of Closed Executive Session Minutes, 5 ILCS 120/2 (c)(21). Commissioner Penicook seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by Voice Vote.

At 8:47 P.M. the Board resumed the regular meeting.

Commissioner Penicook motioned to keep the Executive Minutes confidential for the next six months. Commissioner Jacobs seconded the motion which passed unanimously by Voice Vote.



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**Adjournment**

Commissioner Jacobs moved for adjournment at 8:48 P.M. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Penicook and passed unanimously by Voice Vote.

  
Constantine Bissias, Secretary  
Approved 01/14/2019

 1/14/18  
Robert Vear, President