

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

FEBRUARY 14, 2022

President Vear called the meeting to order at 6:03 P.M.

PRESENT: Commissioners Opyd, Posey, Vear

ABSENT: Commissionner Lacey, Commissionner Lawrence

STAFF PRESENT: Executive Director Jenny Bechtold
Superintendent of Finance Leynette Kuniej
Superintendent of Facilities Chris Finn
Superintendent of Recreation Kevin Miller
Superintendent of BASE Leanna Hartung
Park Foreman Claudia Galla
Recording Secretary Linda Muth

OTHERS PRESENT: Attorney Derke Price
Marian Honel-Wilson
Darrell Garrison, Steven Halberg – Planning Resources
Ron McGrath – TRIA Architecture
Ray Ochromowicz – Executive Decisions

*Commissioner Lacey joined the meeting during the PRI presentation portion of the meeting.

Commissioner Opyd motioned to allow Commissioner Lawrence to participate in the meeting telephonically. Commissioner Posey seconded the motion which passed by Roll Call vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Opyd, Posey, Vear

NAYES: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Lacey

*Commissioner Lawrence joined the meeting telephonically.

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

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Communications, Presentations & Declarations

Public Comments/Participation (Board Manual Section #152)

None

PRI Presentation

Planning Resources Inc. was in attendance to give a presentation on the comprehensive master plan (CMP). Darrell Garrison, president of PRI, introduced his team, which included Steve Halberg, project manager; Ray Ochromowicz from Executive Decisions; and Ron McGrath from TRIA Architecture.

Darrell gave an overview of the progress made on the CMP, and Steve followed with information on the results of the statistically valid survey. Ron detailed the findings on the district's facilities, and Ray presented information on programming.

The Board of Commissioners and executive director posed questions at the conclusion of the presentation.

Will the board have access to all the survey results, including the generic survey?

Yes, all the data will be included in the appendix.

What is the definition of "satisfaction" with the district's parks?

Respondents were asked to rank them from 1 to 5.

Were our parks compared to NRPA standards or per capita recommendations?

The district has good distribution of parkland throughout La Grange, however, based on population we are at a deficit.

Do we have good allocation of space for diversified use and were opportunities for new use of facilities looked at?

They will look at how existing buildings are currently used and alternate uses.

At a cost of \$300,000 to make the restrooms at the community center accessible, at what point is it better to let the building go or spend the money to repurpose the facility?

If you consider that it would be approximately six million dollars to replace the community center, that figure is a small percentage. If the building were to be torn down and replaced in a new location, we need to consider that it would change the distribution of resources and neighborhoods served.

Were our programs compared to the offerings at surrounding communities?

Where are patrons receiving services if not with us?

The assessment did not go that deep; there are too many to compare. However, the information will be included in the appendix.

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Will there be an action plan and prioritization for ten years?

Yes, there will be an action plan for parks, facilities, and programming. They recommend continuing community engagement on a regular basis for programming feedback with short surveys at the end of each program and others using Survey Monkey.

Will the aesthetics of the document be improved and include graphics to hold the reader's attention? It would also be helpful to include a summary of each section.

The final version will have graphics and photos and be visually interesting in a two-column newsprint style.

Will the park evaluations include dates for equipment replacement, which is useful for grants? It would be helpful to have a single document with these details.

PRI used the district's capital replacement plan to determine these dates but did not include them in the CMP. The board requested they be added to the CMP to have one single document

We are under the national average for program success rates. If we make improvements to move that up would there be a financial benefit?

It is hard to give a blanket answer to that. Some programs are offered as community service, some are intended to break even, and others are designated to generate revenue. We must decide what fits in with our philosophy and goals. We should limit our expenses to 70% for a program, compare our fees to our competition, assess the quality of our programs, raise fees if practical, and strive to be the best value. The district could consider reevaluating instructor/contractor percentages and consider a flat fee per participant.

There is nothing in the table of contents on the survey results. How will they be implemented in the document?

The highlights will be included in the public engagement section. All of the 600 plus documents and charts will be provided to the board and staff.

President Vear thanked Darrell Garrison and his team for the presentation.

Consent Agenda

Commissioner Opyd motioned to approve Item 3.1 Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of January 10, 2022; Item 3.2 Approval of the Financial Reports dated January 31, 2022; Item 3.3 Approval of the Consolidated Vouchers for February dated February 14, 2022. Commissioner Posey seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

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Staff Reports

Executive Director Jenny Bechtold

- Director Bechtold reported that with the restrictions easing on 2/28 we hope to see the mask and vaccine mandates end. We will continue to watch and follow the requirements.
- Jenny stated that she included a new drawing of the parking lot with several minor changes. There is a kickout by the pickleball courts to assist with backing out, and the carriage walk on the north side of the walkway has been moved up to the parking lot, and planting walls were added. We must work with the Village, IDOT and MWRD so it will take longer. Due to rising costs and to save time, when we go out to bid, we will bid for all asphalt with an alternate for permeable pavers in the new lot and permeable pavers in the front lot. This will allow us to select based on benefit and cost.
- Phase I for 511 Cossitt is complete, and they recommend a Phase 2. She hopes to have that report next week.
- The Alta survey is in the hands of W.T. Engineering, and we are waiting for their report.

Commissioner Lawrence asked if we were planning to use a construction manager for the parking lot bids and what the timeline will be. Jenny said the plan is not to use a construction manager but to use a general contractor approach. Henry Bros. is aware of the decision to move forward with a general contractor, not a construction manager. Staff agree this will be more economical. Once everything is done the Board can see the bids prior to them going out. She spoke with W.T. and Cody/Braun and they hope to have them complete and out to bid in April.

Staff Comments

Superintendent of Finance Leynette Kuniej

- Superintendent Kuniej reported that she has been busy working on the budget for the new fiscal year.

Commissioner Opyd requested that, given the feedback on inequities (in the CMP survey), could the budget include an analysis of the expenses per park and facility for the past year and next year. Leynette stated that the TRIA report was taken into consideration in developing the capital budget. President Vear asked about the tax bill for 610 East Avenue and what the E911 locator item is. Leynette answered that the tax bill is approximately \$5,600, and we will get an adjustment back based on our tax-exempt status. The E911 will pinpoint where in our building a 911 call was made, and she is working on this item.

Superintendent of Recreation Kevin Miller

- Superintendent Miller had nothing new to add to his written report and was open to questions.

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President Vear asked about open positions. Kevin stated that they began accepting applications for summer camp in mid-January. He has only received one application so far but expects more during spring break. We are back to offering the pre-pandemic camp structure with a regular camp day and am/pm care options. He would like to hire 20-25 counselors.

President Vear commented on staff goals and recommended putting a large “C” when they are complete so the goals can be admirably recognized.

La Grange Fitness Report

- Director Bechtold reported that we are still hovering around 1,600 members. She hopes this will increase if the mask mandate is removed. There was a decline because insurance-based memberships expired in December.
- Jenny stated that group fitness is picking up and additional classes have been added.
- With the current climate, things are going as expected and we have exceeded budgeted revenue at just under \$150,000 for the year.

Superintendent of BASE Leanna Hartung

- Superintendent Hartung reported that she was able to open some spots for the wait list at Cossitt School.

Superintendent of Facilities Chris Finn

- Superintendent Finn stated that he is preparing for the busy season for indoor and outdoor facility use.
- Schools have begun submitting their park requests for their end-of-year picnics.
- Building rentals for February and March look better than January, and he hopes the upward trend continues.

Commissioner Posey suggested that the end-of-year school picnics may create a good marketing opportunity with a captive audience of parents and children.

Park Foreman Claudia Galla

- Foreman Galla reported that staff has completed their work at the community center.
- Claudia stated that the tree contractor has moved on to Rotary Park.

Commissioners Opyd and Posey stated that they would love to drop in to see the work done at the community center.

Commissioner Lawrence asked if there is a minimum acreage requirement for the ComEd green region grant and offered her assistance with the application. Claudia stated she did not see a minimum and that she is excited about this grant, which promotes building pollinator habitats. She needs time to do

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research and thinks next year would be a suitable time to go for the grant. Denning would be a great location for drainage planting. There was also brief discussion on the objective to replace drinking fountains.

Attorney Report

Attorney Price stated that he has been working on the closing for the Cossitt property. He has been following the COVID changes announced by the Governor and county. The school rulings do not affect us, other than possibly childcare.

Treasurer Report

None

Action Items

Discussion and/or Approval of Board Manual Policy Updates

Director Bechtold reported that she has been working on the policy manual as issues come up. At the August meeting it was discussed to offer increased in-kind benefits for staff. After evaluating this and speaking to other districts, we would like to give the same benefits to all part-time staff regardless of their IMRF status and waive 100% of the fitness center fee, as well as offer the same rental discounts to all part-time staff. We are still struggling to attract part-time staff.

The sections on sexual harassment, drug free workplace, and service animals have been updated to follow legal requirements. Other changes are to get things in order, including the removal of section 728 which we cannot find, and reissuing section 736 with the addition of a cell phone policy outlining cell phones in the workplace and reimbursement options.

President Vear asked for a motion to approve the revisions and additions to the board policy manual. The motion was so moved by Commissioner Posey, seconded by Commissioner Lacey, and passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

Discussion and/or Approval of First Reading of the General Operations Budget for Fiscal Year 2022-2023 to be Displayed No Later than March 7, 2022, Allowing the Budget to be Put on Display (Minimum 30-Day Requirement)

Director Bechtold stated that in the past we would have held an additional board meeting to discuss the budget and MBO's, but it was discussed to streamline the process. For the public record we must have something on record stating that we will post 30 days prior. We plan to publish no later than March 7th.

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President Vear encouraged the Board to review the budget numbers. With all that is going on, BASE is still up money for the year. It is incredible that staff continues to show a profit.

Commissioner Opyd motioned to approve the First Reading of the General Operations Budget for Fiscal Year 2022-2023 to be Displayed No Later than March 7, 2022, Allowing the Budget to be Put on Display (Minimum 30-Day Requirement). Commissioner Lacey seconded the motion, which passed unanimously Voice Vote.

Board Business

New Business

Discussion and/or Approval of Warren Oil Fuel Tank and Independent Contractor Agreement

Director Bechtold stated that we are moving forward with this project, and she is seeking approval for the tank procurement and using Warren Oil as the sole fuel provider. Other companies would not allow leasing and had hidden costs. Warren will assist with installation for a minimum cost and would be our ongoing fuel supplier, but we need to guarantee them at least 12 months. We have received the permit from the State Fire Marshall, and we hope to have the project completed by September 2022 or sooner.

President Vear asked for a motion to Approve the Warren Oil Fuel Tank and Independent Contractor Agreement. The motion was so moved by Commissioner Posey, seconded by Commissioner Opyd, and passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

Discussion and/or Approval of a Liaison for a PDLG Foundation

Director Bechtold reported that some of the people she has contacted cannot assist with the foundation. It is important that some of the foundation members have previous board experience. Moving forward will require the formation of a committee to assist with this, and it should be a separate entity from staff. Attorney Price added that code permits the district to launch the foundation, but it should not be the director's project. Jenny can provide administrative help to get it going, but she will not be on the foundation. They can do the legal work, but it is important that a board member serve as the liaison. The foundation should hold their own meetings and prepare their own minutes. The meetings would not have to comply with the Open Meetings Act. Attorney Price explained that the liaison would be a non-voting member of the foundation board and be involved in higher policy decisions between the mission of the park district and the mission of the foundation. Commissioner Posey expressed interested in being involved, but her work on the LGBA board

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might not make it a good fit. Attorney Price agreed that this would be a concern. Commissioner Lawrence stated that she would take the role.

Discussion and/or Approval of Energy Pricing Procurement

Director Bechtold stated that our natural gas contract is up at the end of June, and she has been working with Supt. of Finance Kuniej to evaluate our options. She has been watching the market since January, and it is very volatile. Last week's pricing was a 52% increase. She has stayed in contact with Nania and would like to continue a market watch.

The 16-month contract for the electric is an easy decision. We can add our six satellite facilities and get instant savings. The contract expiration would tie-in with the August 2023 contract that will be up for the recreation center building, allowing us to then merge all the buildings into one contract. It currently offers a 17% savings, and though it may vary slightly tomorrow, we would like to approve this one tonight.

A motion was requested to authorize the executive director to do a market watch on natural gas for 90 days and lock-in after continuous watch and consultation with Nania. The motion was so moved by Commissioner Opyd, seconded by Commissioner Lacey, and passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

A motion was requested for the Board to approve the 16-month proposal for the satellite buildings at a cost of .06476 plus or minus 2% and align all buildings for renewal in August 2023. The motion was so moved by Commissioner Lacey, seconded by Commissioner Posey, and passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

Old Business

None

Committee Reports

Administration Committee

Commissioner Lacey is still trying to recruit members and determine where the committee is going.

Parks and Open Lands

Commissioner Lawrence stated that she would like to circulate copies of the

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CMP for comments.

Finance & Capital Project Committee

President Vear had no report at this time.

Arts & Cultural Affairs Committee

Commissioner Posey stated that she met with Director Bechtold and is formulating what the committee will look like and its goals and parameters. She has spoken with several members of the community that expressed interest in serving. It is still in the development stage, and the success of the committee would be helped if any interested staff would like to join.

Marketing/Social Media Committee

Commissioner Opyd had no report at this time.

Public Comments (Board Manual Section #152)

None

Board Comments

Commissioner Opyd thanked everyone for their innovative ideas, time, and effort. He loves the green space and pollinator program and appreciates Claudia looking at new grants and likes seeing the facility price comparisons. The community center looks fantastic and the performance metrics for goals and objectives look good.

Commissioner Lacey spoke with the vice-president of La Grange National Bank regarding the district's treasurer position, and he is willing to assist in any capacity.

Commissioner Posey stated that she enjoyed attending the annual park conference as a commissioner this year instead of an attorney. She heard a lot of ideas, and it is good to be inspired by what other park districts are doing.

Commissioner Lawrence stated that she likes the attention to green infrastructure and the grant to create pollinator gardens. She thought the conference was good and she learned a lot.

President Vear stated that the conference was highly informative. He hopes that the staff got a lot out of the presentations they attended there, and that they share what they learned with other staff. He appreciates seeing the staff's goals; it is important to see what they want to focus on.

President Vear announced that the Board is going to executive session and the public may rejoin the meeting afterward.

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Executive Session

At 8:34 P.M. Commissioner Opyd motioned the Board convene to Executive Session pursuant to Item 12.4 Personnel 5 ILCS 120/2 (c)(1). Commissioner Lacey seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Opyd, Lacey, Posey, Lawrence Vear
NAYES: None
ABSENT: Commissioner Lawrence

At 9:13 P.M. Commissioner Opyd motioned the Board arise from Executive Session and Commissioner Lacey seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by Voice Vote.

The Board resumed the regular meeting at 9:13 P.M.


Action on Items Discussed in Executive Session

None

Adjournment

Commissioner Opyd moved for adjournment at 9:14 P.M. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Posey and passed unanimously by Voice Vote.



Robert Vear, President

Jenny Bechtold, Board Secretary
Approved March 14, 2022