

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

MAY 10, 2021

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

PRESENT: Commissioners O'Brien, Lacey, Vear

ABSENT: Commissioner Opyd, Commissioner Jacobs

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Attorney Derke Price
Nancy Bramson, Marian Honel, Chester Lacey,
Thelma Montgomery, Charles Gilbert, Tim Davis,
April Hill, Alexander Hill

*Commissioner Opyd joined the meeting at 7:02 P.M.

*Commissioner Jacobs joined the meeting at 7:05 P.M.

President Vear welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for any announcements or changes to the agenda. Director Bechtold stated that Park Foreman Claudia Galla is in attendance and will be joining us at future board meetings.

Commissioner O'Brien motioned that the Board appoint Interim Executive Director Jenny Bechtold as Interim Secretary to the Board. Commissioner Lacey seconded the motion which passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners O'Brien, Lacey, Vear

NAYES: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Opyd, Commissioner Jacobs

Administration of Oaths

Director Bechtold congratulated President Vear and Commissioner Lacey on their election to the Board. They were sworn in and read the Oath of Office.

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Commissioner Jacobs was sworn in and read the Oath of Office later in the meeting.

Communications, Presentations & Declarations

Public Comments/Participation (Board Manual Section #152)

Nancy Bramson, 4246 DuBois, Brookfield, stated she is in attendance on behalf of the Community Diversity Group. She thanked the Park District for the prompt response to their concerns and taking first steps. She understands the remainder of the work at the community center will be handled in a timely manner, and she appreciates us looking into the cosmetic concerns. The community center is the second most used building in the summer, and our efforts build trust in the community.

Consent Agenda

Commissioner Lacey motioned to approve Item 3.1 Approval of the Public Hearing Minutes of April 12, 2021; Item 3.2 Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of April 12, 2021; Item 3.3 Approval of the Minutes of the Special Board Meeting of April 29, 2021; Item 3.4 Approval of the Financial Reports dated April 30, 2021; Item 3.5 Approval of the Consolidated Vouchers for May dated May 10, 2021. Commissioner O'Brien seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

Staff Reports

Interim Director's Report

- Interim Executive Director Jenny Bechtold stated that it has been a great six days in the new position. She has met individually with staff regarding the transition.
- Jenny reported that we are working diligently on the comprehensive master plan and she passed out an updated schedule. She recommends pushing the meetings of 6/1 and 6/7 back to 6/7 and 6/14 to give us more time to promote them. The first meeting with PRI was a branding meeting with staff to discuss branding the plan. One idea discussed is that we want to get back to normal, and "rediscover fun" was suggested as a brand to rediscover recreation.
- She stated that staff has developed internal goals which will set us up to move forward this year, and she hopes the Board had a chance to review them.
- La Grange Fitness plans to offer student membership specials this summer.

Staff Comments

Superintendent of Facilities Chris Finn

- Superintendent Finn reported that there is a lot going on with facilities

and parks, and we are busier with more rentals coming in. We will see how things shape up this week with the potential opening of the bridge phase.

- Chris stated that Andrea will be moving to the recreation department and he will be hiring a new facility person.
- He is working with Claudia, the parks department, and contractors on projects at the community center.
- The splash pad has been turned on and he is working out a few kinks.
- Operation Support Our Troops is holding a media day tomorrow at Denning Park to announce the Field of Honor event they will hold there from June 7-14. This will be an awesome event for the Park District and the community to support our troops and frontline workers, and there will be an opening ceremony on the first day. There was an article in *The Doings* about the event. They will set up 500 flags across the park which are available for purchase and include a dog tag to name the flag's honoree. Flags can be purchased on site at the park and on the group's website. There are some local sponsors, and the movie theater will have information on their kiosk.

President Vear asked about security for the event. Chris answered that OSOT will handle security, and they have contacted local police departments. Commissioner Opyd stated that he may be able to attend the media day.

Superintendent of Recreation Kevin Miller

- Superintendent Miller stated that the spring season is wrapping up, and the recreation department is getting ready for summer.
- Kevin reported that they are working on day camps and will begin hiring camp counselors. They are also working on the summer brochure. Resident registration for summer programs is this Wednesday and non-resident registration is next Wednesday.
- He stated that the Park Pride event is May 22, and if any commissioners would like to help at the event, they should contact Teresa. Commissioners could be assigned to different park sites to avoid the meeting requirements.
- He hopes to have a full recreation department by the end of June.

Commissioner Jacobs commented that she liked the web analytics and asked if most people are viewing the site on mobile and tablet devices. Kevin said they were and that searches for programs were up in April and May with day camps being the second most searched; BASE has always been the most popular search. Engagement for the brochure and recreation is the highest we have had since we began tracking last November. Kevin stated we had a strong spring season and he is excited for summer. Youth athletics is starting to grow again and that is a good sign.

Park Foreman Claudia Galla

- Park Foreman Galla stated that the busy season is starting, and crews have started mowing and trimming at the parks. The bulk of the work is mowing for the user groups.
- Claudia reported that it was a good year for trees and they have completed their spring planting. In addition to District supplied trees, we had a couple of donations from the La Grange Garden Club and another from a neighbor near Spring Park that donated funds to plant arborvitaes along the fence line. Six commemorative trees were planted, which is a lot compared to the usual two or three. We also had an Arbor Day donation of a bitternut hickory tree from the Board which was planted at Denning Park and dedicated to Dean upon his retirement.
- She stated they are addressing the repairs at the community center. Planters will be installed when the funding is approved in the budget.
- The platform on a playground piece was replaced at Elm Park. We are patching it, but this particular piece of equipment should be taken out within the next few years.
- She has hired seasonal summer staff and a new full-time employee, Vince Gonzalez, to fill the vacancy left by Ben.
- She is working on Park Pride logistics with the committee and procuring materials and supplies.
- The community garden plots are almost full.
- There was a press release in *The Patch* on the Urban and Community Forestry Grant and the social media advisory committee will meet sometime soon. The management plan must be tweaked before meeting with contractors to finalize the document.

Superintendent of Finance Leynette Kuniej

- Supt. of Finance Kuniej stated that she closed out the fiscal year end with \$190,000 in excess revenue, though approximately \$12,000 in additional bills have been received that will be put through.
- Leynette has inputted the new fiscal year budget in the system and processed COLA increases for part-time staff for this week's paycheck.
- She is changing over the filing system for the new fiscal year and preparing for the audit next week.
- She and Terri have CPR training this week for recertification.

President Vear stated that the income numbers are depressing, but it is good to see that we got to where we did for year end. He also asked for clarification of the last two pages of financial reports. Leynette stated that a couple of checks had the same pay date of the prior month, so she had to print a different report to show them; they were not in last month.

Director Bechtold asked the Board if they saw her recommendation in her report for a format change to the board packets. She suggested that the department superintendents prepare a single staff report with input from their

staff to reduce the redundancy of multiple reports. She also recommends including memos to summarize items requiring board review or approval. She included a memo in tonight's packet for Item 7.3, the facilities license agreement with the Catholic Bishop of Chicago. The memo highlights the background, changes, and staff recommendations, which allows the Board to focus on the most pertinent information. The Board agreed it would be helpful and Jenny will include memos moving forward.

Attorney Report

Attorney Price stated he has nothing new to report.

Treasurer Report

None

Action Items

Discussion and/or Approval of Updated MBO's

Director Bechtold stated that she has included four new MBO's in the board packet for consideration. The first MBO is for removal of the underground gas tanks in front of the recreation center. They are single wall steel tanks from 1983, and with age comes risk. She spoke with Tricore Environmental and they could come in to determine if we qualify to use the leaky underground storage fund from fuel taxes, which would cover up to one million dollars, with the District paying only a \$10,000 deductible. She would like to be proactive instead of reactive and fund it in the capital budget, if approved. She has also included an MBO for new above ground gas tanks. Purchasing them could run \$100,000, but she has found companies that will give us tanks if we purchase fuel from them, and has quotes from two of them. We would have costs for installation, including a concrete pad, and she suggests putting it on the northeast side of the building in front of the fencing. We would need to talk to the Village for approval and work out logistics, but the underground leaky fund and leasing a new tank is a great opportunity. The current tanks are taking on water and incur a lot of repair costs.

Commissioner Jacobs stated she was glad this was being discussed. She knew the tanks were old but not that they required frequent repairs, and we do not need the large 8,500-gallon tanks we have now. We could get them out of the way with the new parking lot going in. Jenny stated we could get two 500-gallon tanks or one 500-gallon tank for regular gas and a 1,000 gallon tank for diesel. The diesel tank could be split for on-road and off-road use, which is cheaper by 20-30 cents. The risk is that gas pricing is volatile, so buying gas for a smaller 500-gallon tank could require additional purchases at a higher price. Claudia added that we do not need the big tanks we have, and the repairs to the tanks are costly. She never orders more than 3,000 gallons per year. We would also save money on the expensive inspections required for the underground tanks. Jenny stated that it is a lengthy process which could take 2-3 years, and it goes through the EPA. They would secure the site, make it

safe, and do continued testing. President Vear asked Jenny to check on any requirements or liability risk for cleaning up.

Director Bechtold explained that the third MBO is for the community center windows to be repaired and a cement block to be removed from the basketball courts there. She stated that the fourth MBO is to replace the server, which is over eight years old, and is necessary for us to function. Commissioner Opyd commented that server trends are for hosted services instead of on-site, and asked if we want to invest in the cloud. Nobody is hardware free, but there is a lot of cloud hosting going on. We should ask what others are doing and consider pricing. Leynette stated that RecTrac and Tyler are on our server, and Jenny said she would discuss this with our IT support.

Commissioner Opyd motioned to approve the MBO's for the server, window repairs and removal of the cement block at the community center, and replacement of the gas tanks. Commissioner Jacobs seconded the motion which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

Discussion and/or Approval of Update to Capital Budget

Director Bechtold stated that we are requesting approval of the capital budget in its current state. We still have some flexibility in the budget with \$30,000 available for projects. We are investigating areas now and would like to assign the money later. We have funded as many items as we could that should be completed for safety or operational needs. The items that are highlighted are to be removed. There are still many unknowns with the parking lot project. Chris added that the last column on the right are projects that are being funded.

Commissioner Jacobs asked about repainting the tall walls, which was not funded, and she stated that the rug in the social area looks awful and asked whether it is budgeted for replacement. Chris responded that the tall walls in the social area cannot be done in-house but that most other areas have been repainted. The rug would be a capital replacement and is not currently in the budget. Jenny added that with construction costs being so high we are being diligent on what we do.

Commissioner Opyd asked what is in the ADA improvement plan for this year. Chris stated that we had a company come in 5-6 years ago to look at all our doors, entranceways, stairs, etc., to determine what was not ADA compliant. They put together an ADA plan and we have been ticking away with it, though not too much has been done in the last 1-2 years. Some projects can wait, while others must be done if you renovate the area in any way. Commissioner Jacobs asked if the ADA plan includes paths in the parks or benches, which would be a good roadmap for the parks. Chris said it did. For example, when we redid the tennis courts at Sedgwick Park, we also redid the ramp there.

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Commissioner O'Brien motioned to approve the 2021-2022 budget as is, with the remainder of the money to be reallocated at the next board meeting. Commissioner Lacey seconded the motion which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

Discussion and/or Approval of Facilities License Agreement with the Catholic Bishop of Chicago

Director Bechtold stated that we have a new facility license agreement with the Catholic Bishop of Chicago for St. Frances Xavier for the BASE program. It is the same contract with two changes, including section 3A, which removed our access to the annex room. The second change accommodates us with additional time required for a displacement notice. The memo Jenny included for this contract demonstrates transparency, what has changed from the prior year contract, and staff recommendations. Commissioner Opyd commended Jenny for a good job on this; he knew what he needed to focus on.

Commissioner Opyd motioned to approve the Facilities License Agreement with the Catholic Bishop of Chicago. Commissioner O'Brien seconded the motion which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

Board Business

New Business

Discussion and Nominations for Board President, Board Vice President, Board 2nd Vice President, Board Secretary, and Treasurer (vote to be at the June board meeting)

President – Commissioner O'Brien nominated President Vear

Board Vice President – Commissioner Lacey nominated Commissioner O'Brien

Board 2nd Vice President – Commissioner O'Brien nominated Commissioner Lacey

Board Secretary – Jenny Bechtold was appointed Interim Board Secretary earlier in the meeting

Treasurer – Commissioner O'Brien nominated Robert Metzger

Old Business

Nicor Property Updates/Discussion, Environmental Reports & Alternative Drawings

Director Bechtold reported that we received the soil boring results and she included copies of emails in the board packet to help with navigating the report. There is a lot of talk about volume control and what we can do. The first idea of a rain guard is not going to work with 3-feet of separation needed. We

can install a gravel trench beneath the asphalt or 25% of the lot must be permeable pavers.

A new drawing is included depicting an option of five pickleball courts on the south side of the lot with sliding gates. Jenny spoke with Charity from the Village and she is looking into our zoning to see if this is possible. They also discussed possibly adding a couple of basketball hoops at the end. If this is not allowed with the zoning, we would have to request a variance. Commissioner Opyd asked if the sliding gates allow for parking in that area. He likes the innovative design with multi-use. It could be great in the summer months during the day when there will be less cars, and it allows us to find a solution for the whole community. Jenny stated that the sliding gates would allow for parking with the option of removable poles, or we could use portable pickleball nets. She met with a pickleball ambassador today, and he stated that many courts keep the nets in storage containers accessible to players.

President Vear stated that the depth of the water could pose a problem and we need alternatives. The requirement for 25% pavers or a trench affects the whole plan and the architect's design. The pavers could not be used for the pickleball courts. He questioned if we would need the big wall if we eliminated the 6-foot drop by installing additional pavers. Commissioner Opyd asked what the trade-off would be if the entire lot was done in pavers. He requested that Jenny ask the engineers if the 6-foot drop could be eliminated, what the change in depth would be, and the cost in tiers from partial to all pavers. President Vear would like information on the most economical option and how the detention pond would be affected. Jenny stated that the architects did not consider the change to be significant. The lot is the same size; there is just a bit of a difference on what we are putting in it. They will move forward with a new drawing when we make a decision and go back to the Village. The current drawing was complimentary, but we should firm up our direction prior to proceeding.

Director Bechtold announced that we did not receive the House Appropriations Community Project Funding grant and it is disappointing. Several additional grants were brought to her attention. One is an 80/20 green infrastructure grant, which may not open until July 1, with no guarantee it will go. The other is a MWRD grant due in August. She is also looking into a second MWRD grant to relocate the detention pond to another approved area. The Board must decide if we want to pursue them or move forward with the project. Grants are a great opportunity for alternate revenue but would considerably delay the project. Construction costs are high so we want to time the project as best we can. She will confirm the construction parameters with the Village so that we are on track.

Commissioner Opyd stated he is glad we are furthering the conversation and we need to do the right thing. Commissioner Jacobs stated that the borings tested for soil texture; they did not test for chemicals. Their results cannot be

construed as being uncontaminated. Jenny stated that we are not required to test for chemicals with no further remediation.

Committee Reports

Administration Committee

Vacant

Parks and Open Lands

Commissioner Jacobs pointed out that the committee minutes she discussed at the last board meeting have been included in this month's meeting packet.

Finance & Capital Project Committee

None

User Group Committee

Commissioner O'Brien reported that soccer and baseball are up and running, with good weather so far. Chris added that the season has been dry, and he has asked the soccer groups to practice on the better grassy areas instead of the dirt areas of the fields.

Marketing/ Social Media Committee

Commissioner Opyd stated that there is a big push for programming and the brochure. He discussed getting all events on the calendar for the public with Jenny, and thanked staff for contributing. Social media is looking fantastic and he sees information from all departments getting out to the community.

Public Comments (Board Manual Section #152)

None

Board Comments

Commissioner O'Brien welcomed Jenny. He stated it has been a whirlwind for the first six days and he appreciates all that she is doing.

Commissioner Lacey welcomed Jenny and said that the building is still standing so she is doing a good job, and she also commended staff. She added that we need a better audio system for board meetings so that everyone can be heard.

Commissioner Opyd thanked Jenny for a great start and thanked staff for their efforts during the transition. He likes the roadmap staff set for themselves with the goals and objectives. He also thanked Mr. Oremus for the statue donation, which will be a beautiful addition to one of our parks, and thanked the public for taking time out of their schedules to come tonight. It is wonderful to see a huge audience.

Commissioner Jacobs thanked the public for coming. The Community Diversity members can see that we are doing our best for the community. She likes the

alignment of best practices with staff and Jenny, and appreciates the goals and objectives, which keeps the Board on top of the good work we are doing. This time of transition is exciting, and she looks forward to getting involved in the comprehensive master plan.

President Vear thanked the public for being here. He thanked Jenny and the staff during the transition and is excited to see where we go.

Executive Session

At 8:26 P.M. Commissioner Opyd motioned the Board convene to Executive Session pursuant to Item 12.4 Personnel 5 ILCS 120/2 (c)(1) and Item 12.5 Review of Closed Executive Session Minutes 5 ILCS 120/2(c)21. Commissioner Lacey seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

At 9:02 P.M. the Board resumed the regular meeting.

Action on Items Discussed in Executive Session

Commissioner O'Brien motioned to approve the Interim Executive Director Contract. 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

Commissioner Jacobs motioned to approve Resolution 21-01 Authorizing the Release and Continued Retention, Respectively, of Certain Executive Session Minutes and Authorizing the Destruction of Verbatim Recordings of Certain Board Executive Sessions. Commissioner Opyd seconded the motion which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

Commissioner Jacobs motioned to approve Resolution 21-02 Clarifying the Provisions of Benefits. Commissioner Opyd seconded the motion which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:


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

Adjournment

Commissioner Opyd moved for adjournment at 9:27 P.M. The motion was seconded by Commissioner O'Brien and passed unanimously by Voice Vote.



Robert Vear, President



Jenny Bechtold, Interim Board Secretary
Approved June 14, 2021