

**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**

**APRIL 13, 2020**

**President Vear called the meeting to order at 7:01 P.M.**

PRESENT: Commissioners Vear, Jacobs, \*Collins, O'Brien, Opyd

ABSENT: None

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Attorney Derke Price

\*Commissioner Collins joined the meeting remotely at 7:09 P.M.

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

Director Bissias stated that approval of Item 3.2, the minutes of the Executive Session Board Meeting of March 9, 2020 will be removed from the Consent Agenda. He also stated that the Public Hearing regarding the budget which was scheduled for tonight was cancelled and will be rescheduled.

Commissioner Jacobs motioned for the Board to permit Commissioners Vear, O'Brien, Jacobs, and Opyd to participate remotely via Zoom. Commissioner Opyd seconded the motion which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Collins

**Communications, Presentations & Declarations**

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

None



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### **Consent Agenda**

Per Commissioner Jacobs' request, Item 3.2 Approval of the Minutes of the Executive Board Meeting of March 9, 2020 was removed.

Commissioner Opyd motioned to approve Item 3.1 Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of March 9, 2020; Item 3.3 Approval of the Financial Reports dated March 31, 2020; Item 3.4 Approval of the Consolidated Vouchers for April dated April 14, 2020. Commissioner Jacobs seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

### **Staff Reports**

#### **Director's Report**

- Administrative staff has been working hard from home, and the maintenance department has been busy working in the parks and recreation center cleaning the facility and doing extra tasks such as cleaning fans and ductwork.
- He has dealt with many calls and emails related to problems in the parks with large groups of people congregating there in defiance of the State mandates during the pandemic.

Commissioner Jacobs requested additional details.

- Director Bissias explained that groups of 10-15 people have been playing basketball, large groups have been playing soccer, and groups have been congregating on the courts. This is against the Governor's order to stay at home. Playgrounds are closed per the Governor's order, but we have also had to close the basketball and tennis courts due to their misuse. There has also been an increase in vandalism. He has been in contact with the village manager, and the police department is patrolling regularly and often. The Village is dealing with similar issues in downtown La Grange. The parks themselves remain open and patrons can walk in the parks and on the paths.

Commissioner Jacobs said it was a good idea to close the courts in addition to the playgrounds, and she is glad the police are increasing patrols. It is important that people can still access the parks to walk and be outdoors.

\*Commissioner Collins joined the meeting remotely at 7:09 P.M.

- Director Bissias stated that staff members advise him when they are going to be in the office so we can maintain social distancing.



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- He explained that the District's finances will still be on budget due to our fiscal strength, but without the cushion we previously had.

Commissioner Vear asked that the Supt. of Finance expand on the financials.

- Supt. of Finance Leynette Kuniej stated that approximately \$45,000 in refunds have been issued as of April 7<sup>th</sup>. We have received about a dozen unemployment claims so far, and she receives an update on claims every few days. Refunds for dance classes and the BASE program still need to be processed.  
She has been taking webinars from the CPA Society.
- Director Bissias stated that the current payroll only consists of the 18 full-time employees, which includes 5 maintenance staff. We cannot determine when or how many part-time staff members will be rehired until the Governor announces his plan for reopening businesses. Once we have this information, department heads will meet to determine the rehiring plan based on which programs will resume and be sure that we are ready to open. The BASE program cannot resume until we know when the schools will reopen.
- He complimented Supt. of Recreation Kevin Miller and the recreation department for an outstanding job on the drive-through Easter egg pick-up event, which was held on Friday in lieu of the annual Easter egg hunt that had to be cancelled due to the pandemic. The only complaint was that we ran out of eggs, which was due to the large turn-out.

Commissioner Collins asked how the Governor's office is communicating information to the District.

- Director Bissias stated that he receives legislative updates from IAPD and information from PDRMA, IPRA, and televised news reports. He also meets weekly with other park district directors via Zoom.
- He explained that there is no current plan for government aid for the losses suffered by municipalities from the pandemic. He and the Supt. of Finance filed a report with FEMA, and he hopes we can file a claim down the road. As our insurer, PDRMA is not liable because the coronavirus crisis has been declared an Act of God by the government.

### ***Staff Comments***

#### **Superintendent of Facilities Chris Finn**

- He is working closely with Facility Rental Coordinator Andrea Weismantel on cancelling and rescheduling facility rentals booked for the end of March and all of April. We have received numerous emails asking when we will be open for rentals.
- He has been in contact with our user groups, who normally would have begun field use in April. The fields will be in good shape when they open due to the break this month.



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- He has attended many Zoom meetings with other parks & recreation professionals where information is shared on how other districts are dealing with the pandemic.
- He is being proactive to prepare for our reopening, and has ordered PPE for staff, to keep staff and patrons safe. He is in regular contact with other staff members.

### **Superintendent of Finance Leynette Kuniej**

- She provided her comments during Director Bissias' report.

### **Superintendent of BASE Leanna Hartung**

- She has taken several webinars and is working on AFC billing.
- She is making plans for summer camp, however, making reservations for outings is difficult due to closures.
- She has responded to many emails and has sent emails to parents with resources for children's activities to do at home.

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

- She has participated in online seminars, webinars and meetings during our closure. She is on a committee for an IPRA fitness group of approximately 50 professionals. They are investigating best practices that will unite park districts when they reopen their fitness centers, such as reducing touch points.

Commissioner Jacobs asked if she was offering any virtual fitness classes or posting any videos.

- We are not offering virtual classes but are providing written workouts. Our demographic does not include a high number of online users, and there are issues with music licensing fees, providing an instructor, and the lack of an IT department. After discussions with Dean and Kevin it was decided to consider virtual classes with a long-game plan, possibly adding it as a feature for memberships to become a revenue generator.
- She is currently offering a step-up challenge for the community to walk 10,000 steps per day and submit their counts.

Commissioners Collins asked how the fitness center would provide a safe environment upon reopening.

- Jenny reported that we would open in phases and block off some of the equipment to create space for social distancing. We are also investigating changing the sinks and toilets to touch-free operation. We want to keep everyone safe. The plan for reopening will also depend on directives to come from the Governor.



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President Vear asked about the number of cancelled memberships and other districts' cancellations.

- Jenny stated that we have only had approximately 30 memberships cancelled. We have 2,767 members, including memberships that expired during our closure, which we will extend.
- In speaking with other districts, they estimate an average of 20% loss in members. Our advantage is that La Grange is a higher income community and our price point is low in comparison to other fitness centers, however, we have an older demographic, so safety must be our number one priority.

President Vear asked staff if outdoor field work is being done during the closures, and Commissioner Jacobs inquired about mulching trees and repairing holes in the crushed gravel trails at the parks.

### **Superintendent of Facilities Chris Finn responded**

- Chris stated that as soon as the weather cooperates, we will reseed and fill the holes in the soccer field at Waiola Park. It will then be fenced off as it is being rested this year.
- The gymnasium floors have been resurfaced during our closure so that they will not be closed in August, as originally planned. We will also have the carpets cleaned and are completing maintenance items as the budget allows.
- He will investigate repairing the pothole in the basketball court at Elm Park.
- We obtain free mulch from the Village and are waiting for them to chip trees before we can begin mulching our trees. This is working with an organization to try to obtain discounted or free crushed gravel for the trails.

### **Superintendent of Recreation Kevin Miller**

- He is accomplishing a lot working from home and is in the office on Tuesday mornings.
- He has been busy working on contingency plans for our reopening, researching virtual and e-sports, talking to contractors to determine their readiness to teach classes, and gauging what our staff could teach themselves.
- Summer registration begins this Thursday for residents and next week for non-residents.
- He has postponed the start of first session summer fitness classes to the week of 5/18.
- He is evaluating training for summer camp staff in view of the pandemic, with possibly offering online training.



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- The Easter egg drive-through giveaway went well with 18 cars in line when it opened at 9 A.M. Eggs were provided to 123 cars in just half an hour. He did not anticipate such a high turnout.

### **Attorney Report**

Attorney Derke Price said that the District is on top of everything at this time. A new portal for the federal government's CARES Act indicates that any potential cost recovery for park districts' losses will be handled through the State. He suggested that high school e-sports clubs are a good resource to obtain contacts for coaches and participants to drive participation in e-sports that we may potentially offer.

### **Treasurer Report**

None

### **Action Items**

None

### **Board Business**

#### **Old Business**

None

#### **New Business**

None

#### **Item 4.1.1**

The Board agreed that the cancelled March budget/MBO meeting will be rescheduled as an electronic meeting via Zoom on April 27, 2020 at 6:00 P.M.

### **Committee Reports**

#### *Administration Committee*

None

#### *Parks and Open Lands*

Commissioner Jacobs stated that they did not meet this month but discussed the \$6,000 tree planting budget last month. They would like to utilize these funds allocated in the capital budget to beautify the parks with trees, benches, and landscaping.

#### *Finance & Capital Project Committee*

None

#### *User Group Committee*

None

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### *Marketing/ Social Media Committee*

Commissioner Opyd stated that he would like to obtain demographics information from our user groups such as Little League and soccer, which would be helpful when these groups make presentations to the Board.

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

None

### **Board Comments**

Commissioner O'Brien thanked Director Bissias and the staff for all they have done during the last month, from dealing with complaints, park issues, and the great egg giveaway.

Commissioner Collins echoed Commissioner's compliments.

Commissioner Opyd said that we will get through the current adversity and come through the other side.

Commissioner Jacobs stated that she likes the information on our web site and thanked staff for their dedication. Our parks are important to the health and well-being of the community.


President Vear stated that he is proud of Dean and the staff for the good direction taken with the decisions on facility closures, the care provided to our parks, and keeping the public and staff safe.

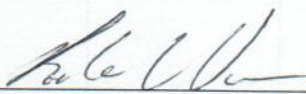
### **Executive Session**

None

### **Adjournment**

Commissioner Collins moved for adjournment at 7:52 P.M. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Opyd and passed unanimously by Voice Vote.

  
Constantine Bissias, Secretary  
Approved 05/11/2020

  
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Robert Vear, President