

**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**

**JULY 9, 2018**

**President Penicook called the meeting to order at 7:03 P.M.**

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

ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Executive Director Dean Bissias, Superintendent of Facilities Chris Finn, Superintendent of La Grange Fitness Jenny Clark, Marketing & Events Supervisor Teresa Chapman, Recording Secretary Ginger Zeman

OTHERS PRESENT: Attorney Jim Rock, Matt Krummick, Gina Martin, Residents Tim O'Brien, Andrea Barnwell, Michelle Papa, Kat Mungo, Beth Augustine, Kris LaRocco, Jim DeLauriea, Tara Buzek, Brian Opyd

Commissioner Penicook welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for changes to the agenda.

**Communications, Presentations & Declarations**

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

Andrea Barnwell, 609 9th Avenue, La Grange, asked the Board to consider a public community pool in their future plans. President Penicook explained there have been three referendums over the years to build a pool and they have all failed by a large margin. It was last denied in 2003. We believe that there is not enough public support to fund this project.

Commissioner Ashby stated that our Park District surveys show that residents are passionate about a pool, however, the Park District does not have the extra revenue to build it without asking voters for an increase in taxes. A referendum would be needed to generate additional tax revenue.

Andrea feels that community interests have changed. Commissioner Lacey suggested that she not give up on the idea.

Andrea also explained when she lived near Wrigley Field there was a small dog park and her children enjoyed watching all the dogs. She felt a dog park does not have to be a huge space. It needs to be a small fenced-in area with a drinking fountain.

Kathy Mungo, 525 S. Waiola, La Grange, complimented the park maintenance

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crew. She admitted she takes her dog to the park to run as do many of her friends. It is a social time for the neighbors to meet and talk while the dogs are exercising. She heard it said that dogs are destructive, however, people can be destructive as well. She has never seen dog waste in the park, just in the parkway, which is how it is all over La Grange. Kathy suggested permitting dogs in the park early in the morning or late in the day.

Kris LaRocco, 505 S. Waiola, La Grange, stated that she lives across from Waiola Park and takes her dog there when there are no games or parties in the park. She always picks up her dog waste as well as other dog waste. Kris would like to see the policy changed to allow dogs at special hours during the day or for leashed dogs only. She suggested putting dog waste bag dispensers in the park and asking the police to limit their patrol of Waiola Park. Kris also asked the Park District to repair the tennis courts at Spring Avenue. Superintendent of Facilities Chris Finn explained that tennis court resurfacing is done on a 3-year cycle. This year Sedgwick Park will be resurfaced and next year Spring Avenue will be resurfaced.

Commissioner Ashby asked the residents if they feel the dog enforcement has changed. Kathy Mungo stated Superintendent of Facilities Finn went to the park regarding a complaint and since then the police are stopping people. Director Bissias stated the dog policy has been in place for over 20 years. Last year there was a major dog problem in Gordon Park when the heavy enforcement began. They must continue to patrol all the parks due to the ongoing problem at Gordon Park.

David Martin, 624 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, La Grange, stated he takes his dog to the park and that is the reason he knows his neighbors. He has called the police due to baseball equipment left in the park, drunk people in the park, and buildings left open in the park because he walks his dog and sees things like this. He feels La Grange should be known as a pet friendly town, not just one day a year at the Pet Parade. Restaurants in La Grange are putting water bowls out for pets along La Grange Road to be pet friendly. David stated he can take his leashed dog into Home Depot so why not walk him in a park leashed. He understands that dogs should not be on the baseball fields. He stated that police patrolling the parks is a waste of their time when there are more pressing issues.

Commissioner Lacey stated that the residents at the meeting will pick up after their dogs, however, there are others that will not. We issued the survey to see what people wanted. It is not that the Board does not want the dog park, but there are many things to consider.

Dan Martin, 624 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, La Grange, asked if the dog park is being considered and if there would be other meetings to discuss this. He would like to see the rules loosened about dogs in the parks.

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President Penicook stated the Board is in the first steps of investigating a dog park. We need to investigate how other park districts run and handle a dog park. We also need to check with our insurer regarding potential coverage if we had a dog park. She stated that changing the rules and regulations is one thing but if the choice is made to build a dog park, it will take longer.

Commissioner Ashby explained to the residents that our Capital Budget was passed two months ago. We have not allocated any money toward this project this fiscal year. More research needs to be done, however, we have a better focus with the results of the survey. We might be able to put it in next spring's budget.

Commissioner Vear reminded the public that they are welcome to have a discussion with the Board at any meeting.

### **Consent Agenda**

Commissioner Ashby motioned to approve Item 3.1 Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of May 14, 2018; Item 3.2 Approval of the Financial Reports dated May 31, 2018 and June 30, 2018; Item 3.3 Approval of the Consolidated Vouchers for June dated June 11, 2018 and for July dated July 9, 2018. Commissioner Lacey seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

### **Staff Reports**

#### *Director's Report*

- Director Bissias praised staff and Commissioner Jacobs for putting the dog survey together. It was a job well done.
- He reminded the Board of working at the Endless Summerfest on Sunday, August 5, 2018. He was hoping to have the Village trustees work that day too.
- President Penicook enlightened the public about our Endless Summerfest. It is a joint endeavor with the LGBA. The event lasts for three days with bands, beer, food, a carnival, and fireworks on Sunday night. She invited everyone to attend.

#### *Staff Comments*

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

- There are over 2,100 members at the fitness center.
- The classes, visits, and personal training are all going strong and profitable.
- On Monday our migration to the new software will begin. Everyone is

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working together to make it a smooth transition.

- Mike Newman won the 21-day fitness challenge last month. Eight other prizes were awarded.
- There were 134 visits in the morning of July 4, 2018.
- There are 96 Silver Sneakers members. Insurance pays \$3 per visit up to 10 visits per month. Silver Sneaker classes are not offered at this time.

Commissioner Jacobs stated she had a few requests for a Sunday yoga class. Superintendent of La Grange Fitness Jenny Clark stated this is the first she has heard of it and will evaluate the possibility.

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

- User groups are ending their regular season. Invoices will be sent out.
- Camps are running now.
- User groups have sent their dates for the fall.
- He is working on capital projects.

### **Attorney Report**

Attorney Jim Rock stated the real estate closing for the property at Gordon Park is scheduled for Wednesday, July 11, 2018. There are a few items that need to be addressed, however, everything is ready to move forward.

### **Treasurer Report**

None

### **Action Items**

*Discussion and/or Approval of Ordinance 18-05 Adopting Prevailing Wage Rates to be Paid to Laborers, Mechanics, and Other Workers Performing Construction of Public Works in the Park District of La Grange*

President Penicook stated this ordinance is required by law and must be approved every year. Commissioner Jacobs motioned to approve Ordinance 18-05 adopting prevailing wage rates to be paid to laborers, mechanics, and other workers performing construction of public works in the Park District of La Grange. Commissioner Lacey seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

*Discussion and/or Approval of Resolution 18-03 Approving and Authorizing the Execution of a Public Improvements Agreement between the Park District of La Grange and Pathway La Grange Property Owner, LLC and Authorizing the Park District President, Executive Director and Attorney to Execute Real Estate Closing Documents*

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Commissioner Lacey motioned to approve Resolution 18-03 approving and authorizing the execution of a public improvement agreement between the Park District of La Grange and Pathway La Grange Property Owner, LLC and authorizing the Park District President, Executive Director and Attorney to execute real estate closing documents. Commissioner Ashby seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

*Discussion and/or Approval of an Estopple and Subordination Agreement*  
Commissioner Vear motioned to approve an Estopple and Subordination Agreement. Commissioner Ashby seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

*Discussion and/or Approval of Request for Fund Balance Transfer Based on Fiscal Year Operations Ending 4/30/2018*

Commissioner Jacobs motioned to approve the request for fund balance transfer based on fiscal year operations ending April 30, 2018. Commissioner Ashby seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

**Board Business**

**Old Business**

None

**New Business**

*Board Discussion of Dogs in the Parks Survey*

- President Penicook stated the dog survey will be closed tomorrow with final results coming back in a few days. Stage one was location of a dog park. The survey is stage two.
- Commissioner Jacobs was satisfied using Survey Monkey for the first time. There were over 800 responses out of 4,000 households. Of those that responded 94.97% were La Grange residents.
- Marketing and Events Supervisor Teresa Chapman reviewed the responses from the survey.

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- There were over 600 responses the first few days. It went out on Facebook and Twitter and had many more responses.
- Commissioner Jacobs reviewed the comments from the survey.
- Beth Augustine, 350 S. Madison, La Grange, did not receive the survey. She heard about the survey and found it and sent it on to neighbors and friends.
- Commissioner Vear questioned how many dog licenses are sold in the Village. Maybe we could incorporate a fee with the dog licenses.
- Commissioner Ashby thanked Marketing & Events Supervisor Teresa Chapman for implementing the survey. He asked Teresa and Superintendent of Recreation Kevin Miller to compile the data and create a report ranking the comments for the Board. He also recognized that if we had a safe dog park, 84% would use it according to the survey. That would mean there would be over 6,000 visits a week and a lot of goodwill and interactions for the Park District.

### **Discussion, Nomination and Approval of: *Board President***

President Penicook nominated Commissioner Vear for Board President. Commissioner Vear accepted the nomination.

Commissioner Ashby nominated President Penicook for Board President. President Penicook declined the nomination.

### ***Board Vice President***

Commissioner Ashby nominated President Penicook for Board Vice President. President Penicook accepted the nomination.

### ***Board 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President***

Commissioner Jacobs nominated Commissioner Lacey for Board 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President. Commissioner Lacey accepted the nomination.

President Penicook nominated Commissioner Ashby for Board 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President. Commissioner Ashby declined the nomination.

### ***Board Secretary***

President Penicook nominated Director Bissias for Board Secretary. Director Bissias accepted the nomination.

### ***Board Treasurer***

Commissioner Ashby nominated Rob Metzger for Board Treasurer. Rob Metzger accepted the nomination per Director Bissias.

**Committee Reports**

*Administration Committee*

President Penicook has been working on the legal documents related to the sale of the Gordon Park property. She is happy the sale is close to a conclusion.

*Public Relations Committee*

Commissioner Lacey thanked the marketing committee for publicizing the neighborhood watch. She was glad to see everyone in attendance today.

*Finance & Capital Project Committee*

None

*User Group Committee*

None

*Marketing Committee*

Commissioner Jacobs asked the public if they had any new ideas on how to market the Park District. They should email Marketing & Events Supervisor Teresa Chapman or Commissioner Karel Jacobs.

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

Matt Krummick, Director of Real Estate at Pathway Development Partners, thanked the Board for a positive vote on the Pathway agreements and to President Penicook and Director Bissias for all their work on this project. They will be developing a 118 unit senior housing community. It is a 40 million dollar project that will take 15 months to complete. It will be called Aspired Living of La Grange. They plan to hire 56 full-time employees.

Brian Opyd, 109 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, La Grange, asked the Board if there was any further information about the construction of a storage building at the handball courts. Director Bissias stated he has not heard anything more from the handball group. Brian also asked if the Board will name the new Meadowbrook Park. The Board had not thought about a name.

Kris LaRocco, 505 S. Waiola, La Grange, wondered why the memorial trees in Waiola Park were mulched and the other trees were not. Director Bissias will ask Park Foreman Claudia Galla.

Kat Mungo, 525 S. Waiola, La Grange, stated she loves walking in the park and reading the plaques on the memorial trees. She loves the new path, too. Director Bissias stated there is a tree memorial on the wall downstairs in the recreation center as well. Kat also stated there is a large tree that is dying and creaking in Waiola Park.

Bella Barnwell, 609 9th Avenue, La Grange, suggested putting the dog park at Sedgwick Park at 47th and East Avenue near the grill by the tennis courts.

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Beth Augustine, 350 S. Madison, La Grange, thanked the Board for the survey which has sparked a great conversation. She is a proponent for the dog park and hopes this group will work together to make it happen without a large expense as there are many other projects requiring funding. She recommends early and late hours for a dog park like the dog park at Katherine Legge Park. Beth also recommends that a committee be formed. She would offer her time.

Gina Martin, Brookfield resident and realtor, stated she is from the city and excited about this area. She does not have any children, however, she does have dogs. She stated people have different uses for the parks. In the city, dog parks are everywhere and it builds community. She suggested sponsorships from vets, Urban Mutt, etc. to support the dog park. Gina felt it was an amenity for clients buying homes in La Grange. She was glad the Park District issued the survey. It was well done and people value being heard.

### **Board Comments**

Commissioner Jacobs congratulated finalizing the Gordon Park deal this week.

Commissioner Lacey appreciated everyone coming to the meeting and voicing their opinions. She notices when walking around La Grange, people are walking their dogs and there are no kids. Last year she lost her dog and it changed her mind about dogs. They become part of your family. She reminded everyone to let Director Bissias know about your ideas and do not give up on the idea of building a pool. The Board is accommodating.

Commissioner Ashby thanked the public for attending and it is nice to know what they are interested in. He thanked the Board for the hard work as we are finally at the finish line for the sale. With all the public comments this evening, he thought there should be a community support group. He wants to make sure that staff's time and supplies for Endless Summerfest are being accounted for and recorded.

Commissioner Vear stated this sale has taken over nine years to complete. Enough cannot be said for the ups and downs everyone has endured during this process. He complimented staff on the great survey. He stated we need more decisive projects to get the public out to the meetings. He thanked President Penicook for the vote of confidence for his nomination for Board President. He will need everyone's support along the way.

President Penicook stated the sale of the land makes so much sense. It was underutilized and surrounded by high-rise buildings. It gives us the ability to restore our reserves and leverage to keep everything going. We are careful with taxpayer funds, however, it was necessary to spend a lot of money defending this deal. We learned a lesson the hard way with those who were against the sale. We appreciate the public feedback and the Board will figure out the dog park. She thanked Commissioner Vear for his positive comments.



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**Executive Session**

At 8:37 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 Vear seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

At 8:45 P.M. the Board resumed the Regular Meeting.

Commissioner Vear motioned that all items currently held as confidential in the Executive Session Minutes will remain that way. Commissioner Jacobs seconded the motion; which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

**Adjournment**

Commissioner Lacey moved for adjournment at 8:45 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jacobs and passed unanimously by Voice Vote.

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Mary Ellen Penicook, President

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Constantine Bissias, Secretary  
*Approved 08/13/2018*