

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

**OCTOBER 16, 2023**

**President Opyd called the meeting to order at 6:01 P.M.**

PRESENT: Commissioners Vear, Lacey, Opyd

ABSENT: Commissioners Posey and Chvatal

STAFF PRESENT: Executive Director Jenny Bechtold  
Director of Parks, Planning & Maintenance Blake Ertmanis  
Recording Secretary Linda Muth

OTHERS PRESENT: Attorney Megan Mack  
Marian Honel-Wilson

\* Commissioner Posey arrived at 6:03 P.M.

President Opyd welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for any announcements or changes to the agenda and there were none. He stated that patrons' access to the recreation center is improved with the reopening of the Cossitt Avenue railroad tracks. He added that the mosaic unveiling at the community center was a fantastic event and it was a joy to participate in it.

**Communications, Presentations & Declarations**

None

**Consent Agenda**

President Opyd asked for a motion to approve Item 3.1 Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of September 11, 2023; Item 3.2 Approval of the Financial Reports dated September 30, 2023; and Item 3.3 Approval of the Consolidated Vouchers for October dated October 16, 2023. The motion was so moved by Commissioner Vear, seconded by Commissioner Lacey, and passed by Roll Call Vote as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Vear, Lacey, Opyd

NAYES: None

ABSENT: Commissioners Posey and Chvatal

**Staff Reports**

**Executive Director Jenny Bechtold**

- Director Bechtold reported that following her written report is the budget timeline. Staff will begin working on the budget on November 7<sup>th</sup> and will submit their worksheets in mid-January to the department heads prior to them being submitted to the finance department. There will be a committee meeting in February, and we plan to present the first draft at the March 8<sup>th</sup> board meeting and the second/final draft at the April 15<sup>th</sup> board meeting, pending the 2024 board meeting schedule.
- Jenny stated that we met with Countryside regarding the IGA and they want to take time to discuss it internally with their committees and then get back to us. They made it clear that they do not want to manage the fields and they want compensation. She will keep the Board updated and would like a resolution by spring.
- She stated that we met with Babe Ruth and spoke about moving towards a rental system vs. them maintaining the fields, and we provided them with a fee structure. We are working with legal to revamp the agreement to reflect this. They are concerned about the clubhouse and the District's involvement, which is necessary if we are maintaining the fields.
- Jenny readdressed Endless Summerfest which was discussed last month in terms of expenses, liability, and labor intensity for the District. She stated that we heard back from LGBA and they also feel it is labor intensive and that the event is costly as-is. Both organizations agreed that it is difficult to move forward in the current position so she is bringing it back to the Board for discussion.

Commissioner Vear stated that if both organizations agree not to move forward we should have an open discussion on what kind of event we want it to be. Jenny replied that the executive director from LGBA indicated that they have not discussed a reimagined event. She added that we have two different missions. Jenny stated that our recreation department developed a proposal for a community one-day event to be held on the first Saturday in August utilizing sponsorships. It would be open from 1pm-9pm with no entry fee and feature food trucks, beer vendors, entertainment for children including face painters and inflatables, and three bands. The next step is to meet with LGBA to determine if there is a way to continue a partnership and what that would look like. With a scaled back event we have time to consider our options. Jenny stated that she wants to make sure the Board is alright with not holding Endless Summerfest. Commissioner Vear stated that the new format is worth entertaining.

Commissioner Lacey expressed concern with discontinuing the fest which people from all over enjoy coming to. She questioned if the Village of La Grange could provide additional volunteers and whether the downtown businesses and restaurants would be unhappy with a potential loss of business generated from the fest. Jenny stated that we approached the village last year for sponsorships

and staffing and they stated they were doing all they could already. They provided in-kind staffing but we had to pay overtime wages for the police. The new police chief felt the event requires a larger police presence, which would increase our expenses going forward. This new free admission event would reflect our mission.

Jenny stated that her understanding is that the fest pulls people away from the downtown businesses rather than drawing them, and Commissioner Posey, who is also on the LGBA board, confirmed that the retail district does not benefit from the fest. Jenny added that we would target local businesses with food trucks which would remove the burden of providing generators, tents, and water for restaurant vendors. We would also try to utilize local bands. We could begin our planning after the new year but should have a game plan before then.

**Director of Finance & Human Resources Cassandra Todd**

*Director Bechtold reported on behalf of Director Todd in her absence.*

- Director Bechtold stated that the second installment of property tax revenue is delayed due to the county issuing bills in November instead of August with a due date of September. An evaluation of our cash flow indicates we will have to borrow from the general fund to pay debt service, as we did last year. We will also need to transfer funds from Republic or Wintrust due to treasury pool funds being utilized, including the parking lot project in large part.
- Jenny reported that budget adjustments were made to the capital fund. Our approved ordinance had a discrepancy and only included 2.25 million for capital projects instead of the 3.67 million presented. The good news is that the parking lot project had many expenses that came out of last year's budget, and the \$500,000 budgeted for the OSLAD project can be reduced to \$450,000 and will not be done until next year. We have the funds in the capital fund but cannot spend them this year due to the discrepancy and moved projects to next year. The current capital fund revenue this year is 2.9 million and the budget is reduced to 2.25 million with a \$732,000 balance. If we do not use the \$148,000 contingency for the parking lot we will begin next year with \$880,000. There would be \$628,000 for delayed projects, \$251,000 for new projects, and the bond proceeds of approximately \$150,000, which does not include any fund transfers. We will be in okay shape this year and if we need to tap into funds for a capital project we have the option of doing a transfer from the recreation fund or general fund with a resolution by April 30<sup>th</sup>. In contrast, a budget amendment would be a lot of work.

President Opyd commented that the construction season would begin in May anyway and asked if other projects were planned for outdoors. Jenny stated that our goal is to do work at Stone Park and we hope to see completion of the parking lot by the next meeting. We can reallocate some of that and get our

projects going. We can work on getting the bids for Waiola and hit the ground running on May 1<sup>st</sup>. The parking lot project needs to be completed before final plans can be determined.

- Jenny reported that our health insurance is increasing 7-8% so we are evaluating our current structure. We offer an HMO and PPO and the District now pays 100% of the employee premiums, and employees pay 10% for family coverage. We will probably bring a health insurance proposal back to the Board next month.
- She stated that Paycom rolled out with the first cycle of paychecks on Friday. It went well with a few challenges. FedEx thought we were closed due to the construction and did not deliver the paper checks, which only affected five employees. There are some growing pains but we will be in good shape moving forward.

**Director of Recreation Kevin Miller**

*Director Bechtold reported on behalf of Director Miller in his absence.*

- Director Bechtold stated that the Trunk or Treat event was postponed due to the rain and cold weather. This Saturday looks better and will allow a better experience for participants.
- She reported that the Board was emailed regarding our dance contractor. We have been evaluating all our contracts in addition to the per user vs. split for financials to assure our contracts are mutually beneficial. In this case the District was making \$1.00 per child per class and the vendor decided to go a different direction rather than renegotiate a new agreement that was mutually beneficial. We have approximately 50 participants and will try to get something in place for spring or co-op with another provider.

President Opyd stated that the numbers are impressive with the growth of the YDL program and he is pleased that the fitness center continues to grow. He asked if the proposed fob system would incur an additional cost. Director Ertmanis stated that no new infrastructure would be required and our existing computers would read the fobs. President Opyd added that he read about the application forms being reviewed and asked that Kevin and his team look at them from a DEI perspective.

Commissioner Vear asked if BASE was running smoothly this year. Jenny stated that it was and it is fully-staffed. She added that the contract for use of the schools for the program is on the agenda for tonight.

**Director of Parks, Planning & Maintenance Blake Ertmanis**

- Director Ertmanis reported that we heard back from Nicor last week. We confirmed that the depth of the line is 40" and they thought it was 18" which was one of the points of contention. This will require anything over the line in a three-foot span running the length of the new driveway to be

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done by hand, including digging, gravel work and compacting; you cannot run a machine over it. This will probably add a day to the project. We are still waiting to hear back from Abbey but hope they can start by Thursday and complete it in ten business days.

- Blake stated that the new tractor was delivered today.
- He reported that herbicide was applied to the athletic fields last week.

Commissioner Vear stated that it was known that a Nicor line was under the ground so they should have known work would need to be done by hand. Blake stated that Abbey and Cody/Braun are blaming each other. He added that Wight said this is common, and they try to head this off months in advance in their projects. It is good that we are transitioning to Wight as they have engineering and architecture in-house. Once Abbey is back on site the project should be complete in two weeks, and landscaping will be done in the spring.

### Attorney Report

Attorney Mack had no report at this time.

### Treasurer Report

Director Bechtold, on behalf of Director of Finance Todd, had nothing additional to report.

### Action Items

*Discussion and/or Approval of An ORDINANCE providing for the issue of not to exceed \$394,000 General Obligation Limited Tax Park Bonds, Series 2023, for the payment of land condemned or purchased for parks, for the building, maintaining, improving and protecting of the same and the existing land and facilities of the Park District, to provide the revenue source for the payment of certain outstanding bonds of the Park District, and for the payment of the expenses incident thereto, providing for the levy of a direct annual tax to pay the principal and interest on said bonds, and authorizing the sale of said bonds to the purchaser thereof*

Director Bechtold stated that this is the bond rollover that we do every year which allows us to add money to the District's capital. The ordinance authorizes the executive director to accept the bid from the best bidder based on PMA and Chapman & Cutler recommendations.

The Board had no questions and President Opyd asked for a motion. Commissioner Vear motioned to approve Ordinance 23-02 as stated. The motion was seconded by Commissioner and passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

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### *Discussion and/or Approval of La Grange School District 102 & Park District of La Grange Lease for Portions of Several School Buildings*

Director Bechtold explained that the lease is for the BASE program and is set to expire on December 31, 2023. This agreement is verbatim to the prior one approved five years ago. Ancel/Glink reviewed it and had no changes or recommendations.

Commissioner Lacey motioned to approve the lease agreement with District 102 and The Park District of La Grange. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Posey and passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

### *Discussion and/or Approval of LeaderShop Lease Agreement*

Director Bechtold stated that the agreement was presented to the LeaderShop and they came back with some changes but were pleased with the agreement. The major change is that the lease is for a two-year term with no renewal. This will give us time to decide what to do with the building. They will now be responsible for paying for natural gas and the District will pay for water and electricity. Due to the assessment of the building some of the repairs over \$5,000 will be evaluated.

Commissioner Vear asked if the LeaderShop is aware of our conversations about the building. Jenny said she spoke with their executive director and he is not thrilled but understands the building is getting older.

Commissioner Vear motioned to approve the LeaderShop Lease Agreement. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lacey and passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

## **Board Business**

### **Old Business**

None

### **New Business**

None

## **Committee Reports**

### *Administration Committee*

No report at this time.

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### *Parks and Facilities Committee*

No report at this time.

### *Recreation & Cultural Programming Committee/ Arts & Cultural Affairs Committee*

No report at this time.

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

Marian Honel-Wilson from the Community Diversity Group thanked the District for their participation in the mosaic art project. She stated the event at the community center yesterday was wonderful and she thanked President Opyd for speaking. She also thanked Commissioner Lacey for speaking and working on the project as an advisor to the art committee. The whole project was amazing and she would love to hear the Board's comments.

Director Bechtold stated that the mosaics look amazing and are even better than she imagined. President Opyd agreed and stated attendance at the event was outstanding and it was wonderful to see a cross-section of the community there. It exceeded his expectations and he offered cheers to Marian, Becky, Nancy, and their whole organization.

### **Board Comments**

Commissioner Posey agreed with all of Commissioner Opyd's comments. She stated it was thrilling to see something creative and community-minded grow from someone's ideas. It is a testament to the neighborhood and she thanked The Community Diversity Group for initiating the project and collaborating so well with the Park District. She is excited to see what's next.

Commissioner Lacey echoed the comments and stated everything from the beginning to the end turned out very nice. She questioned if we would be holding a board meeting at the community center during the winter weather. Director Bechtold answered that we are currently holding two meetings per year there but are trying to avoid the winter with snow and limited parking.

Commissioner Vear agreed that the mosaic project was much better than expected. He stated that the collaboration of Marian's team was perfect. The project was communicated and presented so well that we could never say no and he congratulated them. A visiting relative went to see the display and loved it.

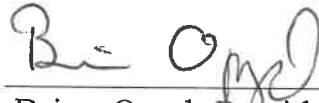
President Opyd stated it was a wonderful event and tons of fun. He reminded everyone of the Trunk or Treat event being held on Saturday. He added that there is a committee meeting at 5:30 P.M. prior to the November board meeting. Commissioner Vear asked if the Board should attend the committee meeting and Director Bechtold stated that we have three residents and five board members and that a quorum would be five. Commissioner Posey stated that she will not be able to attend.

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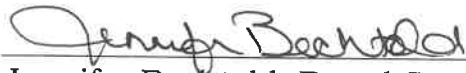
President Opyd announced that there would not be an executive session meeting tonight and asked for a motion to adjourn.

**Adjournment**

Commissioner Vear moved for adjournment at 6:46 P.M. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Posey and passed unanimously by Voice Vote.



Brian Opyd, President



Jennifer Bechtold, Board Secretary

*Approved November 13, 2023*