

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

SEPTEMBER 14, 2020

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

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

ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Executive Director Dean Bissias, Superintendent of Facilities Chris Finn, Superintendent of Recreation Kevin Miller, Superintendent of La Grange Fitness Jenny Bechtold, Assistant Supt. of BASE Melissa Seaberg, Recording Secretary Linda Muth

OTHERS PRESENT: Attorney Derke Price, David Bryant, Jamie Workman

*Commissioner Opyd joined the meeting at 7:12 P.M.

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

Communications, Presentations & Declarations

Public Comments/Participation (Board Manual Section #152)

None

Consent Agenda

Commissioner Jacobs motioned to approve Item 3.1 Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of August 17, 2020; Item 3.2 Approval of the Financial Reports dated August 31, 2020; Item 3.3 Approval of the Consolidated Vouchers for September dated September 14, 2020.

Commissioner Collins seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Opyd

Staff Reports

Staff Comments

Superintendent of La Grange Fitness Jenny Bechtold

- Superintendent Bechtold stated that she included a *Club Industry* article with her board report which indicates that gyms are not spreading COVID. It contains good data and is a positive article.
- Jenny reported that the fitness center currently has 2,133 members and we have had 702 net cancellations since March. She continues to assure patrons that La Grange Fitness is a safe place to be.
- Group fitness classes have been slow with the same 25 regular members attending them, but she has added a few more classes which she hopes will attract additional patrons.

Superintendent of Facilities Chris Finn

- Superintendent Finn stated that building rentals are slow, but that we had three rentals this past weekend, which is the most for a weekend since the COVID shutdown. We would normally have 6-9 rentals each Saturday and Sunday.
- Chris reported that gymnasium rentals have picked up. We currently rent gym space on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday nights, and he may add Wednesdays. Once the District's basketball season starts, he will insert renters where he can.
- The recreation center hours will be expanded beginning October 12th when the YDL basketball program will bring more people into the facility. The front desk will remain open until 8pm several evenings to answer inquiries and assist patrons.
- Chris reported that the user groups are in full swing with AYSO holding scrimmages and LTSC practicing. User groups have scaled back their field use based on COVID guidelines.
- He has been in contact with the vendor he ordered the Gordon Park signs from. They are waiting for material which was delayed due to COVID's effect on the industry but hopes to receive it and complete the signs in the next week and a half. Chris is also getting quotes for the installation of the signs.

President Vear stated that G.G. Gordon is ready to pay for the signs and that she mentioned seeing an article on the *Patch* online about how good the park is for fitness with its track and equipment. Commissioner Jacobs asked Chris to prepare a comparison of facility rentals from last year to this year, including trends and who is renting and how often, as discussed previously with Director Bissias.

Assistant Supt. of BASE Melissa Seaberg

- Assistant Supt. of BASE Seaberg reported that the BASE program began last Tuesday and is going well so far. The numbers are low, but more

children attended this week than last week.

- Melissa stated that staff is doing great using the safety protocols.

Superintendent of Recreation Kevin Miller

- Superintendent Miller stated that the Recreation Dept. is revamping all special events for fall that run from October through December and they will meet again before finalizing the changes.
- Kevin stated that work on the winter program brochure will begin next week.
- He reported that they are preparing for basketball season, and that preschool is in the second week and is going well so far.

President Vear asked if basketball numbers were good and Kevin commented that the youth developmental league has good numbers, with one of the grade levels already at maximum enrollment. Commissioner Jacobs inquired if virtual programming was going well, and Kevin stated it is, especially with hybrid classes.

Commissioner Opyd joined the meeting at 7:12 P.M.

Director's Report

- Director Bissias stated that there are no additional updates to MBO's and capital, but a request to transfer funds will be addressed later in the meeting.
- Dean reported that the MWRD grant application was submitted on time electronically and a hard copy was mailed. An email was received confirming receipt of our application.
- As follow up to last month's discussion and Commissioner Collins' concerns, Dean stated that Commissioner Opyd has information to share on permeable pavers.

Commissioner Opyd stated that the takeaway from last month's meeting was that it made sense to do more investigating on permeable pavers for the MWRD grant application. He spoke to Kris from the Morton Arboretum regarding their experience with the pavers. Permeable pavers were installed in their main visitor parking lot in 2004 and Kris has been happy with their performance. Even with the many trees at their location they have only had to vacuum them once, and very little maintenance has been required. They have not had any problems with the surface becoming uneven or creating a trip hazard. You can plow during the winter, although you should not put sand on the surface, which can clog the holes. Kris relayed that usable land is increased and while the initial cost is higher, the expense of excavating for a pond is avoided, and maintenance costs are lower. Over the last 15 years they have not had to do anything with them, while asphalt needs work every 10 years. Commissioner Opyd also visited Lyons Township High School and the permeable pavers between their gym and track look amazing. We now have relevant information

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as we move forward with the grant process.

- Director Bissias reported that he met with Park Foreman Claudia Galla regarding the IDNR/Morton Arboretum tree grant program. Claudia updated him on her meeting with Commissioner Jacobs to work on the application. It is a matching grant of \$7,500 with a total budget of \$15,000 that includes a tree inventory and management.

Commissioner Jacobs stated that this grant is not difficult to submit and will be awarded in November. We would have 18 months for completion with a finish date of August 2022. If we receive the grant, they will provide us with expertise and a timeline would be developed, and it would entail regular meetings with staff.

- Dean stated that he notified the three firms of the interview schedule on 9/30 for their presentations on updating our strategic master plan. One of the firms, Planning Resources, met with him and Supt. of Facilities Finn. Department heads will attend this special meeting and will be involved in the process. He asked the Board to submit interview questions by next Monday and he will compile questions from the Board and staff.

President Vear applauded Kevin Miller's 10 years with the District and his role as president-elect with the South Suburban Parks and Recreation Association, and contributions made by Jenny Bechtold and Chris Finn to professional associations.

Attorney Report

Attorney Price stated that he discussed the mandated holiday for Election Day in November with Director Bissias. Administrative offices and polling places must be closed to the public to reduce the spread of COVID, but other types of facilities may remain open.

Treasurer Report

None

Action Items

Discussion and/or Approval of a Request to Install a Plaque in Center Field of the "A" Field at Sedgwick Park Honoring Rita Engels

Director Bissias explained that Rita and Bill Engels have been big supporters of the District and La Grange Little League for many years. Their children and grandkids played in the league, and they watched many baseball games over the years from their backyard. Their home in La Grange backs up to Sedgwick Park. La Grange Little League would like to place a plaque on the center field fence in memory and honor of Rita. Dean recommends Board approval and said he would work with Little League on this.

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After Board discussion Commissioner O'Brien motioned for approval of a plaque honoring Rita Engels. Commissioner Collins seconded the motion which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

Discussion and/or Approval of Transferring \$200,000 from the General Operating Budget to the Capital Fund

Director Bissias explained that he is asking the Board to approve the transfer of \$200,000 to the capital fund. Normally an annual transfer is done in May each year, but this year the capital budget was approved with no costs attached to capital projects. We have since had to spend money on projects required before winter and spent approximately \$19,000 to hire engineers to complete investigations needed for the MWRD grant application. The engineering costs would have been incurred anyway down the road for this project. We are still looking carefully at all expenditures.

After Board discussion Commissioner Collins motioned for approval of transferring \$200,000 from the General Operating Budget to the Capital Fund. Commissioner O'Brien seconded the motion which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

Board Business

Old Business

None

New Business

President to Announce an October 12, 2020 "BINA Hearing" A Public Hearing Regarding the Sale of 2020 General Obligation Bonds (PDLG Annual Roll Over Bonds)

President Vear announced that a BINA hearing will be held on October 12th and Director Bissias added that the hearing would be at 7:00pm with the board meeting to begin directly after.

Committee Reports

Administration Committee

None

Parks and Open Lands

Commissioner Jacobs reported that the committee met this past week and that two new members have joined. Bill Lanspeary is a math teacher and soccer

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coach interested in weighing in and assisting the committee. Cathy McCook Parzyck also joined. She is a long-term resident who uses the Park District and fitness center. Commissioner Jacobs also sent invitations to the two residents that expressed their concerns at the June board meeting. With the three existing members they have a nice group of residents and they are all happy that we are moving forward with strategic planning, which is an investment in our future. The committee would like to be part of that, and suggested that park walk-throughs be continued, possibly twice per year. If the director and staff cannot do them, the committee could do them and invite additional citizens to enable more people to weigh in on our parks. They could be ambassadors for the District and assist with things such as encouraging residents to respond to surveys.

Finance & Capital Project Committee

President Vear received information from the Cook County Treasurer on where the Park District stands on pension liability. It is an important topic, and he is happy to report that we are 91.2% funded, which is a respectable number. Many other government bodies are only funded between 60%-80%.

User Group Committee

None

Marketing/ Social Media Committee

Commissioner Opyd reported that LGBA is looking at various promotions and their December holiday event could change, possibly to an outdoor scavenger hunt. It is a good time to think outside the box and try partnering with them for something different. Director Bissias commented that he supports partnering with them but would like to see them recognize the Park District when we do. We were the main sponsor for the past two years for the outdoor art exhibit and the District was not mentioned. Kevin Miller added that we were the presenting sponsor this year and LGBA did not do what was promised. Commissioner Opyd stated that LGBA needs to deliver on sponsorship contractual obligations and he will follow up with them. President Vear stated that he will ask them about it also. He surmises that they may forget that the Park District must promote itself too, just as other La Grange businesses do.

Public Comments (Board Manual Section #152)

David Bryant, 40 S. Ashland Ave. #3A, La Grange, stated that he is here as a representative of the Community Council of La Grange [Citizens' Council of La Grange] to encourage people to vote for candidates for the park board, and he has talked to members of the Board to encourage them to run. He appreciates the good work they do. His background includes the Environmental Quality Commission and Lyons Community Action Council. He is happy to talk to anyone and can provide the required forms for endorsement by the Council. President Vear thanked David for his work with the Council.

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Jamie Workman, 233 S. Park, La Grange, stated that he is a member of the La Grange Area Men's Organized Sports Association of 6-7 men advocating for permanent pickleball courts in La Grange. There is a demand for courts and the sport is increasing in popularity to a higher degree than tennis. Players must travel to adjacent villages to find courts, which often have long wait times. The pickleball lines on the Sedgwick Park tennis courts are not permanent courts. He does not want to kick off the tennis players, and his group plays in the evening when demand is high. Western Springs converted one tennis court to 4 pickleball courts. Pickleball courts serve more people with the same square footage as a tennis court. He supports a referendum or bond issue and would campaign for them. Jamie asked the Board to consider courts at Gordon Park, and to include them in their strategic planning. He appreciates what the Board and Park District does for the community. President Vear noted that our Director has previously proposed pickleball courts at Gordon Park, so it is in our vision, but is a matter of space and time.

Board Comments

Commissioner Opyd hopes our organization remains healthy and keeps planning for the future.

Commissioner Jacobs thanked David Bryant and Jamie Workman for coming to the meeting. She stated that it keeps us connected, and we hear them and are listening. She also thanked Dean for the personnel synopsis on where we stand during COVID, and said it is exciting that we are applying for three grants.

Commissioner Collins thanked staff for all their work during these challenging times when their jobs are crazier, and thanked Commissioner Opyd for reaching out to the Morton Arboretum regarding permeable pavers. Their information is encouraging with the climate concerns, and the train station pavers they viewed looked fantastic.

Commissioner O'Brien reported that he was approached by a neighbor, Pete Koziel, whose father was a manager with Little League for many years. The A and B fields at Sedgwick Park were turned to face outward 25 years ago, and at that time a bench with a plaque previously dedicated to Pete's father was moved. Pete wanted to know where the bench was. After only two days Dean was able to locate the plaque, which will be placed on a new bench. The Koziel family is excited and Commissioner O'Brien appreciates the hard work of Dean and the staff. He also thanked Kevin Miller for creating a party cart for the LGBA summer art exhibit.

President Vear stated that he knows how valuable staff's time is and apologized that sometimes the meetings get off track.

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Executive Session

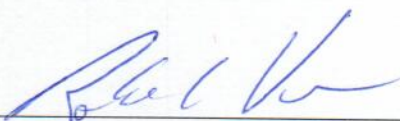
At 7:55 P.M. Commissioner Opyd motioned the Board convene to Executive Session pursuant to Item 12.2 Acquisition of Real Property, 5 ILCS 120/2 (c)(5) and Item 12.5 Review of Closed Executive Session Minutes, 5 ILCS 120/2 (c)(21). Commissioner Jacobs seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote.

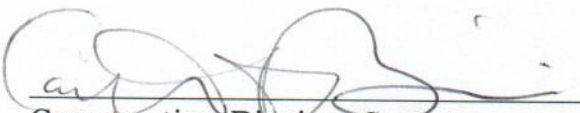
AYES: Commissioners Opyd, Jacobs, Collins, O'Brien, Vear
NAYES: None
ABSENT: None

At 8:09 P.M. the Board resumed the regular meeting.

Adjournment

Commissioner Jacobs moved for adjournment at 8:09 P.M. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Opyd and passed unanimously by Voice Vote.



Robert Vear, President

Constantine Bissias, Secretary
Approved October 12, 2020