

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

MAY 11, 2020

President Vear called the meeting to order at 7:04 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, Jim Boo, G.G. Gordon

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

*Commissioner Jacobs joined the meeting at 7:07 P.M.

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

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

NAYES: None

ABSENT: None

Communications, Presentations & Declarations

Public Comments/Participation (Board Manual Section #152)

None

Consent Agenda

Commissioner Collins motioned to approve Item 3.1 Approval of the Minutes of the Executive Session Board Meeting of March 9, 2020; Item 3.2 Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of April 13, 2020; Item 3.3 Approval of the Minutes of the Special Board Meeting/Workshop of April 27, 2020; Item

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3.4 Approval of the Financial Reports dated April 30, 2020; Item 3.5 Approval of the Consolidated Vouchers for May dated May 11, 2020. Commissioner O'Brien seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

Staff Reports

Director's Report

- The Director's board report includes all the information he wanted to communicate to the Board this month, so he will not repeat it, since staff has much to talk about.
- Dean stated that there continues to be an increase in vandalism, which is common in most park districts during the pandemic.
- The Police Dept. has their hands full enforcing health safety mandates, and they appreciate that our tennis courts are closed, which reduces their misuse as a place to congregate.
- Dean has fielded questions about when Little League might begin playing.

Staff Comments

Superintendent of La Grange Fitness Jenny Bechtold

- Superintendent Bechtold has had many virtual meetings and been in contact with other districts regarding reopening plans for fitness centers. The requirements in the new 5-phase plan issued by the Governor will delay reopening until the later phases.
- Jenny explained that she continues to investigate virtual options for patrons, and she is working with Supt. of Recreation Kevin Miller to avoid duplicating services. Kevin will focus on virtual fee based, specialty fitness programs. Jenny plans to offer a virtual 5K, with T-shirt sales to mark this unique period and provide some revenue, as well as a weight loss challenge.
- She has spent considerable time working on the set up of the new Tyler Technology financial software with Supt. of Finance Kuniej. She stated that the system will be fantastic and save time for staff.

Superintendent of Recreation Kevin Miller

- Superintendent Miller stated he has been doing a lot of research on virtual options and related marketing, and contingency plans for programs.
- In the coming weeks, the Recreation Dept. will be offering 19 virtual classes which include 9 athletic classes, 9 specialty fitness classes and 1 early childhood class.

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- Kevin explained that all our contractual instructors, except one, are ready to return and teach programs once we give the green light. The one dance contractor has opted to only teach virtually for the summer season.
- He has spent considerable time developing several potential plans for summer day camps. Our half-day camps would operate at a loss so it is unlikely they will run. He is considering full-day camps at three locations for children 4-12 years. He surveyed the 50 families that are currently enrolled and received 36 responses. None of the families supported a virtual camp option, and 26 families prefer in-person summer camp. He hopes we can accommodate them within current health guidelines and would like to decide around May 26th so that parents know their options.
- The Recreation Dept. has been working on the fall brochure. We will not have it printed and mailed out to save the significant expense. It will be available online and postcards will be mailed to inform patrons of the change. It is not economical to print it since there will likely be many program revisions as the health crisis evolves, and an online brochure can more easily be updated.

Superintendent of Facilities Chris Finn

- Superintendent Finn stated that he continues to work with all departments to plan for a safe reopening and has met often via Zoom with state and local groups.
- Chris has been assessing which indoor and outdoor facilities may be available for revised programming to allow for social distancing.
- He has met with contractors to keep up with facility repairs. The VCT floors have been stripped and waxed while the building is closed to avoid the usual August shutdown for this annual maintenance. The splash pad will be repaired, though its opening is uncertain.

Commissioner Jacobs stated that some areas of Gordon Park have been nicely mulched and asked if other areas and additional parks will be mulched by staff or contractors. She also stated that some other park districts have placed portalets in their parks and asked if we will be doing the same.

- Chris stated that the weather has prevented additional mulching, and that our crew of only 4 maintenance staff is small, and they have been busy cutting grass. We do not typically hire contractors for mulching. In the past, volunteers for our Park Pride event performed mulching in the parks, but the event will not run this year.
- Chris explained that portalets will be placed in the parks when the soccer and baseball groups are able to begin their season. Currently, our limited staff would not be able to provide the continual sanitizing now required to avoid a health risk. He is aware of many other districts similarly delaying them.

Commissioner Jacobs inquired about the status of the Endless Summerfest event and whether a scaled down version is being considered.

Director Bissias stated that a decision to cancel the event has not been made yet, but that we would not offer a scaled down version. About half of park districts have cancelled their large summer events, and others have postponed them until the fall. It would be tough to postpone our event due to staffing issues. We have an agreement with the promoter that allows us to move the bands to next year with no loss of money. Cancelling the event will be discussed when a decision on Lollapalooza is announced, which is the same weekend.

Superintendent of Finance Leynette Kuniej

- Superintendent Kuniej stated that intense work to set up and train for the new Tyler Technology financial software is ongoing and will continue for the next three weeks.
- Several additional unemployment claims have been filed for a total of approximately 32 applications.
- Leynette has been busy maintaining day-to-day operations.

Superintendent of BASE Leanna Hartung

- Superintendent Hartung was unable to provide a verbal report due to technical issues.

Attorney Report

Attorney Derke Price discussed guidance on public tennis courts that was released last week. The District has the authority to determine how and when we open our courts. We are in the northeast area of the Governor's 5-phase reopening plan. Phase 3 would permit field use with social distancing. When we determine the fields' availability, we will not be responsible for enforcing this. The burden of compliance will be on the user groups.

Attorney Price clarified that the limitation on groups of 10 includes program instructors in the count, and that square footage is included in the executive order. Multiple groups of 10 separated by dropped curtains in the gymnasium should be permissible based on the order.

Moving forward, the District will have to decide how aggressively to proceed with reopening versus the risks. As an essential function of local government, we can decide how to fulfill our mission.

Treasurer Report

None

Action Items

Discussion and Possible Approval of an Easement Agreement with ComEd Along East Side of Gordon Park

Director Bissias asked the Board to consider the agreement along with the additional provisions included in his memo to the Board. ComEd has indicated

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via email that they will add this language and provide an updated agreement. He stated that the easement will be in the berm area on Tilden Avenue in the northeast corner where a Nicor and phone easement are located. The ComEd easement will provide for burying electric lines related to the Pathway project. The agreement will not be signed until the language is changed and it is approved by our attorney. Commissioner Jacobs motioned for approval upon the condition of the recommended language in the agreement. Commissioner O'Brien seconded the motion which passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote as follows:

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

Board Business

Old Business

None

New Business

President Vear stated that he received an email from a member of the public, G.G. Gordon, who is also participating in tonight's Zoom meeting. She would like to make a donation for a park sign at Gordon Park in honor of her grandfather, who the park was named for. There has been no sign since the park was renovated and a previous MBO for a sign was not funded. He stated that this is a noble effort, and we should proceed with staff researching the design and cost of a sign. Director Bissias stated that the sign would best be placed on Ogden Avenue near the stoplight area for the greatest visibility. The Board gave consensus to move forward.

Committee Reports

Administration Committee

None

Parks and Open Lands

Commissioner Jacobs stated that she would like to see the mulching at all parks speeded up to improve the aesthetics of the parks.

Finance & Capital Project Committee

President Vear stated that they have been working on the capital budget.

User Group Committee

Commissioner O'Brien stated that Little League reached out for guidance on reopening the league as they wait for phase 3 of the Governor's plan. They surveyed families and 156 out of 400 responded to the survey, with 60%-75% expressing interest in proceeding with a revised season, and 25% preferring not to participate. Supt. of Facilities Finn commented that the user groups are still up in the air with their plans, and they are waiting for the District to give the go ahead for field use.

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Marketing/ Social Media Committee

Commissioner Opyd thanked Commissioner Jacobs for arranging for the tree donation for Gordon Park. He also thanked Commissioner Vear for assisting in picking up the tree. He supports reviewing our policy to consider opening tennis courts at the next board meeting.

Public Comments (Board Manual Section #152)

Jim Boo stated that he lives near Denning Park in La Grange. He runs at Spring Rock Park in Western Springs and observed that their tennis courts are open, playgrounds are not taped off, and patrons have been playing ball. He encouraged our District to remove its park restrictions and allow people to be responsible for their own actions. He commented that the decision on whether to cancel Endless Summerfest should be made now, cost control is important, and that when the fitness center reopens, we should admit taxpayers first and it should not reopen before private fitness centers. He does not like the Zoom format for meetings. President Vear stated that we are following the Governor's orders and we appreciate his comments.

Board Comments

Commissioner O'Brien thanked Commissioner Jacobs for the tree planted at Gordon Park, which is a great addition to the park, and thanked staff for their hard work during a tough situation.

Commissioner Jacobs thanked everyone and stated that trees survive, and the new tree planted at Gordon Park is a symbol to residents that we will survive this difficult time. She appreciates the comments made by Jim Boo, and would like the Board to take a hard look at our outdoor facility closures at the next board meeting. She asked Director Bissias to reassess this and would like us to have a smart, careful plan for reopening.

Commissioner Collins stated that he appreciates all the work done by Dean and staff to figure things out during this time.

Commissioner Opyd said that he appreciates the information provided by Attorney Price tonight. With warmer weather coming we should reassess tennis restrictions, and he would like this included as an agenda item for the next board meeting. We should take a measured view and consider reopening some things.

President Vear thanked Commissioner Jacobs for her work on the tree planting; it was good to see everyone there. He thanked Dean and the staff for their behind the scenes work preparing for a safe reopening and procuring PPE equipment. In response to Jim Boo's concerns about cost controls, he stated that Director Bissias has already set an objective to do this and will be completing a comprehensive reassessment of the total operations of the District.

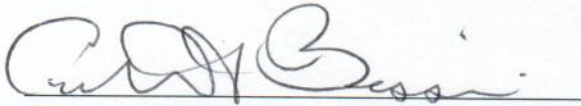
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Executive Session

None

Adjournment

Commissioner Opyd moved for adjournment at 8:06 P.M. The motion was seconded by Commissioner O'Brien and passed unanimously by Voice Vote.


Constantine Bissias, Secretary
Approved 06/08/2020


Robert Vear, President