

## West Suburban Special Recreation Association

November 9, 2021

Zoom Meeting of the Board of Directors

Zoom Meeting from WSSRA Offices located at 2915 Maple Street in Franklin Park

### MINUTES

I. Chairman Jackie Iovinelli called the **meeting to order** at 4:03pm those present included:

Sandy Lentz, Jan Arnold, PD of Oak Park  
Jackie Iovinelli, Park District of Forest Park  
Ted Gruber, Village of Elmwood Park  
Carlene Greifelt, Veterans Park District  
Mike Sletten, River Forest Park District  
Joe Modrich, Dan LoCascio, Franklin Park  
Anna Wegrecki, Village of Harwood Heights

Sandy Fejt, Berwyn Park District  
Annemarie Flaherty, Norridge Park District  
Ron Malchiodi, Village of Riverside  
Teresa Mrozik, Village of North Riverside  
Mark Sladek, North Berwyn

#### **Others in Attendance:**

WSSRA staff: Lisa Gershak, Marianne Birko

II. **Lentz/Mrozik moved to approve the agenda. The motion was approved by roll call vote.**

III. **Flaherty/Mrozik moved to approve the October 12, 2021, Regular Board Meeting minutes. The motion was approved by roll call vote.**

III. A. **Lentz/Sletten moved to accept the October 2021 Financial Report. The motion was approved by roll call vote.**

B. **Sletten/Mrozik moved to authorize payroll, The board, by roll call vote, authorizes payroll, prepaid disbursements #40022 and ending with check #40036 and authorizes payment of October payroll and disbursements debit charges and cash transfers totaling \$136,783.17 and authorizes payment of November 2021 disbursements #40037 and ending with check #40040 disbursements debit charges and cash transfers totaling \$8,887.83 pending the availability of funds. Roll call vote showed 12 yes votes and the motion was approved.**

V. **Public Comment** No Public present.

VI. **Under the Foundation Report: Birko shared the report on behalf of the WSSRF. This WSSRF is currently focusing on the remaining Two more upcoming events:** Fall in for Our Stars WSSRF has wrapped up a very successful "Fall in for Our Stars" Virtual event. While the live bidding on the event started on October 22 it played out over the week until Friday, October 29<sup>th</sup>. where the Foundation hosted **FREE virtual casino games**, virtual silent auction, and raffle prizes. While the Casino event had low attendance those who attended had a great time and the overall event raised over \$20,000 in profits through sponsorships, the raffle, and the silent auction. This nearly matches some of our top years of this event in the past! We are so grateful to the six sponsors, Weston Bridges, Good Heart Work Smart, Park District of Forest Park, Joseph Mullarkey Distributors, the Democratic Party of Oak Park and Chicago Hardware. As well as all those who contributed through the raffle and the Silent Auction. Congratulations to Mark Sladek and AnneMarie Flaherty who were winners in the Silent Auction. Thank you all for your support! **Concert in the Park** WSSRF will be collaborating with PACTT once again hosting the "Sons of Chicago" Holiday Jazz concert at the Thatcher Woods indoor pavilion on Saturday, December 11, 6:00 – 9:30pm. Mark your calendars and plan to celebrate this Holiday Music Spectacular! Online ticket sales will be available shortly. **Holiday Solicitation** This year WSSRF will close the year with its annual "Giving Tuesday" campaign and Holiday solicitation celebrating WSSRA's 45 years of providing recreational services to persons with disabilities to its community partners! The mailing will go out in late November. The Foundation Board of Trustees will have their final meeting of the year on November 15<sup>th</sup> to wrap-up the details for the final events and begin plans for 2022. **Thank you all for your continued support.**

VII. **Under Committee Reports**

- A. **Finance Committee** Arnold reported the October 25, 2021, Zoom meeting was cancelled, and no new decisions needed to be made. Birko sent information updates including staffing changes, Village of River Grove discussions continue, and noted the check and letter have been sent to the Clyde Park District.
- B. **No Other**

VIII. **Unfinished Business**

A. **Approval of the 2022 Proposed Budget**

Birko presented the 2022 balanced budget as approved by the WSSRA Finance Committee and presented in October with a \$50,000 share decrease, 50% share carry over credit as confirmed by the 2020 audit and the Board Policy. Birko reported WSSRA lost another Recreation Specialist which required further adjustments to the staffing budget while still maintaining the bottom line. Discussion included the 2022 budget, narrative and merit of up to 3% (1.4%COLA + 1.6% merit) **Sletten/Fejt motioned the Board approves the 2022 budget as presented. Roll call vote showed all 12 yes votes and the motion was approved.**

IX. **New Business**

A. **WSSRA Vehicle Update & Lease Approval**

Birko stated WSSRA has an accessible bus lease expiring in January 2022. Staff met with Central States Bus leasing and sales and has learned there is a significant increase in the cost due to demand and the increase cost in materials and delays since the bid in July. WSSRA is pleased with the recent accessible vehicle lease of the Ford Microbird DS-Series buses which has more safety features and are recommending the following: Lease the Ford Accessible Bus for the sales price of \$77,428/\$14,325.98 annually for 5 years compared to the July price of \$71,089/\$12,912.62. Birko stated if we place the order now it should be available when our January lease is up. If we delay, we will be down a vehicle and must wait for an undetermined amount of time due to the supply chain issues. **Fejt/Mrozik motioned the WSSRA Board by roll call vote approves the WSSRA Staff to order the Ford Accessible 2021 Microbird DS-Series bus and sign the lease for the January replacement vehicle pending the review of the lease by WSSRA's legal counsel. Roll call vote showed all 12 yes votes and the motion was approved.**

B. **No Other**

X. **Under Correspondence- No comments**

- XI. **Under Board Reports – Sletten reported the River Forest Park District's** Fall activities are winding down. They are putting the finishing touches on outdoor projects and preparing the grounds for winter. District 90 has opened their gyms to the RFPD for winter programs with strict regulations in place and they are finalizing their winter plans. **Gruber reported the Village of Elmwood Park's** Halloween event at the CRC was a great success with over 500 participants passing through. Their Fall Bocce league wraps up in December and Basketball will be getting started in December. **Wegrecki reported the Village of Harwood Heights** recently hosted a Senior Assistance Center fair with great attendance. The Fall Youth Commission sports are wrapping up and new this year is their CHES program which has really taken off in popularity. They are also busy planning for the Holiday festivities including the favorite Sing-along with Santa! **Flaherty reported the Norridge Park District** is wrapping up Fall and they too had a very successful Halloween event with over 200 trick or treaters pass through. They are busy winterizing their grounds and setting up their outdoor skating rink. They are currently gearing up for their Superintendent of Recreation going on FMLA for the addition to her family. **Sladek reported the North Berwyn Park District's** Hollow's weekend was a huge success. Be sure to check out the many pictures on their website. They are now busy planning and decorating for the Holiday events coming up. **Lentz reported the Park District of Oak Park** is wrapping up fall and preparing for their holiday events as well. PDOP is proud to announce the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation grant they received combined with the VOP's grant will allow the PDOP's CRC to be built as a net-zero building. They are still on their scheduled timeline of shovels in the ground in March of 2022. **Fejt reported the Berwyn Park District** is wrapping up a successful Fall league season and are busy preparing for the holiday events by readying the parks with lights. They will also be increasing their Santa's Special deliveries based on demand. **Modrich reported for the Park District of Franklin Park** is pleased to report

the increasing enrollment trends, they are seeing. The Ice Arena is seeing increased numbers as well in all aspects of the program from learn to skate, figure skating and hockey too. Fall programs have ended and they are wrapping up their three park renovations by Thanksgiving. **Mrozik reported the Village of North Riverside's** four-part Halloween events went very well. Soccer is a wrap, and they are closing in on their Turkey Bingo on November 19 which is sold out! Their Holiday events start on December 1<sup>st</sup> with their annual Tree lighting and festivities but no fireworks this year. They are super excited to announce the hiring of Toni Giovenco, as their new Program Coordinator! A great addition to the department. **Malchiodi reported the Village of Riverside** had a very successful drive thru Haunted House for Trick or Treating and plan to move it to a Saturday next year! Thanks to WSSRA for participating in the event again this year. Youth soccer and Fall programs are wrapping up and Basketball starts up inside with safety measures in place. The Annual Holiday Stroll hosted by the Chamber of Commerce is scheduled for December 3 and interviews begin tomorrow for the Recreation Supervisor position to be filled. Then it is onto to sledding and the ice rink... **Greifelt reported the Veterans Park District** is currently working on next year's budget and their Haunted on Hersh outdoor Halloween Event and Veterans Day Observance event went very well! They are also currently planning the Winter/Spring program guide and the Winter Wonderland event. **Iovinelli reported for the Park District of Forest Park**, Halloween celebrations went great! They continue to have record numbers for programs. Their Virtual Craft Fair went well, and they too are planning their Holiday events. The Board vacancy will be filled at the next board meeting and the work on the splash pad continues with the grand opening planned for May 22, 2022.

XII. **Executive Director's Report Birko Reported**

- A. **WSSRF's Fall in for Our Stars Virtual Casino night was a great success raising over \$20,000 in profits through the Silent Auction, raffle for 2 UNITED AIRLINES TICKETS and sponsorships.** A special thanks to all for your participation and support of this event and our Foundations efforts to raise funds to support WSSRA programs and services.
- B. **WSSRA Logo Updates** Staff have updated the WSSRA logo with fresh updates adding color that still maintains our strong marketing image. Board members commented on how much they liked it.
- C. **Annual Visits** Birko is continuing her 2020 Annual visits presenting highlights of 2020. Visits can be done in-person or virtually. Please don't wait to contact Birko to confirm a date.
- D. **Play It Again Sports** WSSRA was invited to be a partner with the Play It Again Sports, Forest Park for the month of November. PIAS accepts used sports equipment for a store credit to purchase other equipment. During the month of November anyone donating equipment can donate their credit to the WSSRA Account. WSSRA will in turn use this credit to purchase needed equipment for WSSRA programs and participants. Go ahead and clear out that closet of all seasons of sports equipment. Thanks for your support!
- E. **All Staff Training & Holiday Party** WSSRA staff will conduct an all-Staff Training followed by a Holiday Party hosted by the Village of Elmwood Park's Community Recreation Center. Birko thank the VEP for their support and invited any Board members to come join come join us for a game of Bocce on Thursday, December 2 after 1:00pm.
- F. **WSSRA Desks Available** WSSRA replaced 3 desks with the donation of desks from PDOP in turn WSSRA has 3 desks available for the taking. Please contact Birko by Friday, November 12 for pick up.

**G. Staff Report April Ryan, Superintendent of Recreation Reported**

1. **Programs** We are wrapping up our fall season on November 13. Staff are busy planning our winter brochure copy. We will be printing our winter and spring brochures separately this year. WSSRA will continue to print a limited quantity of brochures to distribute to our partner districts and participants.
2. **Special Olympics**
  - WSSRA has two basketball teams for the 2021-2022 season with 27 athletes playing. Game season begins on November 16-February 13.

- WSSRA had 17 athletes compete in the Special Olympics Regional Bowling Tournament on October 17. Four athletes received gold medals and will be advancing to the state competition on December 4-5 in Peoria.

**3. Imaginarium Sensory Room** WSSRA is excited to announce that our new Imaginarium Sensory Room location is opening at the George A. Leoni Complex in Melrose Park on Wednesday, November 10. WSSRA will be hosting a Grand Opening event in early December, additional details will be sent out soon.

#### **4. Holiday Events**

- **Turkey Bingo** WSSRA is attending North Riversides Turkey Bingo event on November 19. Participants will have the opportunity to win a turkey, ham, pie, and more.
- **WSSRA Santa Express** Families can register for an outdoor visit from Santa and his elves on December 11. Each participant will receive a gift, the event is sponsored by Thumbuddy Special.
- **Sensory Sensitive Treats with Santa** WSSRA is collaborating with the Park District of Oak Park on December 15 to offer a sensory-friendly evening for families at the Cheney Mansion. There will be activities, treats and a visit from Santa. The program is sold out with 45 participants and family members registered.
- **Holiday Hullabaloo**- WSSRA is offering 6 days of activities during winter break. Activities will include pottery, cooking, a magic show, bowling and more.

#### **H. Staff Report: Annie Hart, Superintendent of Safety and Operations Reported**

- 1. Inclusion** We currently have 34 participants scheduled for fall programs and afterschool care. As you plan and prepare for Winter Camps, please remember to get your inclusion requests in asap. Our Inclusion Manager, Chris Sturm, has returned from his FMLA. Chris will step back into the role of your main contact for anything inclusion related. Christina Fernandez stepped in to help cover Inclusion for Chris while he was away. Christina has recently accepted a position as the Inclusion Manager with SEASPAR. We are sad to see Christina go, but happy for this opportunity for her to grow.
- 2. Transportation** We have continued to expand our transportation offerings to allow more passengers and offered for more programs. We are currently offering transportation for 15 programs as well as Holiday Hullabaloo. All passengers will need to continue to wear a mask and be able to get on and off the vehicle independently. WSSRA just received word that the vehicle we've ordered has been completed and is likely to be delivered by the end of the month. This will put our vehicle fleet back to 4 buses which is full capacity plus our minivan.

#### **I. No Other**

**XIII. Adjournment** Mrozik/Fejt moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:56pm. A roll call vote was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Marianne Birko  
Executive Director  
mb/ Nov 21 minutes