

West Suburban Special Recreation Association

July 13, 2021

Meeting of the Board of Directors
at Park District of Forest Park
7501 Harrison, Forest Park 60131

MINUTES

- I. Chairman Jackie Iovinelli called the **meeting to order** at 4:10pm those present included:
Lentz/Schmidt motioned to approve Fejt, Berwyn Park District's remote attendance. The motioned was approved by roll call vote.

Sandy Lentz, Jan Arnold, PD of Oak Park
Jackie Iovinelli, Park District of Forest Park
Al Schmidt, Village of Elmwood Park
Carlene Greifelt, Veterans Park District
Mike Sletten, River Forest Park District
Joe Modrich, Park District of Franklin Park

Sandy Fejt, Berwyn Park District attended remotely
Annemarie Flaherty, Norridge Park District
Mark Sladek, North Berwyn PD
Ron Malchiodi, Village of Riverside arrived 4:20
Teresa Mrozik, Village of North Riverside

Others in Attendance:

WSSRA staff: April Ryan, Annie Hart, Marianne Birko

Not in Attendance:

Village of Harwood Heights, Excused Absence

- II. **Schmidt/Sletten moved to approve the agenda.** The motion was unanimously approved.
- III. A. **Arnold/Mrozik moved to approve the May 11, 2021, Regular Board Meeting minutes.** The motion was approved by roll call vote.
- B. **Schmidt/Lentz motioned to delay the approval of the Closed session minutes for March 9, 2021.** All approved
- IV. A. **Sletten/Modrich moved to accept the May & June 2021 Financial Report.** The motion was approved unanimously.
- B. **Sletten/Mrozik moved to authorize payroll, the board, The board, by roll call vote, authorizes payroll, prepaid disbursements #39903 and ending with check #39943 and authorizes payment of May & June 2021 payroll and disbursements debit charges and cash transfers totaling \$194,433.07 and authorizes payment of July 2021 disbursements #39945 and ending with check #39948 disbursements debit charges and cash transfers totaling \$9,717.81 pending the availability of funds. (Note check #39944 was voided) Roll call vote showed 10 yes votes and the motion was approved.**
- V. **Public Comment** CSladek from North Berwyn Park District said hello to everyone on the board.
- VI. **Under the Foundation Report: Birko introduced G. Estvanik a resident of NBPD who reported the WSSRF is continuing to focus on Four upcoming events:**
- The Bocce event** Planning is in the works for an in-person Bocce Tournament to be held at the Village of Elmwood Park's many indoor and outdoor Bocce courts on Saturday, September 11 from 4:00 – 8:00pm. WE are very excited to host this 16 Team Tournament competing for Cash prizes. If you are interested in registering a two- or four-member team for \$200 each, go to the WSSRA website! WE are also looking for Gold \$500, Silver \$250 & Friend \$100 sponsorships. For more information go to our website. A Big Thank You to the Village of Elmwood Park for their support in hosting this Inaugural event. More information to come soon. **Fallin For Our Stars** the WSSRF is very optimistic and planning to be back the in-person "Fallin For Our Stars" Casino Night at the Cheney Mansion. This event is scheduled for Friday, October 29th. So, mark your calendars! **Concert in the Park** WSSRF will be collaborating with PACTT once again hosting the "Sons of Chicago" Jazz concert in Thatcher Woods indoor pavilion on Saturday, December 11. Mark your calendars and plan to celebrate this Holiday Music Spectacular!
The Foundation Board of Directors thanks you for your continued support.

VII. **Under Committee Reports**

- A. **Finance Committee** Birko reported the Finance Committee headed by Jan Arnold met virtually on June 29, 2021, and reviewed Fund Balance updates, the 2020 carry-over, the Facility Fund, building research updates, Program & transportation updates and plans for the 2022 budget. The committee is scheduled to meet in-person on July 27 at 10:00am to continue discussions
- B. **No Other**

VIII. **Unfinished Business**

- A. **Acceptance of the 2020 Audit by Lauterbach & Amen** Sletten/Mrozik motioned to approve the 2020 Annual audit as presented by Lauterbach & Amen. **The roll call vote showed 10 yes votes and the motion was approved.**
- B. **Approval of Staff Policy Manual Updates**
Schmidt/Lentz motioned to approve the Staff Policy Manual updates as presented and approved by the Policy Committee. The roll call vote showed 10 yes votes and the motion was approved.
- C. **No Other**

IX. **Under New Business:**

- A. **District 84 Lease renewal** Birko reported District 84 renewed the office space lease with a 1.4% increase based on the December CPI. As of July 1, 2021, WSSRA is paying \$26,374 per year (2,197.83 monthly). Included with utilities WSSRA is paying nearly 6.00 per square foot which is well below the market value.
- B. **Bus Lease Approval** Hart reported WSSRA has had two bus leases expire in 2020 & 2021 and due to COVID staff chose to wait to sign new leases until we moved to Phase 5 opening. 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. WSSRA is deciding between two similar accessible vehicles the Ford Champion Challenger which is exactly what we currently have and have been pleased with, which has a wait of a minimum of 6 months on an order. The other comparable vehicle is the Ford Microbird DS-Series which has more safety features, is a \$1,000 cheaper and available within 2 – 3 weeks. Staff are recommending the following:
 - 1. **Lease Accessible Bus #1 for the sales price of \$71,089/\$12,912.62 annually for 5 years** of the Microbird D Series placing the order now. Staff will do a test run of one prior to signing the lease.
 - 2. **Lease 14- passenger non-accessible Bus #2** If after a month's use of the Microbird Bus #1 lease, decide if we want to order 14- passenger non-accessible Bus #2 of this same bus series for **\$65,734/\$11,939.94 annually for 5 years** and place the order in August with the hope of having the fleet ready for the Fall session of programs.**Schmidt/Greifelt motioned the Board by roll call vote approve the WSSRA Staff to order the buses and sign the leases for the two replacement vehicles pending the review of the lease by WSSRA's legal counsel. The roll call vote showed 11 yes votes and the motion was approved.**
- C. **Potential New Headquarters for WSSRA** Birko reported per the WSSRA Board's directive staff are looking at properties for office space more centrally located. Staff have met with Stephen Chrastka of NAI Hiffman, Commercial Real Estate Services and he is currently reviewing properties based on our parameters of approximately 4-5000 square feet with the parking of WSSRA vehicles as a priority. The per square foot is estimated between \$10 - \$25 per square foot. Included in that look staff looked at the St. Bernadine's school property for a possible lease and reported it is in need of a tremendous amount of work to make the space accessible and of use. Staff will keep you apprised of any updates with this information.
- D. **WSSRA Fund Balance Review & Acceptance** The WSSRA Board has reviewed the Finance Committee recommendations and Sletten suggested we get more clarity to continue with the approval process and the board agreed. The WSSRA Finance Committee will review further and bring their information and recommendations to the next meeting.

E. New Imaginarium Home Birko reported staff have met with the Veterans Park District staff and have found a New Home for the WSSRA Imaginarium Sensory Room at the George A. Leoni Complex located at 800 N. 17th Avenue in Melrose Park. It is the perfect room to accommodate the equipment needs for this exciting play experience and storage too! A huge thank you to the Park District of Oak Park Board and Staff for helping us launch this dream and to the Veterans Park District for welcoming us into their space. We will keep you posted on the details of our agreement and the transition. We are hoping to be up and running by the Fall session.

F. Veterans Park District Non-resident list updated Greifelt reported no changes in the list

X. Under **Correspondence**- No comments

XI. Under **Board Reports** –**Mrozik reported the Village of North Riverside** added the July 4th concert event to their schedule. It was well attended and enjoyed by all. They will host the Biggest Block Party on August 4th as well. Day camp is going well beating the 2019 number of registrants in camp which certainly helps financially. Excited to be serving a lot of young new families! They are wrapping up softball, concerts and the summer rush. They will be going back to the printed brochure in Fall. **Greifelt reported the Veterans Park District** is currently planning the Fall program guide which will be printed. They too have gone back to music in the parks, and they have successfully secured the liquor license for the concerts. They have brought back Movies in the park and just completed the new Spray Park at Grant Park. They are excited to host WSSRA's Imaginarium and staff are already busy getting the room ready! **Sletten reported the River Forest Park District's** camps are going well. District 90 will not be allowing facility access this fall. They are just starting the capital projects of redoing the tennis courts and batting cages at Keystone and possibly adding two more paddle tennis courts. **Sladek reported the North Berwyn Park District's** Splash pads are open, day camp is running, and they have returned to movies in the park as well. They had a successful presentation of "Best of Berwyn". It's great to be back!! **Schmidt reported the Village of Elmwood Park** is currently building a new Skate Park, they are hosting the Taste of Elmwood Park August 5 -8. Summer programs are running smoothly including 126 teams/175 participants in Gymnastics with 52 of those teams placing in competition. **Malchiodi reported the Village of Riverside's** Recreation department has officially moved to its new office space at 43E Quincy. The Phase 5 opening has flipped the switch and they successfully ran their July 4th 5k run, summer camp numbers are down but running smoothly. They are currently working with District 96 to extend before and aftercare programs and extending to Pre-K and Kindergarten. They are also busy planning building use and Fall programs. **Lentz reported the Park District of Oak Park** has both pools full, camps are running as well as movies and concerts in the park. Oak Park Festival Theatre returns to Austin Gardens with "The Tempest" July 15-Aug. 21 with a free community night on Thursday night as a way to give back to the community. Plans for the CRC continue to move forward with a target of March 2022 ground-breaking and opening in April 2024. The Community Capitol campaign continues and a celebration for the CRC is September 18. **Modrich reported for the Park District of Franklin Park says** it is wonderful to be back! The Pool and Ice Arena are open and serving the community. Summer camps are going well, and concert number five is tonight! PDFRP is officially a beekeeper of 5 beehives located on top of the Center at North Park. Modrich encourages others to consider as it is a great community experience! They expect Fall to keep going strong. **Flaherty reported the Norridge Park District's** 60-year-old pool took time to get open. But it is up and running. They are hosting four concerts and two movies in the park. They are running a very successful baseball/softball season. Hosting 3-day tournaments and increasing the revenue stream with new users. They are currently searching for a new team member as the Day Care Center Director who needs to be DCFS certified for the all-Day Childcare Center and Before and Aftercare program. Starting this fall NPD will be extending its before and aftercare enrichment program for students of District 86 and 79. **Fejt reported for the Berwyn Park District** just celebrated their 101 Anniversary with a rain out. They just ended their sports season and are busy planning for fall. They will be hosting events on September 11 and Brew Fest on September 25. **Iovinelli reported for the Park District of Forest Park**, is enjoying the administrative office revitalization completion. They will be reservicing the tennis courts and are opening bids on the Phase 1 of the Aquatics Center renovations of the spray grounds. Programs and events are in full swing. The July 4th events and fireworks had no incidence with 3000 people in attendance. It was a great family event with Speaker of the House Welch and the Lieutenant Governor present. Forest Park is currently preparing for the 16" No Glove Softball Tournament taking place in 2 weeks with Covid protocols will be in place.

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

- A. **WSSRA Staff Teams Return Fully In-person** The WSSRA team of staff has fully returned to the office as of June 1, 2021. We had a welcome back Team Building Activities and lunch as well as a review of office procedures. We continue to ask patrons to wear masks and those staff who are not fully vaccinated must wear masks in-doors as required by the CDC.
- B. **PDRMA Recommendation** Many WSSRA participants have seizure disorders and have medication & procedure protocols in place to help manage their seizures. WSSRA is currently working with a participant whose doctor is requiring the administering of a medication that PDRMA does not recommend staff administer as it requires medical training both in judgement and administering. The family has been given options to hire their own person to monitor and administer or WSSRA will hold the medication for the EMT's who be called in the case of a seizure. We will keep you informed of any updates in this regard.
- C. **NRPA Attendance** WSSRA staff are still determining their attendance for this year.
- D. **Schedule your WSSRA 2020 Annual Report presentations** WSSRA staff have begun presentations of the 2019 & 2020 Annual Snapshot. Please schedule a time for Birko to present either virtually or in person. I look forward to the opportunity to update your boards.

E. Staff Report April Ryan, Superintendent of Recreation Reported

1. **Summer Programs** Summer programs are going well. We currently have 141 participants and family members participating in 12 virtual and 23 in-person programs and special events. WSSRA is offering a Family Swim program and we have received great feedback; families are thrilled to have exclusive pool use. A big thank you to the Park District of Oak Park and the Village of Elmwood Park for hosting our Family Swim programs.
2. **WSSRA is offering an August Mini Session from August 13-27**, we are offering a variety of in-person and virtual program opportunities.
3. **Fall Planning** Staff are busy planning for fall, we plan on offering a full program schedule that will include mostly in-person program offerings and a few virtual programs. WSSRA is printing a limited quantity of brochures to distribute to our partner districts, brochures will be mailed to participants upon request.
4. **Day Camp** Day camp is off to a great start. Session two begins on July 12 and runs until August 5. WSSRA is running five in-person camp with 53 participants registered and one virtual camp with 4 participants registered. Registration is still open and is being taken in a first come, first served basis.
5. **Special Olympics** WSSRA has 6 athletes registered to compete in Special Olympics Golf Skill on July 21, gold medal winners will advance to the state games in the fall. We have 9 athletes participating in Special Olympics Softball Skills on July 31 and 9 athletes competing in Special Olympics Bocce Skills on September 18.
6. **Staffing** Our Staff Manager, Carla, is continuing to hire seasonal staff to work inclusion, day camp and programs. Applicants can apply online at wssra.net.
7. **Recreation Specialists Hiring Update** We are pleased to announce that we hired two Recreation Specialists, Bethany Pastrana accepted a Recreation Specialist position; her focus will be on Children and Youth Programming and Day Camp. Bethany has her degree in Recreational Therapy from Indiana University Bloomington. Skylar Blaszc accepted a Recreation Specialist position; her focus will be on Aquatics Programming. Skylar has her bachelor's degree in Therapeutic Recreation and just completed her master's degree in Recreation Administration. Bethany and Skylar both begin on August 2.
8. **Fall Intern** Katherine Swierczek is completing an internship with WSSRA in the fall. Katherine completed her undergraduate degree from Aurora University in Parks and Recreation Leadership and is currently completing her master's degree in Therapeutic Recreation from Southern Illinois University. Katherine will begin her internship on August 16.
9. **Imaginarium Sensory Room** WSSRA's Imaginarium Sensory Room will be open 3 days per week, families must preregister for their 45-minute play session in advance. WSSRA is in the process of looking for a new facility for our Imaginarium Sensory Room.

Special Events

i. Ice Cream Social & Move in the Park WSSRA is partnering with the Park District of Forest Park on July 16 for their Ice Cream Social and Movie in the Park Event.

ii. The Amazing Race This fun family event is taking place on July 23 at North Riverside Recreation Center. Families will work together to find clues and solve puzzles!

iii. Splish Splash Summer Bash Our annual pool party will be held in person on Thursday, July 29 at the Forest Park Aquatics Center from 7:30-9:30pm. The event will feature our Wacky Quacky Duck Splash, ducks can be purchased online at wssra.net.

iv. Dare2Tri Bike Event WSSRA is partnering with Dare2Tri on August 14 for an adapted bike day at Proksa Park. The event is free, and participants do not need previous cycling experience to participate.

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

1. **Inclusion** Numbers continue to rise. We currently have 45 participants scheduled for 86 seasonal programs and camp. Chris, Sheila, and Christina will be out and about checking in on Park District camps and programs that have inclusion services.

2. **Transportation** We have expanded our transportation offerings to allow more passengers. All passengers, with or without a vaccine will need to continue to wear a mask. Since last month we have added 8 more participants to Day Camp transportation which brings our total to 32 passengers. We were able to add an additional route to a weekly program to bring us up to 3 routes transporting 13 participants. Hart met with our representative, Joel, from Central States Bus Sales to go over options to add to our bus fleet bringing it back to 4 buses. We've determined that going back to 4 buses is a very important step in getting more and more participants back to programs.

G. **No Other**

XIII. **Adjournment** Sletten/Mrozik moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:29pm. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Marianne Birko
Executive Director
mb/ July 21 minutes