

West Suburban Special Recreation Association

May 11, 2021

Meeting of the Board of Directors

Zoom meeting hosted at WSSRA Office

2915 Maple St, Franklin Park 60131

MINUTES

I. Chairman Jackie Iovinelli called the **meeting to order** at 4:10pm those present included:

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

Teresa Mrozik, Village of North Riverside
Sandy Fejt, Berwyn Park District
AnneMarie Flaherty, Norridge Park District
Mark Sladek, North Berwyn PD

Others in Attendance:

WSSRA staff: April Ryan, Annie Hart, Marianne Birko

Not in Attendance:

River Forest Park District, Excused Absence
Village of Riverside, Excused Absence
Park District of Franklin Park
Village of Harwood Heights

II. **Schmidt/Arnold moved to approve the agenda.** The motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

III. A. **Arnold/Mrozik moved to approve the March 9, 2021 Regular Board Meeting minutes.** The motion was approved by roll call vote.

B. **Arnold/Schmidt Approval of Closed session minutes for January 12, 2021 were approved by roll call vote with suggested change.**

IV. A. **Arnold/Schmidt moved to accept the March & April 2021 Financial Report.** The motion was approved by roll call vote.

B. **Arnold/Schmidt moved to authorize payroll, the board, by roll call vote, authorizes payroll, prepaid disbursements #39859 and ending with check #39892 and authorizes payment of March & April 2021 payroll and disbursements debit charges and cash transfers totaling \$196,464.52 and authorizes payment of May 2021 disbursements #39893 and ending with check #39902 disbursements debit charges and cash transfers totaling \$21,449.75 pending the availability of funds. Roll call vote showed 9 yes votes and the motion was approved.**

V. **Public Comment –None**

VI. **Under the Foundation Report Birko reported,**

The WSSRF is continuing to focus on Four upcoming events:

The 2021 Virtual Derby Gala was a success! The Foundation coordinated this event with WSSRA and through the Cup & Ad Sponsorships, Cash Raffle, Paddle Raise and the Silent Auction were able to raise over \$40,000 in profit, the second highest for this event ever. A special thanks to all of you for your support!

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. WE are very excited to be working with them on this First time ever offered event. More information to come soon.

Concert in the Park WSSRF will be collaborating with PACTT once again hosting the "Sons of Chicago" Jazz concert in Thatcher Woods park on Saturday, August 28th. Mark your calendars for this new venue...

Fallin For Our Stars 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. It will be a Spooktacular event! So, mark your calendars!

The Foundation Board of Directors thanks you for your continued support.

VII. **Under Committee Reports**

- A. **Policy Committee** Birko reported the Policy Committee Headed by Ron Malchiodi the Policy Committee met on April 13, 2021 to review and approve the updates to the Staff Policy Manual to be reviewed later in the meeting.
- B. **No Other**

VIII. **Unfinished Business**

- A. **Acceptance of Additional Partner Appointments** (action)
Park District of Oak Park has requested to change their Representative to the WSSRA Board of Directors to Sandy Lentz, PDOP Board Commissioner for the period from May 1, 2021 – December 31, 2021. Schmidt/Arnold **motioned to approve the appointment of Sandy Lentz as the Board Representative for the Park District of Oak Park. The roll call vote Showed 9 yes votes and the motion was approved.**
- B. **Approval of Board Policy Manual Updates** (action)
Sladek/Lentz **motioned to approve the Board Policy Manual updates as presented and approved by the Policy Committee. The roll call vote showed 9 yes votes and the motion was approved.**
- C. **Board Approval to move forward with Merit** (action)
Per the approval of the 2021 budget a 2% performance-based merit is budgeted for all Full-time and Regular Part-time staff to be implemented starting July 1, 2021. **Mrozik/Fejt motioned the WSSRA Board approve the implementation of the budgeted merit of 2% based on performance starting July 1, 2021 for all Full-time and Regular Part-time employees. The roll call vote showed 9 yes votes and the motion was approved.**

IX. **Under New Business:**

- A. **Presentation of the 2020 Audit by Lauterbach & Amen** (discussion)
Birko reported the annual 2020 audit was completed and introduced Michael Del Valle from Lauterbach & Amen, LLP who shared an overview of the audit. Birko reminded the Board the current net position does not reflect the \$142,233 carry-over from 2019 that was used to reduce partner shares in the 2021 budget. This will be reflected in the 2021 audit. She reminded everyone they were sent the e-file of the audit and will receive a hard copy that will be delivered to the Park District offices. The Board is asked to approve the audit at the July Meeting.
- B. **Presentation of the Staff Policy Manual Updates** (discussion)
Birko reviewed the corrections and updates to the Staff Policy Manual as reviewed and approved by the Policy Committee. Lentz reported one additional error on page 55 to be corrected. Staff asks the board to be prepared to vote on the recommended changes at the July 13, 2021 Board meeting.
- C. **No Other**

X. **Under Correspondence-** No comments

XI. **Under Board Reports – Greifelt reported the Veterans Park District** is currently working on finalizing their summer plans. They are excited to offer some new opportunities to entice the consumers into coming back! They too are planning to open their pool this summer! Not sure what that will look like, but they will be back... **Mrozik reported the Village of North Riverside** hosted their first ever.5k run with lots of success and enthusiasm. They are excited to show off their commercial on Facebook! Be sure to check it out! This summer they will be hosting 3 Concerts, the World's largest Block Party! Planning for the July 4th parade and they have a NEW Mayor Joe Mengoni transitioning in as of May 1, 2021. **Fejt reported the Berwyn Park District** has one more week of preschool and spring soccer. They are busy planning for summer day camps and there Pay it Forward project on May 15th. They are currently evaluating the staffing transition of two park district positions, the Superintendent of Recreation, and the Horticulture Specialist. They will also be celebrating their 101st Anniversary. **Arnold reported the Park District of Oak Park** has both pools full and are currently getting all the pumps up and running. They are still trying to figure out how to open them with the current restrictive guidelines. They hope to have more information from the Oak Park and Cook County Health departments reporting their regulations by May 29th. They have recalculated there day camp groupings as the guidelines have opened allowing them to take many off the wait list. They are currently working on the 2022 –2024 Strategic Plan and plan to present to the Board in the Fall. Plans for the CRC continue to move forward with a target of March 2022 ground-breaking and opening in

April 2024. They are currently working on their Community Capitol campaign and the Park District of Oak Park is delighted to report they are a National Gold Medal Finalist for 2021! **Sladek reported the North Berwyn Park District** just completed the judging for the Best of Berwyn and will announce the winners at the event coming up in June at Jefferson field. They just completed the demolition project and are finalizing plans for the new maintenance garage. They are also busy planning for programs this summer. **Flaherty reported the Norridge Park District's** pool is filled and they are busy working on getting everything up and running. They recently lost the Aquatics Manager, so they are working to fill this position, but the good news is the parks department is fully staffed! She sees staffing as their biggest challenge to keep things running safely. Summer day camp is full, and they are looking for ways to expand and modify based on the regulations. While they will not be having the "Island in the City Festival", they will offer four concerts, and four movie nights as well. They are ready for some Summer Fun!! **Schmidt reported the Village of Elmwood Park** is currently hosting 80 Bocce teams and supporting 54 kids in a Bocce program as well. Their Community Recreation Center; CRC will be fully completed by July 1! A great opportunity to rent the space for \$500 for 3 hours! Consider it for your next outing. They are currently fixing a pool leak and plan to open the pool to #100 per group depending on the regulations. **Iovinelli reported for the Park District of Forest Park**, is planning to open their pools and have #100 persons in 4 zones of the pool every 2 hours. There will be water in the pool shortly and they will test the pumps. 50% of the new skatepark is completed with a factory delay on parts. It looks fantastic so far!!! Their Administrative office revitalization is currently underway with new flooring, ceilings, and LED lighting. Cannot wait to show it off...Day camp is full, and they too are preparing for the Phase 4 Bridge. They are changing over to Amilia computer software by the end of the week. Plans are in the works for a July 4th celebration with Fireworks and a scaled back venue. They will also be hosting the No Glove Softball tournament with adjustments to the format based on the regulations. They too will be hosting concerts a& Movies in the park. The big push is for hiring staff. They have a new Commissioner starting May 20 and the spray ground project will begin in September.

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

A. **WSSRA Virtual Derby Gala 2021 Preliminary Summary**

The Foundation has once again worked closely with staff to roll out the third Virtual event since September. The first was the 2020 Virtual Derby Gala which took place in September 2020, in December we presented the Virtual "Celebration of Stars" and 4 months later the 2021 Virtual Derby Gala. As you know all the interviews and presentations were pre-recorded and went live on Saturday, May 1, 2021. WE were able to do this with the complete support of Senate President Harmon and President Skip Saviano who assisted in the friend raising through the Virtual Auction, Paddle Raise and Sponsorships. We had the continued support of the full Steering Committee of which we added Mayor Ronald Serpico from Melrose Park to this year's event. A Special thanks to All of the WSSRA partners for their support!

B. **IPRA Safe Zone Conversations**

WSSRA staff launched the first "Safe Zone Conversation about Racism" hosted by the IPRA Diversity Committee. It was well organized with pre and post presentation surveys to help get the conversation started. All WSSRA Full-time & Regular Part-time staff were required to be in attendance. We are pleased to be moving forward with plenty of work ahead to assure we are a Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive organization. I encourage all of you to do the same with each of your organizations. You can arrange for these workshops through IPRA.

C. **WSSRA Staff Teams Return Fully In-person**

The WSSRA team of staff has been working in two rotating teams coming to the office and working from home to minimize our exposure to COVID and keep staff safe and our programs running smoothly. Staff are preparing for a full return to the office starting June 1, 2021. We are rearranging some workspaces, so we are in full compliance with social distancing and mask wearing in the presence of others.

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. **Birko joins the Joint Legislative Committee**

Birko was asked to take the place of Sandy Gbur who is retiring in June on the IAPD/IPRA Joint Legislative Committee to represent the Special Recreation Associations of Illinois. Birko is honored to be a representative on the

Committee and looks forward to the opportunity to continue to be a voice for SRA's and building the relationships with our community of Legislators.

F. Staff Report April Ryan, Superintendent of Recreation Reported

1. **Spring Programs** Spring programs are going well, program run until May 22. In our current season, we are serving 86 participants and family members in 18 in-person programs and events and 38 participants in 22 virtual programs and events. WSSRA is working with the Chicago District Golf Association Foundation to offer golf skills. This season we are using Ridgemoor Golf Club in Harwood Heights for the first time and the participants and staff could not be happier with their experience.
2. **Summer Programs** Summer registration opens on Monday, May 10. WSSRA is excited to offer some aquatics programming this summer including Bobcats Swim Team, Adult/Participant Swim Lessons and Family Swim. We are working with our partners to secure dedicated pool space in efforts to offer family swim 2-3 time per week for WSSRA participants and families.
3. **Day Camp** WSSRA's Out of This World Day Camp registration is open, registration is taken on a first come, first served basis. We currently have 45 participants registered for Day Camp and Community Cruisers. Camp will be broken into two sessions running June 21-August 6. With current registration numbers, WSSRA plans on running 5 in-person camps and one virtual camp.
4. **Special Olympics** WSSRA brought 6 athletes to the Special Olympics Spring Games on May 3. Athletes competed in Standing Long Jump, Running Long Jump, Softball throw, Mini Javelin, 50m and 100 m run/Walk. WSSRA had 4 athletes, 1 for aquatics and 3 for powerlifting, qualify to participate in the 2022 Special Olympics USA Games in Orlando, Florida.
5. **Staffing** Our Staff Manager, Carla, is working on recalling staff back to work for summer programs, inclusion and day camp and is busy preparing for upcoming trainings.
6. **Imaginarium Sensory Room** WSSRA's Imaginarium Sensory Room will continue to be open 3 days per week, families must preregister for their 45-minute play session in advance. Play sessions are \$5 per individual visit, or \$10 per family visit.
7. **Special Events:**
 - **Art Party** WSSRA held a virtual art party on April 17. A professional artist joined the group to teach participants how to paint a portrait on canvas.
 - **Foot Loose Dance** On April 24 WSSRA held a virtual 80's themed dance. We had 17 participants in attendance, all had a great time!
 - **Family Skate** WSSRA held a Family Skate Night at Ridgeland Commons on April 30. Families really enjoyed themselves and were thrilled to have dedicated ice time. Thank you again to the Park District of Oak Park for making this event possible!

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

1. **Inclusion** WSSRA is currently supporting 20 participants in 27 programs. Chris and our Inclusion Team is currently getting ready for summer trainings and presentations at member districts. If you have not already scheduled our Team to present at your day camp trainings, feel free to reach out to Chris and get one scheduled. He is currently scheduled to present at Riverside on 6/7, Veterans on 5/26, Oak Park is pending, Forest Park on 6/1, and River Forest on 6/8. Chris has received 2 requests for summer inclusion thus far. Mia Leyba, the Recreation Specialist that was a part of the Inclusion Team, has accepted a position as an Inclusion Manager with NISRA. We are sad to see Mia go, but happy for this opportunity for her to grow professionally. WSSRA will not be filling this position at this time and will revisit this decision later this year. This Summer our Inclusion Team will continue to be led by Chris and will include Sheila and Maria; both seasonal staff that have worked for WSSRA over the past 10 years.
2. **Transportation** WSSRA is planning to expand our transportation offerings over the summer to include 4 seasonal programs; we are currently offering transportation for 2 seasonal programs. WSSRA will continue to offer transportation for summer day camp as well.
3. **New Registration System** We are officially going live with our new registration system, SmartRec by Amilia on May 10, 2021. The training for this system has been extremely inclusive and not rushed at all. We have

had several months to learn and play around in the system. Staff have reported they are excited with all SmartRec has to offer and we are all READY to go live!

H. **No Other**

- XIII. **Closed Session** Fejt/Arnold motioned to go into closed session pursuant to 5ILCS 120/2(c) (11) to discuss personnel & compensation2(c)(1) Lentz/Schmidt motioned to go out of closed session and all approved.
- XIV. **Possible Action following closed session** Schmidt/Lentz motioned to approve the items discussed in closed session to go into effect July 1, 2021. The roll call vote showed 9 yes votes and the motion was approved.
- XV. **Adjournment** Schmidt/Mrozik moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:20pm. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Marianne Birko
Executive Director
mb/ May 21 minutes