



**MINUTES OF THE OF THE  
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
PUBLIC HEARING ON OAKTON PARK PICKLEBALL IMPROVEMENTS  
Oakton Community Center  
4701 Oakton Street, SKOKIE, IL  
MARCH 9, 2023 - 6:00 P.M.**

**ATTENDANCE AT MEETING**

Board Members Present: President Susan Aberman  
Vice-President Mike Reid  
Commissioner Ezra Jaffe

Others Present: Executive Director/Secretary Michelle J. Tuft  
Superintendent of Parks, Planning & Facilities Corrie Guynn  
Office Manager Park Services Dima Kirland  
Superintendent of Recreation Breanne Labus  
Operations & Project Manager Jeff Hacker  
Oakton Community Center Manager Aryn Fletcher  
Park Specialist IV Peter Haben

**CALL TO ORDER**

Commissioner Jaffe called the public hearing of the Board of Park Commissioners for the Oakton Park pickleball improvements to order at 6:01 p.m.

**INTRODUCTIONS**

Commissioner Jaffe introduced himself, President Susan Aberman, Vice President Mike Reid, and Executive Director Michelle Tuft.

Executive Director Michelle Tuft introduced Superintendent Corrie Guynn to present the Oakton Park pickleball improvements. Superintendent Guynn told those in attendance that the Power Point presentation will be posted on the Skokie Park District website tomorrow under the Oakton tab. Superintendent Guynn's contact information will also be posted.

**PRESENTATION**

Superintendent Guynn presented the design for the Oakton Park pickleball improvements. Mr. Guynn said that pickleball is the fastest growing sport in the country! He showed statistics of participants since 2019 and how it exploded over the years. The new improvements will include six pickleball courts, lights, benches, water fountain, and a greenhouse room renovation. The project is expected to finish in fall of 2023. The current budget is \$800,000.

Mr. Guynn showed the site and current conditions. He then explained the new concept which includes six pickleball courts, benches, and a water fountain.

Staff are looking into a reservation system, but it has not been determined what it will be or if

one will be implemented. If implemented the reservation system could include tennis and could be used district wide.

Construction of the courts is scheduled to be complete in the fall of 2023 but would not be scheduled with lessons or leagues until spring of 2024.

Executive Director Tuft said that staff are cognizant of the popularity of pickleball and will do their best to balance the scheduling of leagues, lessons, and free play.

Mr. Guynn explained the concept for the indoor space. The district envisions a rentable space to be used for the new pickleball courts as well as other events. It will include seating, island/bar top area, refrigerator, and a TV. The renovated space will be available year-round. Mr. Guynn showed the pictures of the current space and the proposed renovation. Executive Director Tuft said it will be a similar concept to a paddle tennis hut and can be used as a warming center.

### **COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS**

A resident expressed concern for the spacing between the courts and the fences. Another resident said the dimensions are very critical to the game. For comparison, he said that Lawler Park courts dimensions are not correct, but Laramie Park courts are correct.

A resident suggested looking at the official USA pickleball site for the official required dimensions.

A resident suggested putting the proposed gates in the middle on the east side, because it will cause less interruption to the people on the court.

A resident asked if there will be a fence between the courts. Executive Director Tuft said there will be a 4 ft. fence between the courts.

Several residents said that free play is the most important for players who are not in leagues and asked the district to consider this when scheduling the courts. The residents said that open pickleball is the standard. In addition, the residents would like the district to consider peak times verses non-peak times when scheduling.


Executive Director Tuft and Mr. Guynn said many factors that will be considered when scheduling the courts.

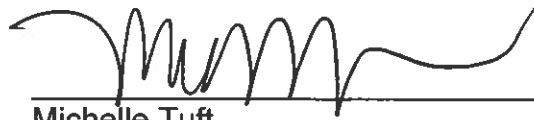
A resident liked the idea of having a reservation system for the courts as she has experienced some hostility when playing on the tennis courts in Skokie. She feels that the reservation system will eliminate some of the arguments. Another resident did not like the idea of a reservation system. One resident asked that pickleball players assist with the reservation system.

Commissioner Ezra ensured the residents that the staff listen to the suggestions and do their best to please residents.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Jaffe thanked everyone for attending and providing input, and adjourned the meeting at 7:44 p.m.

  
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Susan Aberman  
President

  
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Michelle Tuft  
Secretary

March 21, 2023

**Vision Statement**

The Skokie Park District envisions a community where all of its residents enjoy a high quality of life through leisure time pursuits, beautiful open spaces, and first-rate facilities.

**Mission Statement**

The Skokie Park District will realize its vision through teamwork, community partnerships, sound fiscal management, and creativity in every area of its operation.

**Core Values**

The Skokie Park District will fulfill its mission through:

- Commitment• Integrity• Innovation• Service •Openness •Environmental Stewardship •Inclusiveness