

**MINUTES OF THE  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
SKOKIE PARK DISTRICT  
DECEMBER 21, 2021  
7:00 P.M.**

**ATTENDANCE AT MEETING**

Board Members Present:

President Susan Aberman  
Vice President Michael Reid  
Commissioner Ezra Jaffe

Absent:

Commissioner Minal Desai  
Commissioner Mary Oshana

Others Present:

Executive Director/Secretary Michelle J. Tuft  
Superintendent of Business Services William G. Schmidt  
Superintendent of Parks Corrie Guynn  
Superintendent of Recreation Breanne Labus  
Superintendent of Facilities Jon Marquardt  
Executive Administrative Assistant Ann Perez  
Risk Management & Special Facilities Manager Scott Runkle

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Aberman called the regular meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners to order at 7:00 p.m., followed by the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

**COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS**

There were no citizen comments.

**CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL**

Commissioner Jaffe moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Vice President Reid seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioners Desai and Oshana were absent. Motion carried. The Consent Agenda consisted of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 16, 2021; bills payable for the month of November/December 2021, Treasurer's Report, and Staff Reports.

**2021 CAMP REPORT AND 2022 CAMP FEE APPROVAL**

Superintendent Labus presented the 2021 Camp Report with a summary of camps, enrollment highlights, a registration and enrollment comparison, a 2021 actual vs. budget comparison, a three-year camp budget comparison, 2022 proposed fee increases, a summary of survey results for camp 2021, survey comment trends, and recommendations for changes for 2022 camp. President Aberman asked a few questions about fee assistance, camp enrollment for this year vs. camp enrollment in 2019, staff hiring difficulties, and camp bussing.

Commissioner Jaffe asked Ms. Labus to consider using a communication software for parents and staff to keep everyone more informed. Ms. Labus said staff will be using Microsoft Teams software next year. Commissioner Jaffe asked about camp scholarships, camp demographics and requested a more condensed version of the camp survey results for camp 2022.

Vice President Reid moved to approve the 2022 camp fees as proposed. Commissioner Jaffe seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioners Desai and Oshana were absent. Motion carried.

### **2021 POOL REPORT AND 2022 POOL FEES APPROVAL**

Risk Management and Special Facilities Manager Scott Runkle presented the 2021 pool report and 2022 pool fees. Mr. Runkle reviewed the pool season highlighting pool staffing, rescues, programming, current revenue, and recommendations for 2022.

Both pools opened this year under Covid-19 guidelines. A total of 3,624 pool passes were sold which is down from 2019 but better than anticipated. Two capital projects were completed prior to opening Devonshire Aquatic Center. At Skokie Water Playground a new entrance gate was installed, allowing patrons to enter without going through the locker rooms. Mr. Runkle discussed the attendance numbers at both pools with the 8<sup>th</sup> warmest summer on record helping those numbers. Birthday party and private rentals were very popular. Devonshire Aquatic Center held its first dive-in movie with 100 people in attendance. Mr. Runkle is looking forward to doing this again next year.

Mr. Runkle discussed the 2022 pool fees which will remain the same as 2020. Cooler fees will be added to bring in additional revenue.

Vice President Reid moved to approve the 2022 pool hours and fees as proposed. Commissioner Jaffe seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioners Desai and Oshana were absent. Motion carried.

### **APPROVAL OF PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT PURCHASE FOR LOREL PARK AND MENOMINEE PARK**

Superintendent Guynn requested approval of the playground equipment purchase for Lorel Park and Menominee Park. Six vendors submitted proposals and Burke was selected for both sites based on the designs and overall play value. The district received a \$5,343.50 discount for purchasing both playground equipment from Burke.

The Menominee Park purchase includes the main playground equipment and swings. The Lorel Park purchase included the main playground equipment, independent play items, and a zipline. Demolition has begun at both sites. Park Services staff is completing the removal and disposal of the existing playground surfacing, which saves the district some money. The playground installations are tentatively scheduled for April/May but may be completed sooner depending on the winter weather.

Commissioner Jaffe moved to approve the bid from Burke of Fon du Lac, WI for the Lorel Park (\$95,057.58) and Menominee Park (\$42,291.32) playground equipment for a total of \$137,348.90. Vice President Reid seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioners Desai and Oshana were absent. Motion carried.

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

The next regular meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners is Tuesday, January 18, 2022, at 7:00 p.m.

### **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Vice President Reid gave a Shout Out to Rachel Pozner for organizing the staff blood drive on December 17. He said it was very commendable and she did a great job.

### **DIRECTOR COMMENTS**

President Aberman received the Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD) 20-year service award and Ms. Tuft asked Vice President Reid to present the award.

### **20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY IAPD AWARD – SUSAN ABERMAN**

Vice President Reid presented the Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD) 20-year service award plaque honoring her service on the board for 20 years with many of the years as president.

Susan Aberman was elected to the board of commissioners in 2001 and has helped oversee many of the major projects and programming changes made by the park district since then, including the creation of Skokie's Backlot Bash, and the renovation of The Exploritorium, the Skatium Ice Arena, and the Weber Leisure Center and its Fitness First health club.

During her tenure so far, the Skokie Park District also has been recognized as an Illinois Distinguished Accredited Agency four times and in 2021 won the Illinois Park & Recreation Association's 'Champions for Change' award for fostering diversity and inclusion within the Skokie community and within the Skokie Park District. Susan Aberman is the third longest serving board member in the district's 93-year history. President Aberman said it has been a pleasure to work with the board and staff over the years.

Ms. Tuft updated the board on the homeless couple that was living at Oakton Park over the summer and have now returned. The Village of Skokie Human Services Department has been working with them to help them find housing. They left some personal items at the park and Ms. Tuft said the items will be cleared out.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **REQUESTED DEVONSHIRE DOG PARK DISCUSSION**

Ms. Tuft updated the board regarding the request from a group of residents at Devonshire Park for a dog park area at one of the tennis courts. Mr. Guynn and Ms. Tuft do not think the tennis court option is a good location for a dog area. Ms. Tuft showed the board a picture of a possible site and said it made more sense than converting the tennis court to a dog area. The location is half the size of a tennis court but the cost of converting the area would increase substantially to approximately \$75,000. Ms. Tuft said staff is not in favor of the project or of spending funds that could be used for other capital projects. President Aberman and Vice President Reid both agreed that this would not be the time to consider this request with district revenues being unpredictable due to Covid-19 and the variants that are affecting attendance at programs and events. Ms. Tuft will relay this information to the residents.

#### **BOARD RETREAT DISCUSSION**

Ms. Tuft asked the board to table the discussion regarding a board retreat until the January board meeting as Commissioners Desai and Oshana are not in attendance.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**SCHEDULE SPECIAL BOARD MEETING FOR THE SKATIUM ICE ARENA RENOVATION  
BID APPROVALS**

Ms. Tuft said staff hopes to have the Skatium Ice Arena renovation bid approvals on the January board meeting agenda, but if the bids are not received prior to the meeting she asked to schedule a tentative special board meeting the following week, so the project stays on schedule. The board selected Tuesday, January 25 at 7 p.m. as the tentative board meeting date and time. President Aberman asked Ms. Tuft to email the meeting date to the board.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Jaffe moved to adjourn the regular meeting. Vice President Reid seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioners Desai and Oshana were absent. Motion carried. The regular meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.



Susan Aberman  
President



Michelle J. Tuft  
Secretary

January 18, 2022