

**MINUTES OF THE  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
SKOKIE PARK DISTRICT  
MARCH 15, 2022  
7:00 P.M.**

**ATTENDANCE AT MEETING**

Board Members Present:

President Susan Aberman  
Vice President Michael Reid  
Commissioner Minal Desai  
Commissioner Ezra Jaffe  
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 Facilities Jon Marquardt  
Marketing and Communications Director Jim Bottorff  
Human Resource Manager Lynn Seebacher  
Office Manager/IT Support Specialist Dima Kirland  
Executive Administrative Assistant Ann Perez

**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.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS**

Mr. Aaron Becker expressed his concerns regarding an incident that occurred at last year's tennis camp regarding his son receiving a derogatory comment from another camper, and the difficulty he had contacting staff to discuss the incident. Mr. Becker suggested including information on the camp registration form about the contact for chain of command. Ms. Tuft said this is done for most camps and can be done for the tennis camps. Ms. Tuft explained that an investigation was completed, and staff were spoken to. She assured Mr. Becker that this incident was taken seriously. Mr. Becker also asked about training for all staff and Ms. Tuft explained that full-time staff have received diversity, equity, and inclusion training. President Aberman said she felt terrible about what happened and assured Mr. Becker that this will be addressed with children attending summer camp this year. Ms. Tuft told Mr. Becker to contact Mr. Marquardt, Ms. Labus, or Ms. Tuft with any concerns or suggestions he may have.

**CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL**

Vice President Reid moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Desai seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried. The Consent Agenda consisted of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 15, 2022; Finance Committee Meeting Minutes of March 2, 2022; bills payable for the month of February/March 2022, Treasurer's Report, and Staff Reports.

**TENTATIVE BUDGET & APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE #22-022**  
**FISCAL YEAR 2022-2023**

Treasurer Schmidt said that during the Finance Committee Meeting Commissioner Jaffe had questions regarding the Skatium net revenue for the past two years. Ms. Tuft said that Mr. Marquardt put together an analysis for Commissioner Jaffe but explained that the budget being approved tonight did not change from what was presented at the finance committee meeting. Mr. Marquardt then explained the reasons why the net revenues are similar in the 2022-2023 budget and the projected year end numbers for 2021/2022, even with the Skatium closure. Commissioner Jaffe appreciated the explanation and information.

Treasurer Schmidt asked the Board for approval of the Tentative Budget & Appropriation Ordinance #22-002 for fiscal year 2022-2023. This document mirrors the operating budget presented at the Finance Committee Meeting. Following the budget presentation at the Finance Committee Meeting, the budget was put into a legal document, Ordinance #22-002, and will go on public display for 30 days at Devonshire, Oakton, and Weber Leisure Centers and on the website. A public hearing on the Tentative Budget and Appropriation Ordinance will take place at the April Board meeting when the budget is formally approved.

Commissioner Jaffe moved to approve the Tentative Budget and Appropriation Ordinance #22-002 for Fiscal Year 2022-2023 so it can be put on public display for thirty days. Commissioner Desai seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF PERSONNEL POLICY REVISIONS**

Ms. Tuft worked with Human Resource Manager Lynn Seebacher to revise the following personnel policies: Retirement Policy, Bereavement Policy, Paid Vacation for Full Time Staff, and new policy for Participation in the SPACE Program. Ms. Tuft explained each policy in detail. Commissioner Jaffe suggested a correction to the Bereavement Policy and Ms. Tuft agreed. The change should read, The Executive Director at their sole discretion may make exceptions to the list of qualifying "immediate family" members.

Commissioner Desai moved to approve the policy changes, as amended, to the personnel policy manual for all staff in the following areas: retirement policy, bereavement policy, paid vacation policy, and participation in the SPACE program. Vice President Reid seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioner voted aye. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF HEALTH INSURANCE RENEWAL**

Treasurer Schmidt requested approval of the renewal of the District's health insurance policy with Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) beginning May 1, 2022. A 10% increase was budgeted as recommended by the district's insurance broker, Hub International. The first quote from BCBS was over 11%, but with the assistance of the insurance broker and Human Resource Manager Lynn Seebacher the increase was reduced to 5.34%. However, if the District renews the life insurance policy with BCBS there is an additional decrease, reducing the rate to 4.29%. Thus, the rate increase is \$3,512.83 per month for a total premium of \$85,420.15 per month based on the current census.

Commissioner Jaffe moved to continue with Blue Cross Blue Shield health insurance policy for 12 months with a monthly premium of \$85,420.18, based on current status. Commissioner Oshana seconded the motion. On a roll call vote all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

### **APPROVAL OF DENTAL INSURANCE RENEWAL**

Treasurer Schmidt requested approval of the dental insurance renewal with Delta Dental beginning May 1, 2022. This year the dental insurance rates did not increase. However, Human Resource Manager Lynn Seebacher requested the insurance broker, HUB International to remove their 5% broker commission and they agreed, so the dental rates will be reduced by 5% this year.

Vice President Reid moved to approve the renewal of dental insurance for the District with Delta Dental of Illinois for a period of 12 months reflecting a 5% decrease in premium costs an annual savings of \$2,324. Commissioner Desai seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

### **APPROVAL OF VISION INSURANCE RENEWAL**

Treasurer Schmidt requested approval of the vision insurance renewal with Delta Dental with a 0% increase. Once again Human Resource manager Lynn Seebacher asked HUB International to consider removing their commission and they agreed. The renewal rate will be decreased by 10%.

Commissioner Jaffe moved to approve the District's vision insurance with Delta Dental Vision for a period of 12 months beginning May 1, 2022, at a decrease in the premium of 10%, for an annual savings of \$1,101. Commissioner Desai seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

### **APPROVAL OF LIFE INSURANCE RENEWAL**

Treasurer Schmidt requested approval of the life insurance policy through Blue Cross Blue Shield. A 13.4% increase was proposed for May 1, 2022. If the district renews the life insurance, there is a 1% discount in the health insurance renewal. Human Resource Manager Lynn Seebacher asked HUB International to remove their broker fee commission for the life insurance renewal and they agreed bringing the premium increase to only 8.9% or \$2,293.00 annually. The Board commended Ms. Seebacher on the work she did to save on the park district cost of the dental, vision, and life insurance renewals.

Commissioner Desai moved to renew the District's life insurance policy for one year at an increase of \$2,294 per year (8.9%). Vice President Reid seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye.

### **APPROVAL OF THE SPORTS COURT FENCING PROJECT**

Superintendent Guynn requested approval of the sports court fencing project which includes installing fencing at the Oakton tennis courts and the Lockwood tennis and basketball courts. Staff will remove and dispose of the fencing at Lockwood Park and will remove the existing fencing, to be reused, at the Oakton Park courts which saves the District a substantial amount of money. Three bids were received. The low bidder, Northern Illinois Fencing has completed other fencing projects for the District and staff is recommending them for the project. Commissioner Oshana said these were good prices.

Vice President Reid moved to approve the bid of Northern Illinois Fence for \$60,465 for the Sports Court Fencing Project. Commissioner Jaffe seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

### **APPROVAL OF THE 14 PASSENGER BUS BID**

Superintendent Guynn said bids were received for the 14-passenger bus bid, but they were high. Staff is still vetting the pricing and would like more time to do their due diligence and are requesting to table this item until the April Board meeting. Commissioner Jaffe asked when we could expect the new vehicle and if we were keeping the old vehicle. Mr. Guynn said there is not definite timeline for receiving the new vehicle and the old vehicle will be used until the new one is received, then it will be auctioned.

At this time there is no motion.

### **APPROVAL OF FITNESS FIRST EQUIPMENT BID**

Superintendent Guynn requested approval of new fitness equipment for Fitness First. The equipment includes two elliptical machines, three recumbent cross trainers, and three free climbers. The equipment was scheduled for replacement last year but was delayed due to Covid 19. Three bids were received, and staff is recommending the low bidder, Direct Fitness Solutions, as they are the sole provider of the brands specified in the bid documents. Commissioner Oshana had not heard of the vendor and asked if we have used them in the past. Mr. Marquardt said the district has been satisfied with them in the past.

Commissioner Oshana moved to approve the bid of Direct Fitness Solutions, located in Mundelein, IL to provide fitness first replacements for \$55,820. Commissioner Jaffe seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

### **APPROVAL OF DEVONSHIRE SOLAR PANEL INSTALLATION BID**

Superintendent Guynn requested approval of the Devonshire solar panel installation bid. The panels will be installed on the new upper roof at Devonshire Cultural Center. Mr. Guynn said that with the incentives the district receives the cost is offset quite a bit, with a return on investment of approximately 8 ½ years. As other roofs are replaced district wide, solar panels will be installed to offset energy costs. Commissioner Oshana asked how many other park districts are installing solar panels. Mr. Guynn said he knew of one park district, Oak Park. Commissioner Oshana said we are a leader in the industry and asked staff to share the information on social media for awareness. Mr. Guynn said when solar panels were installed at Emily Oaks Nature Center a sign was installed that provides nice factual information. Ms. Tuft reminded the board that the district has been waiting for the Weber Center and Park Service's solar panel installation, which should begin this spring/summer.

Commissioner Jaffe asked why there was only one bidder. Mr. Guynn reached out to the company who will install the Weber solar panels and they did not bid on the project. He feels this project is too small for some companies. Mr. Guynn said Windfree Solar installed the solar panels at Emily Oaks Nature Center and the Windfree representative happened to grow up in Skokie, went to Emily Oaks camps, and is always excited to be involved in our projects.

Commissioner Jaffe moved to approve the bid of Windfree Solar for \$76,383 for the Devonshire Cultural Center Solar Panel Installation Project. Commissioner Desai seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF LOCKWOOD PARK AND OAKTON PARK SPORTS COURT  
IMPROVEMENTS BID**

Superintendent Guynn requested approval of Lockwood Park and Oakton Park sports court improvements bid. The project includes asphalt work on the two tennis courts and two basketball courts at Lockwood Park and the two tennis courts at Oakton Park. The work also includes color coating at both sites. Three bids were received, with Chicagoland Paving as the low bidder. Staff are happy to recommend Chicagoland Paving as they did the work at the Hamlin Park courts and did a fantastic job.

Vice President Reid moved to approve the bid of Chicagoland Paving for \$199,210 for Lockwood Park and Oakton Park sports court improvements. Commissioner Desai seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF LOREL AND MENOMINEE CONSTRUCTION PROJECT**

Superintendent Guynn requested approval of the Lorel and Menominee Parks construction projects for the installation of the new playground equipment and zip line, as well as new sections of curbing and sidewalk at Lorel Park and the installation of the playground equipment at Menominee Park.

Staff has completed the demolition and removal of existing play equipment, amenities, timber border at Menominee Park, the excavation and installation of the zipline area at Lorel Park, and the removal of the play surfacing at both sites, which saves the District a significant amount of money.

Five bids were received, and staff is recommending the low bidder Hacienda Landscaping. Hacienda has done satisfactory work for the District in the past.

Commissioner Jaffe moved to approve the bid from Hacienda Landscaping for the Lorel and Menominee Construction Projects for a total of \$109,060. Vice President Reid seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF MENOMINEE TURF PROJECT**

Superintendent Guynn requested approval of the Menominee turf project for the installation of synthetic turf on the playground. Two bids were received. The low bidder, Perfect Turf, installed the playground turf and baseball infield at Laramie Park and staff is satisfied with their work.

Commissioner Desai moved to approve the bid of Perfect Turf for the Menominee Park Turf Project for a total of \$65,335. Commissioner Jaffe seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

**AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT TRANSITION PLAN UPDATE**

Superintendent Guynn said every year staff update the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) transition plan. There are not many changes to the facilities section this year. However, Mr. Guynn highlighted that the nine playground renovations that were done last year eliminated thirty-seven items off the parks list.

Commissioner Oshana asked if a consultant was hired for the ADA transition plan. Ms. Tuft replied that M-NASR completed the audit.

Commissioner Oshana suggested a link be added to the website to assist with accessibility on the site. It is not expensive and is high impact. Commissioner Oshana will send the link to Ms. Tuft.

Vice President Reid moved to approve the update to the District's Americans with Disabilities Transition Plan. Commissioner Desai seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

The next regular meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners is Tuesday, April 19, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. President Aberman, Commissioner Jaffe, and possibly Commissioner Desai, will attend remotely.

### **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

President Aberman acknowledged and congratulated the team (Ms. Tuft, Superintendents Guynn, Labus, and Marquardt, Lynn Seebacher, and Dima Kirland), who worked on the Distinguished Agency Re-Accreditation for the park district. Superintendent Labus was not present as she is on a parental leave of absence. President Aberman asked for a photograph of the team and thanked the staff for the good job.

Vice President Reid received information that the Niles Township Food Pantry is holding a benefit food run on Saturday, May 14 at the Old Orchard Jr. High School track. He will forward the information to everyone and asked Michelle if the park district would like to have a team participate. Their goal is to raise \$75,000 to continue to provide food for needy families. Vice President Reid and President Aberman went to the food pantry and said they do an unbelievable job.

President Aberman attended "The Crucible" performance and was amazed at the size of the audience. The show had over 536 people for the two weekend performances.

President Aberman said the ice show was great. The skaters were better this year, and the choreography was great. Every senior skater was congratulated with flowers, and it was lovely. Commissioner Desai agreed and said it was really cute with the construction wall that everyone signed.

Vice President Reid went to the Meet 'N Greet Superhero event. The two superheroes were terrific with the kids and afterwards the kids got to go to the Exporitorium. Vice President Reid posted some pictures on social media.

Vice President Reid, President Aberman, Ms. Tuft, and Mr. Guynn attended the legislative conference in Springfield Illinois last week. There was a nice dinner with State Senators Ram Villivalam and Laura Fine. It was a nice event with a lot of worthwhile information.

President Aberman said Fitness First did very well with an increase in revenue in February. Mr. Marquardt says he goes to the fitness center the same time every day to work out and has noticed the increase in people returning.

Commissioner Oshana is excited for the return of Festival of Cultures and the Fourth of July Parade. This year

President Aberman asked about the headliner bands for Backlot Bash and Mr. Bottorff responded:

Friday Night - Kid 'N Play, will be warmed up by Too Hype Crew

Saturday Night –Vertical Horizon will be warmed up by Michael McDermott

Sunday Night – Tributosaurus as the Kinks

### **DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS**

Ms. Tuft asked for a list of possible dates for the board workshop in May so she can present them to the facilitator. The dates of May 3, 4, 10, 11 and 12 were selected. Ms. Tuft will contact the Board once a date is selected.

Ms. Tuft asked if the board had a chance to read the article in the Illinois Parks and Recreation magazine that Mr. Marquardt wrote entitled "Don't Wait for Your Diversity "AHA" Moment." The Board congratulated Mr. Marquardt. Mr. Marquardt thanked the Board for the acknowledgment and thanked Mr. Bottorff for his assistance with the article.

Ms. Tuft asked the board members to let her know if they are interested in attending the NRPA Conference in September. Commissioners Jaffe and Oshana will not be attending. President Aberman and Vice President Reid will be attending. Commissioner Desai will have to check her schedule.

Ms. Tuft scheduled the tours of Dammrich Rowing Center with Commissioner Jaffe and Desai and Vice President Reid and the tour of the Skokie Heritage Museum with Commissioner Jaffe. Commissioner Jaffe is available to tour both sites on March 28 at 5:30 p.m. Commissioner Desai and Vice President Reid are available on Thursday, March 15 at 9:30 a.m. to tour Dammrich Rowing Center.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Commissioner Oshana said there is graffiti on the plexiglass at the Little Library at Terminal Park and asked it to be removed. Mr. Guynn said staff will take care of this immediately.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Commissioner Oshana moved to enter into executive session to discuss executive session meeting minutes for the purpose of approval of the minutes, semi-annual review of the minutes, and to authorize the destruction of executive session recordings pursuant to Section 2(c)(21). Vice President Reid seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

### **ACTION TO BE TAKEN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Commissioner Jaffe moved to approve the Executive Session Minutes of January 18, 2022. Vice President Reid seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

Following review of Executive Session meeting minutes dating from January 2004, Commissioner Jaffe moved to release the minutes from September 14, 2021, and to have those remaining minutes not previously released remain closed because the need for

confidentiality still exists as to all or part of the minutes. Commissioner Desai seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

Commissioner Jaffe moved to approve Ordinance #22-003 authorizing the destruction of verbatim recordings for the closed session meetings on March 17, 2020, and September 15, 2020. Commissioner Desai seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Vice President Reid moved to adjourn the regular meeting. Commissioner Desai seconded the motion. Motion carried. The regular meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.



Susan Aberman  
President



Michelle J. Tuft  
Secretary

April 19, 2022