



**MINUTES OF THE OF THE  
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
PUBLIC HEARING ON IMPROVEMENTS AT POOCH PARK  
SKOKIE PARK DISTRICT  
JANUARY 23, 2024 - 6:30 P.M.**

**ATTENDANCE AT MEETING**

Board Members Present: Commissioner Ezra Jaffe

Others Present: Executive Director Michelle J. Tuft  
Superintendent of Parks, Planning and Facilities Corrie Guynn  
Horticulturalist Supervisor Jim Hallm  
Aquatics Manager Scott Runkle  
Aquatics and Facilities Supervisor Claudia Bidstrup  
Office Manager Park Services Anjum Hava

**CALL TO ORDER**

Executive Director Michelle J. Tuft called the public hearing for the improvements at Pooch Park to order at 6:30 p.m.

**INTRODUCTIONS**

Executive Director Michelle Tuft introduced herself and welcomed the residents. Executive Director Michelle Tuft introduced Commissioner Ezra Jaffe, Superintendent of Parks, Planning, and Facilities Corrie Guynn, Aquatics Manager Scott Runkle, Aquatics and Facilities Supervisor Claudia Bidstrup, Horticultural Supervisor Jim Hallm, and Park Services Office Manager Anjum Hava.

**POOCH PARK PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS**

Mr. Guynn presented the design for Pooch Park and explained the new amenities. The path through the park will be paved with asphalt. A 16x16 shelter will be added to the south end of the park. The north side of the park will be expanded to include the triangle area adding 7,000 square feet to the park. Adding the shelter on the south end and moving the fence on the north end will help alleviate some traffic from the middle of the park. It will also help with turf maintenance.

The current small dog area will be separated into two areas, a small dog area for dogs under 35 pounds and a puppy area for dogs, regardless of size, under 12 months.

Agility pieces that are worn out will be replaced. Synthetic turf will be added under the agility pieces to decrease wear and tear and reduce the mud in this area. One new piece will be added.

Benches and garbage cans will be replaced and installed on concrete pads to eliminate turf wear and mud spots.

Depending on funding, a dog wash station will be added near the north parking lot by converting an old, unused fish washing station.

New trees will be planted throughout the park to create more shade. The shrubs along the west fence will be removed.

A bid alternative to pave the path outside of the park will be included and will be completed if funds allow.

Entrances to each gated area will be included in the paving.

The south entrance will be altered to include a gate that will provide direct access into the small dog area.

The work is intended to begin mid to late Summer 2024.

### **PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS**

A resident asked if there will be some sort of enclosure at the pavilion for the winter. Mr. Guynn said at this time it is not possible, but we are looking into heating both shelters depending on cost. It is very expensive to heat the shelters as it involves trenching lines all the way from the Dammrich Rowing Center.

A resident commented that the garbage cans should be placed far away from the shelters and benches, because in the summer the smell can get intense. Mr. Guynn stated that he will take that into consideration and look at the locations of the new garbage cans.

A resident stated that her puppy is already past 35 pounds so the proposed puppy area is not big enough for larger puppies. She requested more space in the puppy area. Mr. Guynn and Executive Director Michelle Tuft stated that they will look into it.

A resident asked if the Park District can get metal dog bones engraved and hang them on the fence as a memorial, it could be a memorial fence. The Executive Director stated that she loved the idea and Mr. Guynn said that they will look further into it. The resident also asked if the water fountain can be adapted with a water hose to fill up a kiddie pool. Mr. Guynn stated that the concern with a kiddie pool is the lack of drainage which will create a muddy mess. The Executive Director said they will look into it and see if there is a way to add a kiddie pool in a way that won't create a muddy area.

Many residents thanked the park district for adding "poop bags" for convenience and stated that it is a great feature of the park. However, they asked if the bags can be switched to a larger size and provide thicker more durable bags. Mr. Guynn said that it is an easy fix and we can take care of it.

All the residents present in the meeting thanked the park district for pooch park and the

maintenance of it. Everyone clapped and stated how grateful they are to the Skokie Park District and what they have done. Mr. Guynn and Ms. Tuft thanked everyone.

**CLOSING COMMENTS**

Executive Director Michelle Tuft thanked the residents for attending and sharing their questions and comments.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The Executive Director adjourned the meeting at 7PM.



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Mike Reid  
President



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Michelle Tuft  
Executive Director

2/20/24

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Date