

**MINUTES OF THE  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
SKOKIE PARK DISTRICT  
AUGUST 19, 2025  
6:30 P.M.**

**ATTENDANCE AT THE MEETING**

Board Members Present: President Susan Aberman  
Vice President Ezra Jaffe  
Commissioner Antonia Kasalo-Terihaj

Remote Attendance: Commissioner Elsa Fischer

Absent: Commissioner Courtney Williams

Others Present: Executive Director/Secretary Michelle J. Tuft  
Superintendent of Business Services William G. Schmidt  
Superintendent of Parks, Planning & Facilities Corrie Guynn  
Superintendent of Recreation Breanne Labus  
Assistant Superintendent of Recreation Mary Amato  
Marketing and Communications Director Jim Bottorff  
Executive Administrative Assistant Ann Perez  
Skatium Facility Manager Kurt von Helms

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Aberman called the regular meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners to order at 6:30 p.m. President Aberman called for the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS**

Mr. David Dalka addressed several concerns regarding Sequoya Park. He noted that two picnic tables are currently located in the middle of the playground and suggested relocating benches to the north end of the park to provide quiet seating for visitors. Additionally, he raised an issue regarding School District 68's use of the park district's parking lot and the absence of a stop sign at the alley exit, which he believes poses a safety risk as vehicles may exit directly onto the street. Mr. Dalka also expressed concern about park safety and suggested increased attention from local law enforcement. Mr. Dalka reported that on July 5, individuals set off fireworks at Sequoya Park, where a parking lot camera recorded their license plates. He requested that the board inquire with Chief Barnes regarding the lack of prosecution, noting that such activities posed potential risks to pedestrians in the park.

Ms. Tuft noted the district's strong relationship with police regarding park incidents and expressed satisfaction with their work. She will contact Chief Barnes about the July 5

fireworks at Sequoya Park; Mr. Dalka added that Chief Barnes is not pursuing the culprit.

Ms. Tuft indicated that Mr. Dalka should consult with the school district regarding parking, bus arrangements, and coordinate with the Village concerning the placement of the stop sign.

President Aberman said the parking lots are not restricted and anyone can park in them.

Ms. Tuft thanked Mr. Dalka for his comments.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL**

Vice President Jaffe moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried. The Consent Agenda consisted of the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of July 15, 2025, bills payable for the month of July/August 2025, Treasurer's Report, and Staff Reports.

#### **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

Mr. Steve Konters and Ms. Jenna Beck from Hitchcock Design Group presented an update on the Comprehensive Master Plan. Mr. Konters outlined park amenities and noted this was one of three planned meetings with the board. The initial steps include assessing parks, facilities, programs, and gathering community input. No conclusions were made at this meeting, as the data will inform future decisions.

Ms. Beck shared the results from a staff workshop and from the feedback gathered at the Festival of Cultures.

Ms. Bobbi Nance from Recreation Results discussed the analysis of registration and sales data. She reported that participation has increased steadily and that most program areas are experiencing growth.

Ms. Tuft thanked them for all the information.

No motion required, informational only.

#### **CHANNELSIDE SOUTH SURVEY RESULTS AND BOARD INPUT**

Ms. Tuft introduced Mr. Gage Berger and Ms. Patty King from Wight & Company to present the results of the survey regarding Channelside South development.

Mr. Berger described the Channelside South site survey, noting that separate surveys were conducted for residents and staff. A total of forty-four staff members and 1,332 residents participated. The survey was highlighted by Patch, which contributed to a high number of responses. Its purpose was to gather input regarding suitable development options for the site, and Mr. Berger provided an overview of proposed programming and sustainability considerations.

Ms. Tuft said the next steps are to develop site plan options and determine project funding. She recommended hiring a consultant to assess referendum prospects, possibly including outdoor pool upgrades. Ms. Tuft will get a proposal from Beyond your Base for the board to consider.

Ms. Tuft stated that there is a possibility of another property being made available to the park district from the MWRD, specifically the area currently leased by Sherman Dodge. Mr. Guynn noted that this property could serve as a storage area.

Ms. Tuft stated that the MWRD wants to bundle the district's leases, which include Skokie Sports Park, Sports Park East, Hamlin Park, Channelside, Channelside South, and potentially the area currently leased by Sherman Dodge, into a single agreement.

Commissioner Fischer noted that, given the limited available acreage within the district's boundaries, consideration should be given to any type of property within the boundaries. She supported including the pools in the referendum. She suggested waiting for the community wide survey results before reviewing options and inquired about when aQuity would present. Ms. Tuft responded that it would take place at the next board meeting.

Ms. Tuft and President Aberman thanked Wight for sharing the information.

No motion required, informational only.

#### **APPROVAL OF COMPRESSOR REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT AT THE SKATIUM ICE ARENA**

Ms. Labus requested approval for the repair and replacement of compressors at the Skatium Ice Arena following the failure of both units. The plan is to replace one compressor and rebuild the other, as only one new compressor is currently available. The plan is to restore the ice sheets for fall programming and have the compressors working by Labor Day, which aligns with the beginning of fall programs.

Ms. Labus stated that the cause of the compressor failures remains unknown. Despite consultation with experts, no definitive explanation has been identified.

Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj inquired about manufacturer accountability regarding the compressors. Ms. Tuft responded that there was a two-year warranty, but the compressors have now been in use for two and a half years. An insurance claim will be submitted to PDRMA in the hope of receiving coverage for the cost. The team may add more fail-safes later, but right now their focus is on starting the system.

Vice President Jaffe moved to authorize Premistar to rebuild one compressor and purchase on new compressor for \$99,998 plus labor which is estimated at \$26,000 and shipping costs. Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Williams was absent. Motion carried.

### **APPROVAL OF PURCHASING BID LIMIT INCREASE**

Treasurer Schmidt requested approval of the purchasing bid limit increase. Mr. Schmidt said Governor Pritzker enacted legislation to raise the park district's bid limit for supplies and materials that require board approval. The \$30,000 limit has increased to \$60,000 for supplies and materials but needs board approval. The bidding threshold for labor remains at \$30,000.

Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj moved to approve the increase in the bid limit from \$30,000 to \$60,000, for supplies and materials only, effective immediately. Commissioner Fischer seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Williams was absent. Motion carried.

### **AUTHORIZATION FOR BUSINESS RELATED TRAVEL FOR PARK BOARD COMMISSIONERS**

Mr. Schmidt requested the authorization for business related travel for park board Commissioners to the NRPA Conference on September 16 – 19, 2025 in Orlando Florida. The Commissioners attending are Commissioner Aberman and Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj.

Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj moved to approve business related travel for Commissioners Aberman and Kasalo-Terihaj to the NRPA annual conference in Orlando, Florida on September 16-19, 2025. Vice President Jaffe seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Williams was absent. Motion carried.

### **APPROVAL OF DEVONSHIRE CHILLER REPLACEMENT**

Mr. Guynn has requested approval for the replacement of the Devonshire Chiller due to an issue with one of the compressors, which is currently operating at 70% capacity. A new compressor can be delivered within 16 to 20 weeks. This project is included in the two-year capital budget. There is a \$50,000 rebate available, contingent on completing the project by the end of the calendar year. Mr. Guynn stated that he expects the project to be finished by year end.

Vice President Jaffe moved to approve the Devonshire chiller replacement through the OMNIA cooperative purchase program with Thermo Systems, Inc. for \$195,150.00. Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Williams was absent. Motion carried.

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

The September Board of Park Commissioners meeting is rescheduled from Tuesday, September 16, 2025, to Thursday, September 25, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. due to the NRPA Conference.

### **COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS**

President Aberman inquired about the decline in concession sales at the pools. Mr. Guynn noted that there has been a slight decrease in attendance. Ms. Tuft reported a reduction of \$300 in revenue at Devonshire Aquatics Center and \$3,000 at Skokie Water Playground.

### **DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS**

Ms. Tuft said she does not have a closing date for the property being donated by Builders. She will keep the Commissioners posted.

Mr. Guynn has applied for the IAPD Best of the Best Awards for sustainable practices. The awards ceremony is on Friday, October 24.

Ms. Tuft reminded the board that the public hearing for Gleiss Park is next week on Thursday, August 28, at Gleiss Park at 6:30 p.m. If it rains it will be at Devonshire Center.

No Friday memo this week due to Backlot Bash; she will be at the event site.

Ms. Tuft inquired whether the board was interested in going to bid for the annual audit or if they would like to stay with Miller Cooper. Vice President Jaffe thought there was a multiyear contract with Miller Cooper and Mr. Schmidt said they only do annual contracts now. Vice President Jaffe is agreeable with staying with the same audit firm.

The public hearing for Lyon Park is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. at Lyon Park. In the event of rain, the location will be changed to Oakton Center.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

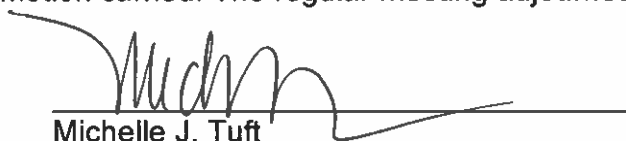
There was no new business.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Vice President Jaffe moved to adjourn the regular meeting. Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj seconded the motion. On a roll call vote all Commissioner voted aye. Commissioner Williams was absent. Motion carried. The regular meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m.



Susan Aberman  
President



Michelle J. Tuft  
Secretary

September 25, 2025