

**MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
SKOKIE PARK DISTRICT
JANUARY 21, 2025
6:30 P.M.**

ATTENDANCE AT MEETING

Board Members Present: President Susan Aberman
Vice President Ezra Jaffe
Commissioner Elsa Fischer
Commissioner Antonia Kasalo-Terihaj
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
IT Assistant Dylan Kehoe
Marketing and Communications Director Jim Bottorff
Executive Administrative Assistant Ann Perez

CALL TO ORDER

President Aberman called the regular meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners to order at 6:00 p.m. President Aberman called for the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Ms. Maureen Jacob said she wanted to advocate for a land swap at Middleton School/McNally Park. She said the swap would help parking, update the playfields and playground equipment, and move the fields off Main Street, away from traffic.

Mr. Gerardo Mendez represents northern Cook County as a Construction Analyst for the Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa Foundation for contracting. He wanted to share information about D&J Landscaping who was the lowest bidder for the Onondowa'ga Park playground installation. He said D&J Landscaping does not use the correct equipment and the safety of their workers is his biggest concern. He said other park districts have reference checked D&J Landscaping and decided not to use them.

Mr. Marc Jucott said the park district should consider the land swap and it should be a 50/50 land swap. He said the swap will provide for children's education at a functioning school. There are other parks in the area if McNally Park is unavailable; the park district can survive. He said this is 110% the best thing for children.

Ms. Emily White said there is a need for a new Middleton School. Phasing the project will take 7 – 9 years to complete. A land swap and would take 3 – 4 years to complete. She thinks the district should consider the land swap proposal. It would be an opportunity to pave the way for the school to do what it needs to do. The hope is that the park district will consider this, even with the inconveniences, for the kids in 73.5 who deserve a new school.

President Aberman thanked the citizens for their comments.

CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL

Vice President Jaffe moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Williams 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 December 17, bills payable for the month of December 2024/January 2025, Treasurer's Report, and Staff Reports.

CAPITAL ACCOUNTS ANALYSIS FISCAL YEAR 2025 FOR SIX (6) MONTHS ENDING 10/31/2024

Vice President Jaffe asked for clarification on the capital expenditures and a report was provided. Vice President Jaffe said it was great information and shows how our cash flow works with the capital accounts. He asked that the capital analysis be presented in the exact same format at the next quarterly update. Vice President Jaffe said to include liquid balances and the rate on the main accounts, and Treasurer Schmidt agreed.

No motion required, informational only.

SCHOOL DISTRICT 73.5 PRESENTATION

Ms. Tuft introduced School District 73.5 staff who were present to provide the commissioners with their first look at the school district's renovation plans.

Mr. Richard McDonald is the School District 73.5's Chief Information Officer and Karen Hayes was also present. He presented two renovation options for Middleton School, which include a land swap or a phased construction. They would really like the park district to consider the land swap because the construction would only take 3-4 years to complete compared to 7-9 years for a phased approach.

Both plans require the use of McNally Park. The swap option would use the entire park, and McNally Park would be unavailable throughout construction. The phased approach would require the use of the south field for 7-9 years so the school district could install mobile classrooms.

Commissioners had questions and expressed concerns about the loss of McNally for baseball. Staff reported that baseball could be accommodated at other parks, but the Affiliates prefer this site because there are two fields. The park is used regularly.

Executive Director Tuft said the district understands the parents' concerns and there may be other options. Vice President Jaffe said we really must see how this would impact the park district.

Ms. Tuft thanked Mr. McDonald for the presentation and discussion.

No motion required, informational only.

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION #25-001 AND AGREEMENT FOR PROPERTY DONATION FROM BUILDERS ASPHALT

Ms. Tuft said the park district is working with the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District to sign a lease for the property on the east side of McCormick Boulevard, between Oakton and Howard Streets. The current tenant, Builders Asphalt, owns a small right of way on the property and want to donate it to the park district. The park district would be responsible for half of the closing fees and some insurance costs for approximately \$4,000- \$5,000. Vice President Jaffe wants to ensure the property is environmentally safe. Builders Asphalt has completed a phase one environmental study and Ms. Tuft will request a copy and get more information. This item was tabled until the February board meeting.

APPROVAL OF PURCHASE OF 2025 VEHICLE REPLACEMENTS

Mr. Guynn requested approval of the purchase of three 2025 vehicles. One bid was received from Bob Ridings for a total of \$154,622.00.

Vice President Jaffe moved to approve the bid of Bob Ridings, Inc. to provide the three vehicles in the 2025 Vehicle Replacement bid for \$154,622. Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF 2025 SPORTS COURTS IMPROVEMENTS PURCHASE

Mr. Guynn requested approval of the 2025 Sports Courts Improvements bid for color coating. The color coating will include the pickleball courts at Reid Park. Vice President Jaffe asked how long the pickleball courts would be closed and Mr. Guynn said it would take about two weeks to complete the work.

Commissioner Williams moved to approve the bid of MCH for \$42,680 for the 2025 Sports Courts Improvements project. Commissioner Fischer seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF DEVONSHIRE AQUATIC CENTER PARTITIONS PURCHASE

Mr. Guynn requested approval to purchase partitions at the Devonshire Aquatic Center. The partitions in both locker rooms are over thirty years old. Doors will be added to the shower stalls, eliminating shower curtains. The work will be done in the spring before the pool opens for the season.

Commissioner Fischer moved to approve the bid from Commercial Specialties for Devonshire Aquatic Center Partition Replacement Project for a total of \$34,300. Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF ONÖNDOWA'GA PARK PLAYGROUND INSTALLATION

Mr. Guynn requested approval of the Onöndowa'ga Park Playground installation. The low bid was submitted by D&J Landscaping. D&J installed the nine playground installations in 2021 and worked on Central Park in 2023 and there were no issues. He will keep an eye on safety issues.

Vice President Jaffe moved to approve the bid from D&J Landscaping for the Onöndowa'ga playground installation for \$35,804.16. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF EXPLORITORIUM TINY TOWN PURCHASE

Mr. Guynn requested approval to purchase three Tiny Town structures for the Exploritorium. The structures include an animal hospital, a market store, and a construction house. Installation should take place in August and will potentially be installed when the tubes and tunnels are replaced.

Commissioner Fischer moved to approve the bid from Lilliput Play Homes for the Tiny Tot Exhibit for the Exploritorium for a total of \$45,426.00. Vice President Jaffe seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF SKOKIE WATER PLAYGROUND ROOF REPLACEMENT

Mr. Guynn requested approval of the Skokie Water Playground roof replacement through the OMNIA Partners Public Sector Cooperative Purchasing Agreement. The project includes the replacement of the shingled roof on the bathhouse, concession stand, and two pump houses. Once the roof is replaced, solar panels will be installed.

Commissioner Williams moved to approve the purchase of roofing services and installation through Anthony Roofing, Inc. for the Skokie Water Playground for \$189,300. Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF TORO 5900 PURCHASE

Mr. Guynn requested approval to purchase a Toro 5900 Groundmaster Mower through Sourcewell joint purchase program from Reinders, Inc. This is a very large and expensive mower. The district's large mower is over twenty years old and parts are obsolete.

Commissioner Fischer moved to approve the purchase of a Toro 5900 Groundmaster from Reinders, Inc. through the Sourcewell joint purchase program for \$144,891.43. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF WEBER TRACK REPLACEMENT

Mr. Guynn requested approval of the Weber Leisure Center Indoor track replacement. The purchase will be through the Sourcewell cooperative joint purchase program from Floors, Incorporated. Ms. Labus and Mr. Guynn toured several park districts to see the proposed surface and confirmed this is a durable track surface. The current surface is over thirty years old.

The replacement will be funded through a grant from the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) of \$115,000 that was awarded through Representative Jennifer Gong-Gershowitz's office. The Park District will fund the remaining cost.

Commissioner Fischer moved to approve the proposal from Floors, Incorporated for the Weber Leisure Center Indoor Track Replacement project for a total of \$133,958. Vice President Jaffe seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF SPORTS PARK SHELTER PURCHASE

Mr. Guynn requested approval of the Skokie Sports Park Shelter purchase of a 30-foot by 44-foot shelter. The shelter will replace the tent and temporary flooring. The tent will be auctioned.

The improvements include removing the tent flooring and brick tee line and installing a concrete pad and strip. The shelter will have electricity for lighting and outlets. The shelter will be purchased through the Sourcewell cooperative joint purchase program through Poligon for a cost of \$48,385.63.

Commissioner Williams moved to approve the purchase of the 30-foot x 44-foot shelter from Poligon for Skokie Sports Park for a total of \$48,385.63. Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj 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, February 25, 2025, at 6:30 p.m.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

There were no Commissioner Comments.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Last month Vice President Jaffe asked about billing the City of Evanston for Pooch Park and Channelside Park. Staff are making progress but have not received payment. The new bill was sent in December, and they were emailed again today. They always pay, but not in a timely manner. Staff will continue to follow up.

Ms. Tuft reminded the board of the public hearings on January 28 for Lauth Park and Lee Wright Park at 6 p.m. and 6:45 p.m. at the Oakton Community Center. The Terminal Park public hearing will be on February 6 at the Weber Center at 6 p.m.

Ms. Tuft reminded the board that the legislative breakfast is on February 14.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Tuft asked if the board wanted to change the board meeting time to 6:30 p.m. for all future meetings as it has been difficult for some Commissioners to make the 6:00 p.m. meeting time. All Commissioners agree to change the starting time to 6:30 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

There was discussion about the presentation from Skokie School District 73.5. Ms. Tuft said she will be in contact with Mr. McDonald about our concerns and other options.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Williams moved to enter executive session for the purpose of the discussion of executive session minutes pursuant to Section 2(c)(21); and the discussion of the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employee of the park district pursuant to Section 2(c)(1). Vice President Jaffe seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioner voted aye. Motion carried. The regular meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.


ACTION TO BE TAKEN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

The regular meeting reconvened at 9:29 p.m. Commissioner Fischer moved to approve the Executive Session Minutes of December 21, 2024. Vice President Jaffe seconded the motion. On a recall vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.


Commissioner Fischer moved to approve the Executive Director's salary to \$200,000 effective January 1, 2025. Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Fischer moved to adjourn the regular meeting. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. On a roll call vote all Commissioner voted aye. Motion carried. The regular meeting adjourned at 9:29 p.m.



Susan Aberman
President



Michelle J. Tuft
Secretary

February 25, 2025