

**MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
SKOKIE PARK DISTRICT
JANUARY 20, 2026
6:30 P.M.**

ATTENDANCE AT THE MEETING

Board Members Present: Vice President Ezra Jaffe
Commissioner Elsa Fischer
Commissioner Antonia Kasalo-Terihaj
Commissioner Courtney Williams

Absent: President Susan Aberman

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 & Facilities Breanne Labus
Assistant Superintendent of Recreation Mary Amato
Marketing and Communications Director Jim Bottorff
Emily Oaks Nature Center Facility Manager Lee Hansen
Executive Administrative Assistant Ann Perez

CALL TO ORDER

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

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Mr. Glenn Freeman discussed School District 73.5's proposal to swap land with the park district for a new Middleton elementary school on McNally Park and expressed concerns about a related survey on building the school on park property. Vice President Jaffe thanked him for his comments.

STAFF RECOGNITION

Lee Hansen was honored with a 2025 Force of Nature Award. Ms. Tuft extended her congratulations to Ms. Hansen for this accomplishment. Additionally, Ms. Labus acknowledged the numerous commendations Ms. Hansen has received for her exemplary performance.

Ms. Hansen explained that the mission of Emily Oaks is to build relationships with nature, and she is backed by a hardworking, dedicated team that shares this commitment. She expressed gratitude for the recognition received from both the board and staff.

CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL

Commissioner Fischer moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. President Aberman was absent. Motion carried. The Consent Agenda consisted of the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of December 16, 2025, bills payable for the month of December 2025 /January 2026 Treasurer's Report, and Staff Reports.

2026 BOND FINANCING TIMELINE

Mr. Schmidt reported that Speer Financial Inc. has distributed a bond financing schedule indicating there will be a single request for the issuance of one bond in 2026, with an estimated value of \$2,900,000.

No motion required, informational only.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Mr. Steve Konters from Hitchcock Design Group presented the Comprehensive Plan update, focusing on the envision and prioritize phases. Mr. Konters answered commissioner's questions and received their feedback.

Ms. Tuft thanked Mr. Konters for the presentation. The plan should be finalized in March after the action plan is completed.

No motion required, informational only.

APPROVAL OF REFERENDUM CONSULTANT AGREEMENT

Ms. Tuft asked for approval of the consultant agreement with Beyond Your Base related to the possible referendum. Given Beyond Your Base's strong track record with referendums, Ms. Tuft expressed her desire to continue working with them.

There was discussion regarding the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District lease agreement for Channelside South. Vice President Jaffe is not comfortable moving forward with the consultant until the lease is finalized. Commissioner Williams and Commissioner Fischer attended Beyond Your Base's presentation and explained that the timeline is tight. Ms. Tuft stated that the referendum is scheduled for November 2026; if this deadline is not met, the next opportunity to hold the referendum will be during the presidential election in November 2028.

Commissioner Williams moved to approve the agreement with Beyond Your Base, a consulting group of Wight and & Company, for \$64,000 plus travel expenses. Commissioner Fischer seconded the motion. On a roll call vote Commissioners Fischer, Kasalo-Terihaj and Williams voted aye. Vice President Jaffe abstained. President Aberman was absent. Motion carried.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The next regular board meeting will be held Tuesday, February 17, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

There were no Commissioner comments.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Ms. Tuft reported that the referendum task force will meet on March 11 at 6:30 p.m. Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj will attend.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

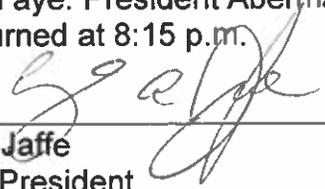
Commissioner Williams moved to enter executive session to discuss minutes of meetings lawfully closed under the Open Meetings Act, pursuant to 5 ILCS120/2(c)(21); to discuss the purchase or lease of real property for the use of the public body pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(5); and to discuss the setting of a price for sale or lease of property owned by the public body pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(6). Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. President Aberman was absent. Motion carried.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

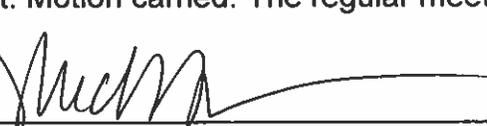
The regular meeting was reconvened at 8:15 p.m. Commissioner Fischer moved to approve the Executive Session Minutes of November 8, 2025. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioner voted aye. President Aberman was absent. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Williams moved to adjourn the regular meeting at 8:15 p.m. Commissioner Fischer seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. President Aberman was absent. Motion carried. The regular meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.



Ezra Jaffe
Vice President
January 2026



Michelle J. Tuft
Secretary