

**MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
SKOKIE PARK DISTRICT
NOVEMBER 18, 2025
6:30 P.M.**

ATTENDANCE AT THE MEETING

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

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 & Facilities Breanne Labus
Assistant Superintendent of Recreation Mary Amato
Business Services Manager Laura Le
Marketing and Communications Director Jim Bottorff
Aquatics and Facility Manager Scott Runkle
Aquatics/Facility Manager/Pooch Park Claudia Bidstrup
Executive Administrative Assistant Ann Perez

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

Ms. Bobbie Newman from Barcelona condominiums north of the golf course informed the board that golf balls continue to land on their property. She mentioned that Mr. Guynn suggested installing black slats in the fence, but she believes this would look unattractive and wouldn't solve the issue of golf balls coming over the fence. Instead, she is requesting a tall net be installed in the area where the balls are crossing over. She acknowledges that this proposal may raise budget concerns for the park district. She also read a letter from a resident talking about the golf balls coming over to the property.

Mr. Guynn acknowledged her preference against using the slats and explained that installing a taller net is being considered for next year's budget. Ms. Newman expressed her appreciation for his response.

Ms. Tuft stated that an email had been received from Mr. David Dalka, with a request for it to be read during the board meeting. His letter said that Sequoyah Park is allowing

District 68 to destroy the park and create a safety hazard. The Village has not painted and added a stop sign at the end of the alley, and parents drive recklessly out of the alley. The no left turn sign is not being enforced at the end of the alley. He and certain Trustees of the Village seek a return to 99 percent of the students being bused to school which will allow normal social interactions to occur, carbon emissions to be reduced, and the park to return to its purpose. The school continues to have overflowing garbage cans contributing to the rat problem at the park. He is seeking the board's help in resolving the four concerns.

CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL

Vice President Jaffe moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Fischer seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Williams was absent. Motion carried. The Consent Agenda consisted of the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of October 21, 2025, bills payable for the month of October/November 2025, Treasurer's Report, and Staff Reports.

FISCAL YEAR ENDED 04/30/2025 ANNUAL COMPREHENSIVE FINANCIAL REPORT (ACFR), MANAGEMENT LETTER AND CONTROL DEFICIENCY LETTER

Mr. Schmidt introduced Ms. Andrea Meade from Miller, Cooper & Co., Ltd to review the Audit Report, Management Letter, and Control Deficiency Letter and answer questions.

The district received a Certificate of Excellence for financial reporting. She commended Mr. Schmidt and his team for the excellent quality of the report. She explained the management analysis and control deficiency letter. There were no material corrections identified.

Commissioner Fischer moved to approve the fiscal year end 04/30/2025 ACFR, management letter, Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control and control deficiency letter. Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioner voted aye. Commissioner Williams was absent. Motion carried.

TAX LEVY PRESENTATION

Mr. Schmidt inquired whether the board wanted a presentation, but the board was satisfied with the details provided in the report.

No motion, informational only.

APPROVAL OF TAX LEVY ORDINANCE #25-010

Mr. Schmidt requested approval of Tax Levy Ordinance #25-010, which is the legal document filed with the Cook County Tax Extension Office. The aggregate total received in 2024 estimated final levy report is \$10,137,014. Assuming a 2.9% increase in the aggregate levy, the increase would be \$293,986 for a total of \$10,431,000. This is the same levy amount present to the board at the October board meeting.

Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj moved to approve the 2025 Tax Levy Ordinance #25-010 in the amount of \$10,431,000. This does not include debt service costs, or the loss and

cost factors added by the County. Vice President Jaffe seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Williams was absent. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF GREENSMaster TRIFLEX HYBRID MOWER

Mr. Guynn requested approval to purchase a Greensmaster Triflex Hybrid Mower for golf course operations. The mower being replaced is a 2013 mower. Buying the mower this year will save the district \$3,000 before next year's price increase.

Commissioner Fischer moved to approve the purchase of a Toro Greensmaster Triflex Hybrid Motor from Reinders, Inc. for \$69,998.04. Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Williams was absent. Motion carried.

2025 CAMP REPORT AND 2026 CAMP FEE PROPOSAL

Ms. Labus presented the 2025 Camp Report providing an overview of camp registration, camp survey results, fee assistance and inclusion, camp financials, proposed 2026 fees, and plans for 2026.

There were 8,204 campers in 2025. The most popular camps with waitlists were Emily Oaks Camps, Kids Cooking Camps, Camp Skokie and CIT at Oakton, Urban Adventures, Summer on Broadway Camps, and Art Camps.

There were over 5,300 registrations on the first day of camp registration.

The camp survey was sent to 1,800 families, and she received 446 responses. The results were positive and similar to the survey results from 2024.

Staff focused on improving the camp app this summer, and there were 1,815 camp app users.

Ms. Labus explained the options families have for fee assistance. \$125,886 was awarded to 64 families and 81 campers.

Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj moved to approve the 2026 camp fees as proposed. Commissioner Fischer seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Williams was absent. Motion carried.

2025 POOL REPORT AND 2026 POOL FEES APPROVAL

Scott Runkle, Aquatics and Special Facility Manager, presented the 2025 Pool Report providing an overview of the season including staffing, survey results, finances, and the proposed hours and fees for 2026.

Pass sales remained strong with 4,997 sold and 43,000 visits. Devonshire Aquatics center had 40,000+ visits and Skokie Water Playground had 83,000+ visits.

Repairs at Devonshire Aquatic Center included a concession stand renovation, a new concrete entrance, the pools were painted, new lane lines were purchased, and solar panels were installed. New bathroom partitions were installed in the locker rooms; passholders loved the shower doors instead of the shower curtains. Shortly after Memorial Day the pool heater stopped working, but it was repaired quickly.

Skokie Water Playground repairs included new shingles on all three buildings and solar panels installed on the concession stand building and the main bathhouse building. The bucket stopped working mid-summer. Staff did what they could to keep it running, but a new bucket had to be ordered and should arrive in January.

The district participated in the world's largest swim lesson by including several camp groups of about 60 kids.

There were 96 certified lifeguards, which was the most lifeguards in approximately 20 years. There were 149 rescues for mostly non-swimmers. Mr. Runkle complimented Ms. Bidstrup for the excellent job she does with the staff.

Vice President Jaffe asked Mr. Runkle to include comparisons from the previous year in the pool report next year. The comparisons for this year will be emailed to the board.

Vice President Jaffe said cleanliness issues are significant at the pools and Mr. Guynn explained that staff are working to improve cleanliness. He said Ms. Bidstrup did an excellent job working with staff, and that she created a maintenance log to track cleaning.

Vice President Jaffe moved to approve the 2026 pool hours and fees as proposed. 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 next Regular meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners is on Tuesday, December 16, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. President Aberman will be absent.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

President Aberman addressed park safety, referencing the October antisemitic incident at Shawnee Park and ICE presence in Skokie. Ms. Tuft clarified that the park district cannot act if ICE is present; if an ordinance was passed, it is unenforceable and police lack authority to intervene.

Ms. Tuft stated that she can create a resolution in support of the community and has consulted with legal counsel regarding this matter. Should the board wish to proceed, she can collaborate with the attorney to draft and pass a resolution demonstrating the board's support for the community.

The Village has enacted an ordinance, but it currently lacks means of enforcement. Vice President Jaffe inquired whether it would be possible for us to express support for the Village's ordinance, and Ms. Tuft will consult with legal counsel regarding this matter.

President Aberman said the Village of Skokie had a board meeting last night and a woman said the Jewish community is not feeling safe in Skokie. President Aberman would like input from the board on how to make people feel safe. Ms. Tuft said she met with Chief Barnes, President Aberman, and Vice President Jaffe a few weeks ago and spoke about this. Yesterday they met with Mayor Tennes, John Lockerby and Chief Barnes and spoke about safety issues.

Several measures have been suggested to enhance the sense of safety in parks, including the installation of signage and additional cameras. While these actions may not directly prevent incidents, they aim to improve visitors' perceptions of safety within our parks. Additionally, implementing a community wide initiative, such as a BE KIND pledge campers take, may be another way to make people feel safe.

Ms. Tuft provided details about the district's rules, noting that orby guns are not allowed in any parks and that the district can both suspend violators and impose fines. However, in the incident at Shawnee Park, suspension was not possible because juveniles were involved and their identities are protected. The police are collaborating with the district to determine whether any action can be taken regarding suspension. While fines can reach up to \$1,000, they are typically only imposed when damage has occurred.

The role of park monitors was addressed. While they do not possess enforcement authority, their presence can be increased at parks where incidents have taken place. Park monitors are available spring through fall; they are not staffed during the winter months.

Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj suggested having a neighborhood watch, so incidents are reported.

Vice President Jaffe expressed support for efforts to enhance public safety. When considering park renovations, installing cameras should be explored. President Aberman values community engagement, while Vice President Jaffe inquired about participation in the Human Relations Community, which sparked further discussion.

Ms. Tuft asked how the board wanted to proceed and Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj said to put together a resolution. Ms. Tuft plans to include the expense of installing a camera at Gross Point Park in the budget.

Commissioner Fischer said she liked the staff Halloween costumes.

Vice President Jaffe thanked staff for their feedback on the 360 report and expressed his appreciation.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Assistant Superintendent Amato introduced a translation kiosk for Weber's front desk, with plans to use it at events like the Festival of Cultures and Backlot Bash. Other facilities will have access to live phone translators in over 300 languages, but without the kiosk. If successful, kiosks may be added elsewhere to further support Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee goals.

Ms. Tuft informed the board that the Skokie Chamber Holiday Party is scheduled for Thursday, December 11 from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m., and requested confirmation of attendance from board members. Commissioner Fischer confirmed that she will attend.

Ms. Tuft requested that the board inform her of the preferred email address to which board reports should be sent, as they are currently being distributed to three separate addresses.

OLD BUSINESS

No old business.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Fischer moved to enter into Executive Session to discuss Executive Session Minutes for the purpose of approval of the minutes, and the discussion of the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the park district pursuant to Section 2(c)1). Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioner voted aye. Commissioner Williams was absent. Motion carried.


ACTION TO BE TAKEN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

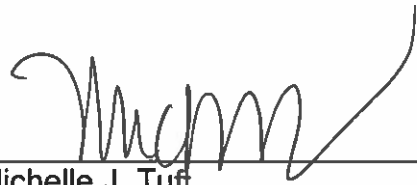
The regular meeting reconvened at 9:17 p.m. Commissioner Fischer moved to approve the Executive Session Minutes of September 25, 2025. Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Williams was absent. Motion carried.

Commissioner Fischer moved to approve the Executive Director's salary of \$208,000 effective January 1, 2026. Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Williams was absent. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice President Jaffe moved to adjourn the regular meeting. Commissioner Fischer seconded the motion. On a roll call vote all Commissioner voted aye. Commissioner Williams was absent. Motion carried. The regular meeting adjourned at 9:17 p.m.


Susan Aberman
President


Michelle J. Tuft
Secretary

December 16, 2025

 Vice President