



REGULAR BOARD MEETING
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS OF PALATINE PARK DISTRICT
 Village of Palatine, 200 East Wood Street in Palatine
 Second Floor – Village Room B
 September 23, 2024, at 5:00 p.m.



These minutes are not a verbatim record of what was said during the meeting

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by President Ruff

Commissioners Present

Terry Ruff, President
 Susan Gould
 Joe Petricca
 Jennifer Rogers
 Greg Sammons

Commissioners Absent

None

Staff Present

Benjamin Rea, Executive Director
 Dayell Houzenga, Supt. of District Services
 Sonia Austin, Superintendent of Finance
 Colleen Palmer, Director of Recreation & Facilities
 Jim Holder, Director of Parks

Amy Vito, Superintendent of Parks
 Katie Waszak, Supt. of Recreation Programming
 Josh Ludolph, Supt. of Recreation Facilities
 Cheryl Lufitz, Communications & Marketing Mgr.
 Lisa Allie, Park Board Secretary/Executive Assistant

Visitors and Citizens Present

Andrew Paine, Tressler LLP/Park District Attorney
 See attached list

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Rogers moved, and Commissioner Petricca seconded that the agenda be approved. By a roll call vote, the agenda for the regular meeting of September 23, 2024, was approved as presented. The result of the roll call vote follows:

AYE: Jennifer Rogers, Susan Gould, Joe Petricca, Greg Sammons, Terry Ruff

NAY: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried.

Approval of Consent Agenda

The Board reviewed the previously distributed items posted on the consent agenda. Commissioner Rogers moved and Commissioner Sammons seconded that the consent agenda be approved as presented. By a roll call vote, the following items on the consent agenda were approved: Regular Meeting Minutes of September 9, 2024. The result of the roll call vote follows:

AYE: Susan Gould, Joe Petricca, Greg Sammons, Jennifer Rogers, Terry Ruff

NAY: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried.

Visitors and Citizens' Comments

Sharol Gersic: You continue to say that you have listened to us and have been honest, open, and transparent in your decision about the Palatine Stables, but I'm here to tell you that you have not. As a teacher, my job is to listen to my students, help them understand, and teach them to the best of my ability. If a student comes up to me and says, "I don't get it", it's my responsibility to help them get it. What kind of teacher would I be if I looked at them and said, "Well I told you what we're doing and we're moving on" or worse yet just looked at them and said nothing? At the end of the day, those students are lost and confused that is on me. This is how we feel every time we come to a board meeting. You didn't do your homework to understand the situation at the stable before you made the decision to close, and you certainly didn't prepare yourself to answer any of the questions we had as to why you did what you did. Our feelings of confusion are a direct result of your actions. I need you to know that our riding journey and barn family is bigger than you and this decision. At the end of the day, you were the ones that have lost.

Frank Skorski: I wanna congratulate you guys. You've achieved your goal of harming the children and now you're killing our horses. It's disgusting Joe, Greg, Jennifer, Ben. Why are you putting a \$ 175,000-a-year job in jeopardy by providing false and misleading information to this Board and all of us? There's no way in hell that the cost is \$2.6 million and know it. You live out in Crystal Lake, you don't give a damn about us or our children. Jennifer got you a job; she got her old boss a job and now we are putting up with your employment. I'm going to do what I can to get you fired because I feel that you have violated the terms of your agreement, and it is despicable that you would harm children. I'm gonna write DCFS a letter tomorrow and I'm gonna notify them about what you've been up to and the harm that you have given to the Village of Palatine. You were told, by young children that the retirement program that Ben suggested for our horses was reprehensible, but you didn't give a damn and you killed 1. How many more are you gonna kill Ben? Why don't you just take them out and shoot them in front of the kids? That'll give him some nice nightmares.

President Ruff informed Mr. Skorski that his time was up to which Mr. Skorski replied: Oh it's a shame, and like I said last week, so is yours.

Willam Van Giesen: The main reason why I'm here is because I've been in the community talking to a lot of people, not just from the stables, but other communities that utilize your park district. The number one thing that they all say is they don't trust you. They don't trust the process and they don't trust what you have done with the stables. It was a quick process, and they are disgusted by it. I don't know what you guys are doing to fix that communication. You are not doing it; it's been happening since May 13th. Even your staff are not doing that. For example, my son loves summer camp. The one major thing was the communication from the staff. I didn't get anything for the full 8 weeks of summer camp. I didn't get anything about what he was doing, I didn't get a schedule, I didn't get anything until the last week at Kids Camp. That's ridiculous and that shows your communication between the staff and to the residents shows me what you are really here for; yourselves not for the residents. The communication needs to be better; people need to trust the park district and the fact that you don't talk back is very concerning.

President Ruff thanked the public for their comments and said that we would be moving on to new business.

New Business

The Board reviewed a previously distributed board summary pertaining to the approval of 2024 Asphalt Maintenance Project Number 24-106P. Commissioner Rogers read the motion aloud, Commissioner Sammons moved, and Commissioner Petricca seconded that the Board of Park Commissioners approve the lowest responsible bidder, EverLine Coatings & Services of Wauconda, IL in an amount not to exceed \$39,665.54 for the 2024 Asphalt Maintenance Project, 24-106P. The motion was approved by a roll call; the result follows:

AYE: Joe Petricca, Greg Sammons, Jennifer Rogers, Susan Gould, Terry Ruff
NAY: None
ABSENT: None
Motion carried.

The Board reviewed a previously distributed board summary pertaining to the approval of proposal for Professional Services Selection for Comprehensive Masterplan and Community-Wide Needs Assessment. Commissioner Rogers read the motion aloud, Commissioner Sammons moved, and Commissioner Petricca seconded that the Board of Park Commissioners move to approve the agreement with Hitchcock Design Group of Naperville, IL for completion of the 2025 Comprehensive Masterplan and Community-Wide Needs Assessment in the amount of \$138,200 and a project budget of \$142,550. The motion was approved by a roll call; the result follows:

AYE: Greg Sammons, Jennifer Rogers, Susan Gould, Joe Petricca, Terry Ruff
NAY: None
ABSENT: None
Motion carried.

The Board reviewed a previously distributed board summary pertaining to the approval of Resolution #24-13 for the 2025 Northwest Special Recreation Association (NWSRA) Member District Annual Assessment. Commissioner Petricca moved, and Commissioner Sammons seconded the motion that the Board of Park Commissioners approve Resolution #24-13, a Resolution approving the member district annual assessment for 2025 to NWSRA to serve the residents of the Palatine Park District who have special needs. Commissioner Sammons asked if the 2% increase is normal; Director Rea explained that due to the Cook County employee benefit changes NWSRA has had to increase their fees. The motion was approved by a roll call; the result follows:

AYE: Jennifer Rogers, Susan Gould, Joe Petricca, Greg Sammons, Terry Ruff
NAY: None
ABSENT: None
Motion carried.

Department Reports

The Park Board reviewed the previously distributed written Finance Department report. Director Fisher shared that we are 79% collected on our Cook County property taxes through August 31st which is significantly higher than last year. The 2nd installment of 2023 came in later in November and December so that's the main reason why the revenues are higher. Also last year under a different Finance Director all those property taxes were hitting the corporate fund and later allocated to the recreation fund so when you look at the corporate fund income statement all those property taxes are in line with the prior year but that's because the full amount was sitting in corporate. As we get later in the year, you'll see a better allocation when those numbers are correct in 2023. Replacement taxes are also coming in less, we knew this was going to happen, the Illinois Department of Revenue had notified us last year so a slight reduction there. Offsetting that our interest revenue is up 57% or \$381,000 over 2023. Overall, our expenses have increased 29% compared to 2023 that's mostly due to the wages and our capital expenditures this year.

The Park Board reviewed the previously distributed written Recreation and Facilities Department report. Director Palmer said that August was spent wrapping up the summer and preparing for fall with increased rentals and a new season of programming. We offered a number of successful camps to accommodate the District 15 extended summer and accommodated over 400 kids in total. The pools wrapped up but we were able to keep the Family Aquatic Center (FAC) open one extra week to accommodate more families who are off and also the extended camps. Sounds of Summer wrapped up with great attendance at the

Simple and of course the Taylor Swift cover band that brought in about 5,000 attendees. In response to Commissioner Sammons's question about our record attendance; Director Palmer replied that we've had 5,000 in the past with American English and other big bands but this was a different kind of crowd with a lot more energy. Director Palmer also shared that the annual POC Better Together event was held at Falcon on August 21st, which impacted over 1,400 people with community resources and school supply distribution. In addition to the annual preparation of preschools and maintenance, Facilities repaired the AV system and turf divider at Falcon. The number of registrations visits and memberships is up compared to this time last August.

The Park Board reviewed the previously distributed written Parks and Planning Department report. Director Holder gave an update on Meadowlark: the playground has been installed and the contractor is going to start framing the curbing that surrounds the play area this week; the shelter piers have been poured and they erected the framing; excavation on the pathways throughout the park is almost done and they made good progress with the grading. There's some major grading going on to meet the ADA requirements for the paths out there. We're still waiting for IDOT to provide the permits for us to remove all the way up through their easement which is taking forever. Director Holder gave an update on the Cedar Park playground replacement project: Kids Around the World was there on Friday to remove the playground; the contractor started on Saturday removing all the old footings and is currently removing all the old engineered wood fibers to get the base of the play area ready for installation of the new playground. The playgrounds should be delivered by the end of this week so if the weather cooperates by the time the playgrounds arrive they'll be ready to install. The parks guys have transitioned from athletic field setups to maintaining of the athletic fields and have been able to focus on some special projects within the parks. The golf courses had a good month in August; they continue to beat their budgeted numbers and actuals from last year so things are going well out there. In response to President Ruff's questions about the Com Ed power outages; Director Holder said that he spoke with somebody at Com Ed today and they're pushing it through their process. It should be paid for, but the issue is the distance at Birchwood. They don't want to replace anything over 700 feet right away but four direct shorts since July is kind of excessive so he's pushing it. Director Holder also said that it's not good for the equipment; we had a pump for the deep lift station that may have been affected by the outage because it was working when we drained the pool and it's not working today and it's not good for the three-phase equipment to be running one leg down; luckily we were able to get over there and shut everything off right away which helped.

The Park Board reviewed the previously distributed written District Services Department report. Superintendent Houzenga stated that they distributed new policy manuals for both full-time and part-time staff over the summer; we'll also have a part-time staff training in October to get everyone up to date on policies and procedures. They are doing a preliminary review of 2025 benefit renewals with open enrollment coming up shortly. There were two volunteer events in August; the Twilight Run and a movie in the park. They attended the Harper Promise kickoff event; we're a partner of Harper Promise providing volunteer opportunities for their students on scholarship through high school and college. We welcomed an IT intern, Matthew Zabawsk; he's here to help with our conversion to Windows 11 so that IT can focus on some of our more in-depth projects. August was busy with CPR training to get all our preschool, CARE, and fitness staff up to date before the fall season. C&M put out a flavors of fall marketing piece; they were also part of the POC Better Together event where they distributed shirts and notebooks. Superintendent Houzenga also shared that the Foundation has already exceeded their 2024 goal for scholarship awards; their goal was to award \$10,000 in scholarships and are at \$11,600 so far. They will also have a dedication for the Schultz family on Saturday the 28th at Dutch Schultz Recreation Center; district staff and board members are welcome to attend. Director Holder replied to Commissioner Gould's question about the location of the dedication which will be at the shelter with the plaque going in front of the sign.

Executive Director Reports

Director Rea shared that they've been working with Fox Valley Equine Practice to provide a transition letter for our school horses as they move to their new homes. We're also working to include several bales

of hay and some feed if needed for the transition process. Staff continues to visit any location that has been suggested for a school horse before it is moved, and working with our stables team to ensure that it is a good location before those animals are moved

Commissioner Reports/Future Agenda Items

There were no Commissioner Reports

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Park Board on this date, Commissioner Petricca moved that the regular meeting be adjourned. Commissioner Rogers seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by a voice vote as follows:

AYE: Jennifer Rogers, Susan Gould, Joe Petricca, Greg Sammons, Terry Ruff,

NAY: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried at 5:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Allie
Park Board Secretary

Attest:

Approved:

Lisa Allie
Secretary

Terry Ruff
President

<u>2024 Park Board Meetings</u>	
October 28, 2024	November 25, 2024
November 11, 2024	December 9, 2024