

West Suburban Special Recreation Association

January 14, 2025

WSSRA

2915 Maple St, Franklin Park, IL

MINUTES

I. Chairperson Ron Malchiodi called the meeting to order at 4:03pm those present included:

Jan Arnold, Park District of Oak Park

Jackie Iovinelli, Park District of Forest Park

Dan LoCascio, Park District of Franklin Park

Ron Malchiodi, Village of Riverside

Anna Wegrecki, Village of Harwood Heights *arrived 4:02*

Stille, River Forest Park District

Greg Stanczyk, Veterans Park District

Cathy Fallon, Berwyn Park District

Kelly Diaz, North Berwyn Park District

Nate Brown, Norridge Park District **remote**

Katie Muellner, Village of River Grove

Jack Savage, Village of North Riverside

Ted Gruber, Village of Elmwood Park

Others in Attendance: WSSRA staff: Annie Hart, April Michalski, Marianne Birko,

Approval of Remote Attendees meeting Qualifying Event: **Arnold/Iovinelli motioned to approve, and the vote was unanimously approved**

II. Approval of Agenda **Arnold/Iovinelli motioned to approve the agenda. The motion was unanimously approved.**

III. Approval of the Consent Agenda **Iovinelli/Gruber motioned to approve the Consent Agenda including the December 10, 2024, Minutes & Closed session minutes, December Financial Report, and Disbursements for December 2024. Acceptance of 2025 Partner Appointments, Election of Officers, Committee Appt, Committee Tasks for 2025, the Safety Policy statement, IAPD membership renewal and Executive Director Goals; Roll call vote showed 13 yes votes, and the motion was approved**

IV. Public Comment: Chris Devine and Andy Smolen presented a check to WSSRA on behalf of the Knights of Columbus Council #4456 from the Tootsie Roll Drive in Fall of 2024. They thanked WSSRA for their work and invited anyone interested in supporting the drive next year to reach out to Smolen.

V. Under the Foundation **Birko reported for the WSSRF: Happy 2025 All!** The Foundation hosted their last meeting of the year on November 18, 2024 via Zoom. They closed 2024 raising nearly 73,371 in funds. This includes the funds raised with Giving Tuesday and Holiday Solicitation is estimated at raising \$10,899 dollars to close the year. The Executive Committee met this week to update and finalize the 2025 Proposed Budget, update the 2024 goals, and plan the 2025 goals. The Foundation will host their Annual meeting on Wednesday January 29th to celebrate their 2024 successes and plan for 2025. Included in their plans are the following events:

2025 Bocce Ball Tournament taking place on Saturday, February 1, 2025

2025 Derby Gala planned for Saturday, May 3, 2025

2025 Family Bowl-a-thon taking place in September

2025 Fallin For Our Stars taking place on Friday, November 7, 2025

2025 Tuesday Giving & Holiday Solicitation

Included in your packet are opportunities for Sponsorships and raffles for the upcoming Bocce Tournament. We really need your support. Consider hosting a Team! We will send out notice shortly to collect donations for the Derby Gala on May 3rd as well! Thank you for your continued support throughout the year!

VI. Under Committee Reports No Reports

VII. Unfinished Business Acceptance of the 2025 Chairperson & Vice Chairperson

A. Nominating Committee Chair Iovinelli recommends Jan Arnold as the 2025 Chairperson and Ted Gruber as the 2025 Vice Chairperson. **Iovinelli/Fallon motioned to approve Jan Arnold as the 2025 Chairperson and Ted Gruber as the 2025 Vice Chairperson. Roll call vote showed 13 yes votes, and the motion was approved**

B. Park District of Forest Park Building Updates The Park District of Forest Park is meeting with financial advisors to discuss next steps for funding a building.

C. No Other

VIII. Under New Business

A. Approval of Grace Kenney Accounting Services Iovinelli/Gruber motioned to approve Grace Kenney as the CPA & Accounting Services to complete the WSSRA Monthly Financial reports. Roll call vote showed 13 yes

votes, and the motion was approved

- B. *Approval of 2-year Transportation Bid process Iovinelli/Stanczyk motioned to approve the 2-year Transportation Bid process as presented. Roll call vote showed 13 yes votes, and the motion was approved*
- C. *No Other*

IX. Under Correspondence No Comments

X. **Under Board Reports** *Fallon reported the Berwyn Park District* received a \$600,000 OSLAD grant to rebuild the Proksa Park playground, and they also received a grant from the Morton Arboretum. *Savage reported the Village of North Riverside* and he is still in training and is "Still getting his feet Wet" from his October start as the new Park & Recreation Director. They have booked their summer concert series, planning the July 4th events and he is revamping the leagues. *Muellner reported the Village of River Grove* is busy planning their summer concerts, the 4-day Riverfront Fest May 29-June 1 and they also have a blood drive coming up! *LoCascio reported the Park District of Franklin Park* All things are good in Franklin Park. They are getting ready for the start of Winter programs. *Iovinelli reported the Park District of Forest Park* "Where Every Day Is A Walk in the Park" the Floors in Admin building are being replaced after 90 years old. They are also currently in the midst of hiring for a maintenance position and will be putting out notice for a new position for a Business Coordinator position to start in the spring. They will also be building new dedicated pickleball courts in spring! All of their staff are looking forward to attending conference next week and lastly, they have just closed on the H & R property and will now go to a month-to-month lease until they are ready to make a transition of the property's use by the Park District. *Diaz reported the North Berwyn Park District* got a kaboom grant to rebuild Pryce Park, Joe will be reaching out to get input. They are also working with their State Representative Abdelnasser Rashid for a possible capital grant. The Park District is also working with the Berwyn Arts Initiative on a mural and lantern project and Winter programs are starting this coming week. *Gruber reported the Village of Elmwood Park* has put in a refrigerated ice rink that is getting good use! The indoor golf league started with 9 teams Monday through Friday. Winter Bocce is also running with 16 teams a night! They are hosting "Fight Night" on February 21. This year it is a PRO Boxing night and is \$50 per ticket! Lastly indoor basketball leagues have started as well! *Stanczyk reported the Veterans Park District* is marketing current programs, working on summer timelines and job postings. *Wegrecki reported for the Village of Harwood Heights* Youth Commission programs have begun, the Recreation Center is open for business and programs are running! *Stille reported the River Forest Park District* is down an Athletic Manager but despite it the Recreation basketball league has 500 participants, platform tennis continues to be very popular with male, female and travel leagues running and their summer camp guide is in production and registration begins March 4th. They are currently looking to hire camp counselors. *Malchiodi reported the Village of Riverside* is celebrating it's 150th Anniversary as a Village and will be hosting the Opening Ceremonies this week. The Ice Rink has opened, and summer camp registration starts next week. *Arnold reported the Park District of Oak Park's* Summer program guide goes out next week, camp registration opens first week in February. They are currently going to bid for putting in geothermal at Cheney and a bid for Anderson Park playground and splashpad. They also received \$600,000 OSLAD grant for this project. Arnold invited everyone to a session at conference that discusses Distinguished Accreditation. She highly recommends everyone look into it for their agencies. PDOP is also nationally accredited through CAPRA, and she is happy to share materials and her expertise. *Brown reported the Norridge Park District* has kicked off a marketing campaign with their first newsletter in January, and they will focus next month's newsletter on employees. They are also working on sponsorships for the soccer program and basketball starts next week. Their Superintendent of Recreation is focused on pool planning and they are finally taking down holiday decorations.

X. **Executive Director's Report** *Birko Reported*

- A. **Board Responsibilities and Expectations** *Annually the Board of Directors and Alternates are asked to commit their support to the Association. Please sign that you have reviewed and understand the list of Responsibilities and Expectations in this role. You are welcome to bring the signed document to the meeting or e-mail it to me.*
- B. **WSSRA Staff will attend the IPRA Annual Conference** *Eleven Full-time staff are scheduled to attend the IPRA conference on January 23 - 26, 2025.*
- C. **WSSRA will Co-Host the In-person Legislative Breakfast/Brunch on Friday, February 28, 2025, with the Park District of Oak Park. This event is scheduled to begin at 11:30am.** *More information will be forthcoming on the platform to be used. A formal invite will be sent via e-mail to local Legislators & WSSRA Board Members. Please extend this invitation to your board members and RSVP your attendance to Birko. Thanks to the Park District of Oak Park for their willingness to host. We will continue to rotate it annually.*

- D. **Bocci Tournament 2025** Don't miss your opportunity to be a part of the 2025 Bocce Tournament generously hosted by Village of Elmwood Park. It will take place on Saturday, February 1 starting at 11:00am. Be a part, field a Team of 4, no experience necessary or Be a Sponsor and/or donate a Raffle prize and of course please post on your websites. Your support is greatly appreciated. See attached fliers for more information
- E. **WSSRA Derby Gala 2025** Mark your calendars for Saturday, May 3, 2025, when the WSSRA/WSSRF will host the 23rd year of this very successful event. We plan to once again be at D'Agostino's in River Grove from 4:00 – 7:00pm. Mark your calendars and plan on attending!
- F. **Partner Annual Presentations** Call or email Birko with dates and times that work for you in 2025.
- G. **WSSRA 2013 Minivan for Sale** Partners are invited to bid on the used 2013 Grand Caravan Minivan. Bid information will be emailed shortly.
- H. **Staff Report: April Michalski, Superintendent of Recreation reported**
1. **Holiday Hullabaloo Events** WSSRA offered 6 days of activities for school-aged children during winter break. Highlights included a trip to the Chicago Sports Museum, a visit to Kid's Empire, ice skating at the Franklin Park Ice Arena, and a fun-filled Lego day with Play-Well TEKnologies.
 2. **Winter Programs** Winter program registration is underway! The season runs from January 27 to March 22. We are excited to offer a variety of programs, including ice skating, powerlifting, tumbling, Club Wellness, a new Zumba class, a monthly cooking and nutrition program called Flavorful Wellness, and much more!
 3. **Special Olympics** Our **Bobcats Snowshoeing** athletes will compete in the Special Olympics regional snowshoeing Competition this Saturday, January 11. Gold medal winners will have the opportunity to compete at State winter games in February. **WSSRA's Four Basketball teams** will compete in the Special Olympics Regional competition on February 2 at Oswego East High School. Gold medal winners will advance to the state competition in March.
 4. **Hiring Updates** Recreation Coordinator, Danielle Bradel, resigned from her position, her last day was on January 7. She left to pursue her own in-home recreation therapy business. WSSRA is hiring a Recreation Specialist to oversee our children and youth programming. For more information or to apply, applicants can visit our website at [West Suburban Special Recreation - Recreation Specialist - Children & Youth](#)
 5. **Inclusion** Winter Inclusion requests are coming in! Please be sure to send notifications to Chris as they come in. As we move into the new year, consider inviting WSSRA's inclusion team to lead a session at one of your staff trainings. To schedule a training, reach out to Chris at chriss@wssra.net.
 6. **Upcoming Events** WSSRA is hosting our annual Recognition Banquet on Saturday, February 8 at the Centre at North Park in Franklin Park from 6:00pm-9:00pm. This event will celebrate the accomplishments of 2024 with a memorable evening, including dinner, dancing, and awards. A special thank you to the Park District of Franklin Park for hosting our event.
- I. **Staff Report: Annie Hart, Superintendent of Business reported**
1. **Marketing Round Table** WSSRA's Marketing Manager, Nicole Walsh, is planning to host another marketing round table for all of our member districts. Please alert your marketing staff to be on the lookout for an invitation from Nicole.
 2. **Year End Wrap Up** Hart has worked to tie up any loose ends and to start getting prepared for the upcoming audit which will take place March 4 – 6, 2025.
 3. **No Other**
- XI. **Closed Session None**
- XII. **Adjournment** **Malchiodi/lovinelli motioned to adjourn the meeting at 4:37pm. Motion was unanimously approved**

Respectfully submitted,



Marianne Birko, Executive Director
mb/ January 25 minutes