

West Suburban Special Recreation Association

July 14, 2020

Board of Directors

Held Remotely

2915 Maple St, Franklin Park 60131

MINUTES

- I. Chairman Mike Sletten called the remote **meeting to order** at 4:03pm those present included:

Mike Sletten, River Forest Park District
Jan Arnold, Park District of Oak Park
Jackie Iovinelli, Park District of Forest Park
Joe Modrich, Park District of Franklin Park
Al Schmidt, Village of Elmwood Park

Annemarie Flaherty, Norridge arrived 4:18
Ron Malchiodi, Village of Riverside
Teresa Mrozik, Village of North Riverside
Sandy Fejt, Berwyn Park District
Mark Sladek, Joe Vallez, North Berwyn Park District

Others in Attendance:

WSSRA staff: April Ryan, Annie Hart, Marianne Birko
Christine Nakatsuka, WSSRF Treasurer
Jim Kearns, NBPB Board Commissioner

Not in Attendance:

Clyde Park District, Unexcused Absence
Harwood Heights, Excused Absence

- II. A. Arnold/Mrozik **moved to approve the agenda.** The motion was unanimously approved.
- III. A. Arnold/Iovinelli **moved to approve the May 15, 2020 Regular Board Meeting minutes. The motion was approved.**
- IV. A. Arnold/Fejt **moved to accept the May & June 2020 Financial Report.** The motion was approved.
B. Arnold/Schmidt **moved to authorize payroll, prepaid disbursements →Recommendation: The board, by roll call vote, authorizes payroll, prepaid disbursements #39294 and ending with check #39575 and authorizes payment of May & June 2020 payroll and disbursements debit charges and cash transfers totaling \$211,842.58 and authorizes payment of July 2020 disbursements #39576 and ending with check #39602 disbursements debit charges and cash transfers totaling \$58,483.12 pending the availability of funds. Roll call vote showed 9 yes votes and the move was approved.**
- V. **Public Comment** – None
- VI. **Under the Foundation Report Nakatsuka reported, she is a long-time resident of the Village of Elmwood Park and user of WSSRA services.** She has been on the WSSRF for a few years and took over as the Foundation's Treasurer a year ago. **Nakatsuka reported the Foundation Board** met via a Zoom meeting on July 13, 2020 and offered to support WSSRA in whatever way possible during this COVID-19 Pandemic including supporting the costs of Staff furloughs. The Foundation is looking at some other Fundraising options as well.
WSSRA/WSSRF's 2020 Annual Derby Gala event. The Foundation Derby Gala Committee will sponsor the silent auction and Derby Gala raffle. Rocio Perez Chairing the event with the Foundation. Solicitation letters have gone out to procure auction items. While there still is a great deal of uncertainty with the Restore Illinois only in Phase 4 the committee has determined the event will go Virtual only. WE will continue to celebrate WSSRA with the Virtual Auction & Paddle Raise and secure sponsorship support. WSSRF welcomes donations from the WSSRA Board. Please contact Marianne at WSSRA about silent auction contributions or if you have ideas for locations that we should solicit. They will keep you loop on any updates. **The Derby Gala raffle is all set.** The top prize is \$500 cash, second prize is \$300 cash, and third prize is \$200 cash. Everyone is encouraged to support the raffle.

Nakatsuka also reported the Foundation has moved **the “Fallin For Our Stars”** event to Friday, December 11, 2020. They are committed to an in-person event with the Casino theme. **Don’t forget if you are purchasing anything on Amazon Smile go to: [smile.amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com/smile)** link and WSSRF will earn a 0.5% commission for every sale. The funds raised will support the Foundation. Go to **[smile.amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com/smile), select West Suburban Special Recreation Foundation as your charity** the next time you make a purchase and WSSRF will benefit! Thank you always for your support.

VII. **Under Committee Reports**

A. **Arnold reported the Finance Committee** is scheduled to meet on Monday, July 20 at 3:00 at the Park District of Oak Park. We will continue discussions of the Financial impact of COVID-19 and 2021 budget planning.

B. **No Other**

VIII. **Unfinished Business**

A. **Approval of 2019 Audit as presented by Lauterbach & Amen** Sletten asked if there were any questions based on Brad Porter’s presentation of the WSSRA 2019 annual audit completed by his firm, Lauterbach & Amen, LLP. Arnold/Mrozik moved to **accepts the 2019 Annual audit as presented by Lauterbach & Amen. Roll call vote showed 10 yes votes. The motion was approved.**

B. **No other**

IX. **Under New Business:**

A. North Berwyn Park District Shares

North Berwyn Park District’s, Executive Director and WSSRA Alternate Board member, Joe Vallez shared “his concerns of the rise in the NBPD shares. They are currently at 95% of their “Handicapped Fund” levy going to WSSRA, not leaving enough funds for inclusion and other potential ADA expenses in the future. He noted other SRA’s have frozen their rates for 5-7 years.” Arnold asked for clarity on what the additional funds would be used for. She noted the new Carry-Over Policy addresses this with a credit to the partners. Sletten invited Vallez to continue these discussions at the Finance Committee meeting on July 20.

B. **Partner Facility Use Birko** shared as we roll into the Fall and in-person programming WSSRA would like to discuss the importance of being a priority to accessing your facilities. Many partners concurred they too are challenged by not having access to the schools and managing the demands of e-learning students. All concurred and would support WSSRA in whatever way they could.

X. **Under Correspondence-** No comments

XI. **Under Board Reports –Schmidt reported the Village of Elmwood Park’s** pool is open. They are busy hosting the Millennium Swim club 5 days a week in the early morning, seniors, camps and the public from noon – 8: 00pm. There Open Gym is busy, and they are at 50% capacity with their summer day camp serving 60 kids. **Flaherty reported for the Norridge Park District** is having a busy summer serving 90 kids in summer day camp, preparing to open the DCFS Early Childhood program starting July 27. They are finalizing budget items and are in discussions with the three local school districts to collaborate on offering youth sports programs, a care program for teacher’s children who as well as others in the community who need supervision. They are also currently being challenged by the young teens who do not have enough to do. They are working closely with the local police department. **Modrich reported the Park District of Franklin Park’s** ice arena, community center and parks are now open. They are currently serving 80 persons in day camp and working on a collaborative for fall with District 84 also for the teacher’s children and others at North Park. **Fejt reported the Berwyn Park District** is slowly opening. Playgrounds are open and they are offering “Camp in a Box” with great reviews from families. They are waiting to hear from the school district to determine how many pre-school groups they will offer in the fall. They are offering league prep activities currently. No contact sports through August. **Sladek reported the North Berwyn Park District** is mourning the loss of Ann Mackin, the NBPD Board President. She was a pillar in the community working with the

NBPD since its inception 44 years ago. They are currently taking applications for the interim board member position. **Malchiodi reported the Village of Riverside** shared the great reviews on the alternate July 4th activities. The Farmers Market is going well. Programs and day camp have low enrollment. They update the community every Wednesday with "What's Going on Wednesday" e-blasts. They are currently in budget meetings and the recreation department is in need of new revenue streams. **Mrozik reported the Village of North Riverside** is in a mad dash for a revenue stream as well. They are currently serving 111 kids in their day camp. They recently release their electronic program guide of which they keep adding programs. They are currently in discussions to consider a soccer league, room rentals and field rentals. **Iovinelli reported for the Park District of Forest Park** is slow but steady. They opened their splash pad this week with a great response from the public! They had to get an inspection and clearance from IDPH. The Adult softball league opened yesterday along with the opening of the Roos Center. All summer programs have started with the numbers slowly rising. They are currently serving 37 kids in day camp. All are going well! They also ran a very successful Drive-in Movie night. All who attended had a great time! Plan to do again soon. They are in the midst of planning for Fall. Working closely with the school district to determine how to support the e-learning program. All kids are going back 5 days per week starting in Fall. **Arnold reported the Park District of Oak Park** is currently serving 25% capacity with 250 kids in camp programs with the half day programs having the highest enrollment. The ice arena is open to ice hockey and figure skating. Gymnastics is serving 134/800. Adult softball will open 2 nights per week in a few weeks and there will be no soccer due to the nature of play. All 4 splash pads are open as well with a very happy public as a result. They are also working with District 97 on a collaborative plan to support families with the Hybrid e-learning model being rolled out in Fall. They are anticipating 42% loss in earned revenue = 2 – 4 million dollars. Just had the board retreat with a 4-hour Social Equity workshop. As a result, they have developed a Social Equity policy and committee. They will be hosting a second community meeting focused on the Community Center. It is full press on the Capital campaign with shovels in the ground in 2021.

Sletten reported the River Forest Park District's Summer day camp is going great serving 100 kids daily in two sessions. The mobile DJ is popular, and they ran their Easter Egg event with over 5000 eggs. They are currently converting a ball field to synthetic turf and when it is done, they will open their Adult Softball league. They will continue with the strategic planning and host a board workshop to discuss the new facility.

XII. **Executive Director's Report-** Birko Reported

A. COVID-19 Impact WSSRA Staff Update As shared in previous updates WSSRA has furloughed all part-time drivers, and seasonal staff since March 20. All Full-time Exempt staff were furloughed a day per week since April 10 – May 30 and Non-Exempt staff 2 days per week for a total of 136 days. All Full-time Exempt staff returned full time starting June 1 due to the increased program load. Three Non-Exempt positions are furloughing 1-2 days depending on their position through June, July & August.

WSSRA Budget projections Staff continue to monitor 2020 budget estimates that will be reviewed at the Finance Committee. Staff have made cuts in every area of business and are not filling the two vacant Regular Part-time positions and furloughed all Part-Time and seasonal staff. WSSRA will be collecting unemployment reimbursement as well.

WSSRA returns to In-person programs WSSRA has prepared for Phase 4 and are rolling into a small percentage of in-person programs. Participants must meet the CDC guidelines and State COVID-19 mandates to participate.

WSSRA Participation Guidelines &

1. Participant must have the ability to wear a mask when necessary
2. Participant must be able to social distance 6'
3. Participant must be able to follow directions with minimal intervention by staff
4. Participant must be able to be successful with a 4:1 staffing and devoid of emotional outbursts requiring 1:1 staffing support.
5. Participant must be independent in managing personal care including toileting, feeding, personal hygiene
6. If a participant cannot meet these guidelines, they can participate with a family member within their family unit

Safety Protocols

1. Participants and staff must complete a health screening upon arrival

2. Participants and staff will wash hands upon arrival and throughout the program
3. Participants must be dropped off to WSSRA staff at the facility entrance, parents and guardians will not be allowed inside facilities
4. Participants must be able to follow participation guidelines per COVID-19 state mandates, safe behaviors will be strictly enforced
5. Programs will be limited to 8 participants per 2 staff

WSSRA Sunshine Moments

During these unprecedented times it is easy to look to the uncertain future with fear. But, all of us at WSSRA have had the good fortune to witness **HOPE** through our participants and their families. We have watched them progress from moments of complete frustration and exasperation to finding success in the navigating this wild ride. While our days are filled with planning, pivoting and re-planning. WE have taken the time to share, listen and witness their stories, helping them through their struggles and watch success in new amazing ways. Here are a few testimonials from families and staff. I hope it inspires you to take the time to listen and watch the “**Sunshine Moments**” unfold in your world as well.

B. Derby Gala 2020 Goes Virtual The Foundations Derby Gala Steering Committee has determined the Derby Gala will go Virtual due to the Restore Illinois Phase 4 limitations. Solicitations have gone out and invites will go out shortly. We have the complete support of Senator Harmon and President Skip Saviano as we move forward with the Virtual Auction, Paddle Raise and Sponsorships. We are excited about the additions to the Steering Committee which include Representatives, Lisa Hernandez, Chris Welch, and Bradley Stephens and Norridge President Daniel Tannhauser. Every event is dependent on our partners support. We need each of the WSSRA Partners to do their part in supporting this event through **Cup Sponsorship, Ads and donations**. It's a great way to promote your agencies facilities and programs through

C. Veteran's Park District Discussions continue with Veterans Park District but have been tabled since the COVID-19 crisis began. We plan to resume virtually sometime in July or August.

D. Annual Visits Birko has begun her 2020 Annual visits presenting highlights of 2019. Presentations began in March with the Park District of Oak Park and will resume when you are in-person again.

E. Staff Report: Prepared by April Ryan, Superintendent of Recreation

1. **Summer Programs** Summer Session 2 is underway. Virtual programs began on Monday, July 6. and participation continues to increase each session; we currently have nearly 1,000 program registrations. In-person programs are off to a slower start, we currently have 21 participants registered so some were postponed one week and will begin on July 13 and run through August 15. Participants must meet specific eligibility criteria to participate in the in-person programs.
2. **Day Camp** Session 2 began on July 6 and will run through July 24. We currently have 9 participants enrolled. While numbers are low participants really enjoy it and we have received positive feedback from participants and families. Participants who registered received a “Highlighter Camp Kit” for \$20 each. Virtual camp meets on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays and is run by full-time staff. Registration is currently still open.
3. **Creation Kits** WSSRA is selling Creation Kits for participants who are looking for at-home activities. Themes include Arts and Crafts, Sensory Exploration and Fun and Games.
4. **WSSRA Sunshine Breaks** Staff have created over 100 short videos including art, music, dance, cooking, fitness and more. Videos are posted on our social media and YouTube channel.
5. **Phone Pals** WSSRA staff frequently check in with WSSRA participants and their families to help them stay connected! The list is reviewed and updated regularly.
6. **Byline Bank Award** WSSRA staff have been working with several local group homes and individual participants to purchase the electronics for them to successfully participate with WSSRA virtually. Currently we have purchased 15 computers, licenses and supporting equipment as well as developing procedures and an agreement outlined for participation. Staff are currently disseminating nine of the computers for virtual participation.
7. **Imaginarium Sensory Room** WSSRA's Imaginarium sensory room re-opened on June 20. WSSRA Families can register for a private 45-minute time slots on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturdays. 15 Families have enjoyed the new program opportunity so far and several have come back more than once!

8. Special Events

- i. **Virtual Campfire** WSSRA held a Virtual Campfire on June 26 with special guest Alyssa from Dynamic Lynks. We had 19 families registered. Participants especially enjoyed the s'more Kits that WSSRA staff delivered.
- ii. **Fourth of July Parades** WSSRA participated in the Village of Elmwood Park's 4th of July parade and also put together a virtual parade for participants and families to enjoy.
- iii. **Virtual Reptile Encounters** WSSRA is hosting a reptile encounter on Thursday, July 9 with Dave NiNaso's Traveling World of Reptiles. We currently have 17 families registered.
- iv. **Virtual Dance Party** WSSRA is hosting a virtual dance with special guest DJ Marc Poise on Saturday, July 25. We currently have 22 families registered.
- v. **Splish Splash Summer Dance** Our Annual Wacky Quacky Duck Race will be held virtually combined with a dance party. The event is scheduled on August 6 from 7:00pm-8:30pm. DJ Mark Poise will provide music and entertainment and duck races will be shown throughout the event. A big thanks to Elmwood Park for allowing us to use their pool for the duck races!

F. Staff Report: Prepared by Annie Hart, Superintendent of Safety and Operations.

1. **Inclusion** WSSRA canceled our Summer Inclusion Training the first week in June and let all inclusion staff know they would remain furloughed at this time. Chris Sturm, Inclusion Manager and Mia Leyba, Recreation Specialist have been out visiting camps and offering support where needed. They are currently providing support in Elmwood Park, Oak Park and North Riverside. Please contact Chris or Annie with any inclusion support questions or concerns.
2. **Transportation** WSSRA is not currently offering transportation. One of our 4 bus leases is up in November and we have decided to wait until the new year to determine if we will lease another

G. Other

XIII. Arnold/Mrozik **moved to adjourn** the meeting at 5:07pm. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Marianne Birko
Executive Director
mb/ July minutes