

West Suburban Special Recreation Association

July 9, 2024

**Park District of Forest Park
7501 Harrison, Forest 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
Ron Malchiodi, Village of Riverside
Jeanmarie Hajer-O'Connor, Village of North
Riverside
Ted Gruber, Village of Elmwood Park

Karen Stille, River Forest Park District
Cathy Fallon, Berwyn Park District
Kelly Diaz, North Berwyn Park District
Annemarie Flaherty, Norridge Park District **remote**
Greg Stanczyk, Veterans Park District

Not in Attendance: EA Park District of Franklin Park, UEA Village of Harwood Heights

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

- i. Approval of Remote Attendees meeting Qualifying Event: Arnold/Iovinelli motioned to approve Annemarie Flaherty from Norridge Park District to attend remotely, roll call vote resulted in unanimous approval**
- ii. Approval of Agenda Arnold/Iovinelli motioned to approve the agenda. A roll call vote resulted in unanimous approval**
- iii. Approval of the Consent Agenda Arnold/Iovinelli motioned to approve the Consent Agenda including the May 14, 2024, Minutes, May and June Financial reports and Pre-paid Disbursements for June & July 2024. Approval of the School District #84 lease and the new Alternate Representative for the Village of Riverside Megan Siska. Roll call vote showed 10 yes votes and the motion was approved.**
- IV. No Public Comment**
- V. Under the Foundation Estvanik reported the Foundation is currently working on the following events:**
2024 Fallin For Our Stars Casino Night event that is scheduled for Friday, November 8, 2024 taking place at the Cheney Mansion in Oak Park. We are soliciting donations for the raffle prizes and \$25 and up gift cards for the Star Pull. Anyone wanting to donate items reach out to Marianne Birko at WSSRA, marianneb@wssra.net. Mark your calendars and plan to be there!
2025 Bocce Tournament The Annual John Lannefeld Memorial Bocce Tournament will be held on Saturday February 1, 2025 at the Elmwood Park Community Recreation Center. **WSSRA hiring assistance** The Foundation is committed to supporting WSSRA in their search for staff for programs and summer day camp. Staff have been invited to present to various parent groups to help get the word out about WSSRA programs and staff support.
WSSRF once again thanks you for your continued support throughout the year!
- VI. Under Committee Reports**
- A. Finance Committee Chairperson** Flaherty/Birko share the committee met June 27th to review discussions of the Village of River Grove interested in participation in WSSRA, Approval of the 2023 Audit and audited carryover. Also discussed the options and impact of the FLSA on WSSRA and budget planning for 2025. Details to be shared later in the agenda.
- B. No Other**
- VII. Unfinished Business**
- A. Park District of Forest Park Building Updates** Iovinelli reported the Park District of Forest Park has moved on and selected Perkins & Will to do the schematics for the possible #20,000 square foot addition to the Roos Center. Iovinelli shared they are closing on the purchase of the last of the parcel of land owned by the Car towing company. The current owner will lease the space for a time.
- B. Approval of the 2023 Audit by Lauterbach & Amen** Lauterbach & Amen presented the WSSRA 2023 audit, and the summary statement is "The Financial statement for West Suburban Special Recreation Association for the year end of 2023 presents fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of WSSRA as of December 31, 2023 in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the US". **Arnold/Iovinelli motioned to accept the 2023 audit as presented by Lauterbach & Amen. Roll call vote showed 10 yes votes, motion was approved.**

C. No Other

VIII. Under New Business

A. Approval of the Audited Carry-Over Per the 2023 audit WSSRA has a carryover of \$81,995. as noted on page 18 of the audit. Per the WSSRA Carry over policy 50%;\$40,997.50 goes to the Partner shares and 50%;\$40,997.50 goes to the WSSRA Facility Fund, which is currently at \$563,150. (The ceiling amount for this fund is \$750,000) **Arnold/lovinelli motioned to approve the WSSRA Fund Balance Policy and split the \$81,995 dollars from the 2023 carryover funds; 50% \$40,997.50 goes to the Facility Fund and 50% \$40,997.50 goes back to reduce the partners shares in the 2024 budget. Roll call vote showed 10 yes votes and the motion was approved.**

B. No Other

IX. Under Correspondence No Comments

X. Under Board Reports

lovinelli reported the Park District of Forest Park "Where every day is a walk in the Park! "The pool is open, and it is the happening place. Summer camp is going with #50 kids on the wait list weekly. They had outstanding July 4th celebrations and had the opportunity to celebrate their excellent staff this summer. They are making the final preparations for the 16" No Glove Softball Tournament July 25-28. They are looking for volunteers and lovinelli welcomes all board members to come join in the fun! They are closing the pool on Friday July 12 for the IPRA lifeguard Games. Everyone is invited to join in the fun. lovinelli expressed a BIG thank you to Oak Park for accommodating Forest Park pool passholders that day! **Stille reported for the River Forest Park District** and they too are having a great summer too due to the quality of the staff they hired. They will be hosting a party in the park on July 18 with food and live music and again in August for their Annual Food Truck Rally on August 24. The Board recently approved the agreement with Dominican for synthetic turf field they will share use of. In September they will host their 2nd Annual Color Run on Saturday September 21 where all proceeds will go to WSSRA! **Gruber reported the Village of Elmwood Park's** July 4th parade was a huge hit with over 60 units including cars, floats, bands and more. Next year they hope to have the "Weiner Mobile" in it! They are getting ready for the Taste of Elmwood Park August 8 – 11 where they expect over 30,000 people to attend. They are currently hosting a very successful summer day camp with 150 kids and 30 on the wait list. Summer Bocce continues to go strong! **Fallon reported the Berwyn Park District's** first Fiesta De Verano was a big success with music, food vendors, artists, dancers including free Salsa dance lessons. All who attended had a great time! Summer continues with full camps and wait lists as well. They are hosting Thursday concerts in the park once a month and will also Co-host the Annual Back to School event with the School District and local PAV YMCA on Sunday August 18 which will feature the free backpack give away! They are also in the final stages of their Master Plan completion. **Diaz reported the North Berwyn Park District's** summer day camp is a huge success with record numbers. They are hosting a Senior Health Workshop "I Health Care", They Also have their Dance & Foam Party coming up and they are making their final preparations for the **Corrida del Mariachi 5k run/walk** on August 17th. Last year they had over 800 runners and they are expecting more this year! They will have a large post party as well this year. **Hajer-O'Connor reported the Village of North Riverside's Recreation Department** finished their largest July 4th Parade in over 20 years with a day full of festivities which started with the parade and finished at the park with fireworks donated by the Riverside Golf Club. They will be hosting the July 18th Concert and Car show and finalizing their Fall plans including the Autumn Fest Chili Cook Off on September 20th. They are currently managing their team severely short staffed. **Stanczyk reported the Veterans Park District** is in the midst of completing their Fall program guide which will be available August 1. They too are hosting a variety of summer events including movies and music in the park and have two more concerts to finish the summer series. They are putting the final touches on their 4-day Softball Tournament starting August 1 – 4. Their Summer Day Camps are going well with registration up by 30 campers and they were able to accommodate the last session of camp. **Arnold reported the Park District of Oak Park** is getting ready to remove the diving well with a 4' fun pool including 2 slides and a daisy chain walk. They will start this project the day the pool closes for the season. Summer Day camps are full! PDOP added some more fun to the community with "Fun Van and touring Bike trailer their Community Outreach program. IT includes a vehicle full of equipment and activities will take to local parks for more community engagement. They once again received a \$100,000 grant to support the CRC's free Afterschool program for 6th – 12th graders. Which includes free Mental Health support. The CRC continues its success with over 6000 paying memberships and 5000 free walking passes in year two. The summer concert and movies series continues in the park, and they are continuing their work on the 5-year Strategic Master plan. The final phase includes discussions with the community about an indoor pool. This will include spontaneous interviews in local coffee shops. The Library and Township will host the Back-to-School event on August 9 which includes a backpack give away. They had 38

submissions in their “Redesign Field Center” competition. They have narrowed the submissions down to three and “Rammed Earth” won! **Flaherty reported the Norridge Park District** is busy making the final preparations for their “Island in the City” festival this weekend. Camps are going great, and they too are hosting music and movies in the park. The Pool Opening is in early August. The BIG news is Flaherty announced she has taken the position to be the Executive Director of the Deerfield Park District. She shared “It has been a pleasure to serve and work with all of the staff at WSSRA and all of you as a Board.” Details for her replacement will be decided at Wednesday’s Board meeting. **Malchiodi reported the Village of Riverside’s** July 3 & 4 festivities are a wrap with great fun and success had by all! It was great to have WSSRA join their July 4th parade! The crowd loved having them there! Camp is going great, and they are busy finalizing details for extended camp. They are now in the final stages of the Strategic Plan with the Social Engagement piece. They will close the summer with the August 17th Kids Triathlon.

XI. **Executive Director’s Report** Birko Reported

- A. **IAPD Universal Design article by Mark Trieglaff** Birko was asked by IAPD to assist with authoring an article about Universal Design in Open Spaces. Birko worked with Mark Trieglaff from ACT Services Inc., a consultant whose life’s work is helping Park Districts and Municipalities do just that. The article is an overview of the design considerations that should be addressed to successfully complete a Universally Designed project. Look for the article in the next IAPD magazine coming out in late July.
- B. **All things summer** As with all of you, life is busy at WSSRA with “**All Things Summer**” The first session of summer day camp is almost over, and the second session is about to begin and so far, all is going well! WSSRA continues to hire staff and has filled the camps to capacity. While we removed many participants from the wait list, we still have 18 persons who remain on the wait list and will likely not be added this summer. This is not due to a lack of staffing but a capacity issue. It is too late to add another camp location which adds many logistical challenges. We will plan forward for these increases for next summer.
- C. **NRPA Plans** Birko looks forward to attending the NRPA conference in Atlanta, Georgia October 8-10. She will be staying at an Air B & B and will save about \$250 as a result.
- D. **Partner Annual presentations** Birko continues to present to the WSSRA partner boards and most recently presented to the Park District of Oak Park, Berwyn Park District, the Village of Riverside, Village of Harwood Heights, and will be presenting to the Park District of Franklin Park in August. Let me know a date that works for you.
- E. **Fair Labor Standards Act Updates** The changes to the Fair Labor Standards are significant and are being reviewed by staff and the Finance Committee. The proposed increases are currently being challenged in the courts and if past history is a guide the increase will be less than what is proposed. WSSRA currently meets the threshold of \$43,000 for the July 1 deadline. WSSRA will continue to work with the Finance Committee and monitor the rulings as we plan forward for the 2025 fiscal year.

F. **Staff Report: April Michalski, Superintendent of Recreation reported**

1. **Programs** Summer programs are going well. We are offering a new pickleball program in collaboration with the Tennis and Fitness Centre in Oak Park and have 13 participants registered. Staff are working on Fall brochure copy, which is scheduled to go to print on Friday, July 19.
2. **Special Olympics**
 - i. **Bobcats Volleyball** season is underway; we have 2 teams with 21 athletes participating.
 - ii. **Tennis** WSSRA offered a new tennis skills program this past season, and our team is competing in the Special Olympics Tennis Skills Competition on July 10 at Lincoln-Way Community High School in New Lenox. Gold medal winners will advance to the state competition in August.
 - iii. **Bowling** The Special Olympics Regional Bowling Tournament will be held on Saturday, July 27 at Stardust Bowl in Addison. We have 16 athletes competing. Gold medal winners will advance to the state bowling tournament in December.
 - iv. **Golf** We have 15 golf athletes competing in the Special Olympics Golf Skills Competition on July 31 at Springbrook Golf course in Naperville. Gold medal winners will advance to the state games in September.
3. **Day Camp** We are wrapping up our first session of camp and all has gone well. Session two runs July 8-July 26. We have made good progress with our waitlist; we currently have 102 participants in Day Camp and 26 participants in Community Cruisers. There are 18 participants on the waitlist for camp and 1 participant on the waitlist for Community Cruisers. At this point we are not able to add to the second session because our camps are at capacity.

4. **Hiring Updates** We had a large pool of applicants applying throughout the month of June. At this point, we are not hiring additional staff for summer and are beginning to hire for the fall season.

5. **WSSRA is hiring a full-time Staff Manager to join our team. Our current Staff Manager, Maria Losselyoung, resigned from her position effective July 26. Maria accepted a teaching position. Please see the attached flyer and pass it along to anyone you think might be interested.**

6. **Inclusion** We are currently supporting 83 participants in 254 inclusive programs. We hired 6 new Inclusions Aides to begin this month. Our inclusion team has been busy conducting site visits, checking in with staff and providing staff with visual aids and sensory supplies. If you have any questions regarding inclusion, reach out to Chris Strum at chriss@wssra.net.

7. **Special Events**

i. **Fourth of July Parades** WSSRA is excited to participate in the Village of Oak Park, the Village of North Riverside, and the Village of Riverside's annual parades on July 4.

ii. **TR Softball Tournament** WSSRA is hosting 11 teams in the TR Softball Tournament on July 14 at Veteran's Park in North Riverside. We are looking for volunteers to assist with score keeping. For more information about volunteering, contact Maria Losselyoung at marial@wssra.net.

iii. **Splish Splash Summer Bash** WSSRA's annual pool party will be held on Wednesday, July 17 at the Forest Park Aquatic Center from 6:30-9:00pm. The event will feature our Wacky Quacy Duck Splash, ducks can be purchased online at wssra.net.

iv. **Family Swim**-WSSRA is hosting a family swim at Rehm Pool in Oak Park on Sunday, July 21 from 9:30-11:00am.

G. **Staff Report: Annie Hart, Superintendent of Business reported**

1. **Transportation** In August WSSRA will begin the process of replacing the 2011 WSSRA Minivan. We are currently in talks with our Foundation to use the raised funds to support the purchase of this new vehicle. Our Transportation Specialist, Jacob Kell, will start the process in August after Day Camp has ended. Our Marketing Manager is currently working to design the wrap for our newest leased minivan.

2. **IMRF** Hart took the two-part IMRF Authorized Agent training in hopes of learning a bit more about their new website. There was barely any mention of the new site. Nonetheless, it was a good refresher and is most helpful as we continue to navigate the new system.

3. **No Other**

XII. **Closed Session None**

XIII. **Adjournment** *lovinelli/Gruber motioned to adjourn the meeting at 4:58pm. The motion was approved unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,



Marianne Birko, Executive Director
mb/July 24 minutes