

**West Suburban Special Recreation Association**

**November 12, 2024**

**WSSRA**

**2915 Maple Street, Franklin Park, IL 60131**

**MINUTES**

**I. Chairperson Ron Malchiodi called the meeting to order at 4:05pm those present included:**

Jan Arnold Park District of Oak Park

Jackie Iovinelli, Park District of Forest Park

Ron Malchiodi, Village of Riverside

Ted Gruber, Village of Elmwood Park

Mike Sletten, River Forest Park District,

arrived 4:12

Cathy Fallon, Berwyn Park District arrived 4:10

Jack Savage, Village of North Riverside

Nate Brown, Norridge Park District

Greg Stanczyk, Veterans Park District

Liz Visteen, Park District of Franklin Park

Anna Wegrecki, Village of Harwood Heights

Arrived 4:06

**Not in Attendance:** EA North Berwyn Park District

**Others in Attendance:** WSSRA staff: Annie Hart, April Michalski, Marianne Birko, WSSRF Christine Nakatsuka

**I. Approval of Remote Attendees meeting Qualifying Event: Arnold/ Iovinelli motioned to approve Jack Savage as the Board Representative for the Village of North Riverside. The motion was unanimously approved**

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

**III. Approval of the Consent Agenda Iovinelli/Arnold motioned to approve the Consent Agenda including the October 1, 2024, Minutes, the October Financial report and Pre-paid Disbursements for October 2024. Roll call vote showed 11 yes votes and the motion was approved.**

**IV. No Public Comment**

**V. Under the Foundation Christine Nakatsuka reported on behalf of the Foundation. The Foundation is excited to share the Fall in For Our Stars Casino night event on Friday, November 8 was a huge success. The Cheney Mansion was filled with over 121 guests and a magnetic energy. Anyone who attended found plenty of games to enjoy along with delicious food and plenty of spirits to keep the evening lively. The preliminary numbers show this event raised an estimated \$37,600 highest profit yet. A special thanks to all for your support in helping to secure raffle prizes, gift cards or certificates sponsorships and attending the event! And to the Park District of Oak Park for sharing their beautiful facility for all of our guests to enjoy. WSSRF's last fundraiser of the year is Giving Tuesday and Holiday Solicitation. Please consider closing the year with a donation to WSSRF. The Foundation will be hosting their last Zoom meeting of the year next Monday, November 18<sup>th</sup>. WE will discuss final details on the last of the year's events and begin planning for 2025. At this time of Thanksgiving the Foundation is truly grateful for your continued support of our ongoing efforts in supporting the WSSRA mission.**

**VI. Under Committee Reports**

**A. Finance Committee** Birko shared the committee cancelled their October 30 meeting due to no questions on the 2025 budget. The WSSRA proposed 2025 budget will be approved later in the meeting.

**B. Nominating Committee** Iovinelli will be heading up the Nominating Committee for the 2025 WSSRA Board of Directors Chairperson and Vice Chairperson. The slate will be shared at the December 2024 meeting and approved at the Annual Meeting in January 2025.

**C. No Other**

**VII. Unfinished Business**

**A. Final Approval of the Village of River Grove joining the WSSRA Consortium** WSSRA staff have met with the Village of River Grove Staff and have formerly signed the Resolution 2024-01, and the Village of River Grove has signed the membership agreement with the updates highlighted as discussed at the October 1<sup>st</sup> meeting.

**B. Presentation of the 2025 Proposed Budget and Budget Narrative Review**

Birko presented the 2025 budget as recommended by the Finance Committee. Iovinelli/Fallon motioned to approve Roll call vote showed 11 yes votes and the motion was approved.

**C. Park District of Forest Park Building Updates** Iovinelli reported the Park District of Forest Park's park board continues to support plans to move forward. The board's next steps will be to come up with a plan to finance the Roos expansion project.

**D. No Other**

VIII. Under New Business

A. No Other

IX. Under Correspondence No Comments

X. Under Board Reports

**Stanczyk reported the Veterans Park District** Staff are busy wrapping up the Winter/Spring program Brochure and preparing for the holiday events including the free Winter Wonderland event on 12/6 from 5-8, and Breakfast with Santa Event on 12/14. They are also looking into 2025 and their budget development. **Iovinelli reported the Park District of Forest Park** "Where every day is a walk in the Park!" They had their "Soft Opening" of the final of 4 total leased village parks "Remembrance Park." Proviso Math and Science Academy band played with a beautiful recognition of the Veterans Memorial rededication on Veterans Day. The Park District of Forest Park's 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration is this Friday on Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>. from 6:30 – 9:00pm. All are welcome to come and celebrate. Included in the festivities is many historical photos including the National Girls Baseball League (NGBL) in 1937 the "Bloomer Girls" came to Forest Park. Forest Park has two board seats open for the April elections and the Marketing Department is working to bring back the brochure in-house. It has been out sourced since 2020. **Savage reported he started as the new Director for the Village of North Riverside's** Recreation department on October 28. They too are busy preparing their Winter/spring brochure that will be out in a week. They are making the final preparations on the upcoming Winter Fest on December 4<sup>th</sup> and Breakfast with Santa on December 8<sup>th</sup>. They will also be attending the grand re-grand opening of North Riverside mall this Saturday and hosting Turkey Bingo next Friday, 11/22-WSSRA will be bringing a group of 40 participants and family members, with 297 total registered. They are also starting to plan for summer events including the Mayor's golf outing and booking summer concerts. **Wegrecki reported the Village of Harwood Heights** had a very successful Annual Halloween Party and Senior Craft Fair. They are now busy preparing for all things holidays including the Senior & Village Holiday parties. **Visteen reported the Park District of Franklin Park's** will complete their Winter/Spring brochure next week and will be hosting many events in December including Breakfast with Santa and two Holiday Train Rides on December 14 & 21<sup>st</sup>. **Arnold reported the Park District of Oak Park's** Greens market opens on the 13<sup>th</sup> at the conservatory and was highlighted by NBC! They will be featuring the rebuilt front entrance to the Conservatory which they raised \$100,000 for this project with the support of the "Friends of the Conservatory". The Rehm pool project is underway and 5 weeks behind due to permitting issues. The Park Board will approve the 2025 budget on the 21<sup>st</sup> of November, which includes adding more pickleball rolls at Barrie. New community issues have arisen with the new building project at Field Recreation Center. They also have 2 board seats open, and it will be contested this time around. With the new rulings they will be addressing the hiring of lifeguards and the supervision requirements of persons 21 years and older. They start hiring at the end of this month for lifeguards. **Brown reported the Norridge Park District's** Family Pumpkin Fest was the perfect day coinciding with the last day of soccer and perfect weather the park was filled with people having fun! Now it is all things Holidays as the park transforms with lots of new characters including the Villian's of Christmas and characters from it's a Wonderful Life...Santas workshop is coming up on December 7<sup>th</sup>, they are working on the Winter/Spring brochure, finishing a paving project, and working on a plan to build their Marketing department. **Fallon reported the Berwyn Park District** has 2 Board seats open that will be contested. Three persons have turned in their application information so far. They will be approving their 2025 Budget and Master Plan at next weeks Board meeting. They too are finalizing the Winter/Spring brochure and Holiday events. **Sletten reported for the River Forest Park District** complimented WSSRA/WSSRF for a great FFOS event on Friday night and a special thanks to the Park District of Oak Park for hosting it. They also have two board seats up for re-election, both are re-running. They are busy, redeveloping Constitution Park, developing girls' synthetic softball field at Keystone Park in collaboration with Dominican University and preparing for the Holiday Tree lighting on November 21 and their Holiday Trolley event on December 7<sup>th</sup>. **Gruber reported the Village of Elmwood Park** had 1000 persons enjoyed their Halloween Party on October 31<sup>st</sup> at the Community Center. Coming up they will host the Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> tree lighting and pictures with Santa and on December 13<sup>th</sup> they are hosting a first time ever Wrestling event featuring Matt Cardona with over 200 tickets already sold. Their In-house basketball league starts in January, and they are trying their hand at Paint and Sip events! **Malchiodi reported the Village of Riverside's** Haunted House at the Scout Cabin was a frightening success! They are halfway through the Master Plan with a wrap planned for April. They closed the Fall session with the Decades Dance in conjunction with the Coat Drive with moderate success! Coming up is the Holiday Stroll on December 6<sup>th</sup> and WSSRA will lead the craft activity and of course a close with Bingo with Santa on December 13. Basketball registration is underway showing higher numbers so far!

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

- A. **Partner Annual Presentations** Birko is scheduling Annual presentations to meet with your boards and share the Annual report and WSSRA updates. Call or email Birko with dates and times that work for you in 2024.
- B. **Last Chance "Fallin For Our Stars Event"** Birko shared updates of the successful FFOS Casino night. Guests enjoyed an evening of Casino gaming, food, drink, raffle, and outstanding LIVE Auction items to bid on. It was a very successful evening!
- C. **WSSRA Attends the Legal Symposium & PDRMA RMI** Birko & Hart attended the IAPD Legal Symposium remotely and all levels of staff will be attending the PDRMA RMI in a few weeks in Tinley Park.
- D. **WSSRA Executive Director Annual Review** Board Chairperson Malchiodi will be sending out the Executive Director Birko's Annual Review. Included in the evaluation will be her 2024 goals updated. Malchiodi requests the evaluation be completed by each partner and returned to Malchiodi by December 1, 2024 so a summary can be prepared for the December 10, 2024 Board meeting.
- E. **Reminder on Alternate Share Payment Schedule** Please accept this as your reminder of the process you must follow to request an alternate payment schedule. Per the Amended and Restated Articles of Agreement, "any partner, who has not received an alternate payment schedule for more than two consecutive years may request and alternate schedule for the payment of the Special Recreation Share. Such requests must be in writing, must describe the reason for the alternate schedule, and be received by WSSRA by December 1, 2024, The WSSRA Board of Directors will vote on the requests at the December 10, 2024, meeting. The alternate schedules can be granted only if all the schedules can be granted. All the schedules must be approved by a vote of two-thirds of those members of the Board voting on the issue at a regularly convened meeting of the Board of Directors. Interest will be charged on the alternate schedules as described in IV. C. Schedule for Payment of Shares of the Amended and Restated Articles of Agreement.

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

- 1. **Programs** Fall programs are wrapping up this week, and staff are planning for our winter/spring brochure copy.
- 2. **Program Highlights** WSSRA introduced a new youth cheerleading program, with 6 participants enrolled. The group has been practicing a variety of cheers, stunts, tumbling, flyer positions, and other cheerleading motions. They will perform at a couple Bobcats basketball games.
- 3. **Special Olympics**
  - **Floor Hockey** WSSRA's Floor Hockey team will compete in the Special Olympics State Floor Hockey competition on November 16 at the Wintrust Sports Complex in Bedford Park.
  - **Basketball** Bobcats Basketball is in full swing. We have 4 teams and a Jr. Basketball Team, with 57 enrolled. Games begin on November 12.
- 4. **Hiring Updates** We have started interviewing candidates for our Full-Time Recreation Specialist position, which will oversee our Adult Day Community Cruisers program. We hope to fill the position by the end of the month.
- 5. **Inclusion** We are currently serving 47 participants in 76 inclusive programs. For any questions regarding inclusion, please reach out to Chris Sturm at [chriss@wssra.net](mailto:chriss@wssra.net).
- 6. **Upcoming Events**
  - **We Rock the Spectrum Family event** on November 15, WSSRA is hosting a sensory-friendly family event at We Rock the Spectrum in Franklin Park. Families will have the opportunity to socialize, play, and enjoy refreshments.
  - **Turkey Bingo** WSSRA will be attending North Riverside's Annual Turkey Bingo Event is on Friday, November 22. We have 39 participants and family members registered. Families will enjoy an evening of bingo where they can win a turkey or other exciting prizes.
  - **Polar Express** WSSRA's Annual Polar Express Story Time is taking place on December 14. Families will enjoy a fun-filled train ride to the "North Pole" with a visit from Santa. The event is sponsored by Thumbuddy Special.
  - **Sensory Sensitive Cookies with Santa** The Park District of Oak Park and WSSRA are partnering to host a sensory-friendly holiday event at the Cheney Mansion on Wednesday, December 18. Families will have the opportunity to visit with Santa, enjoy crafts, and treats

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

- 1. **Transportation** We are down one bus for the next couple of weeks. A part-time driver was in a minor accident and sideswiped a parked truck. The bus is currently at the body shop, and we are awaiting an estimate. PDRMA has

been notified and the driver will not be driving until they can attend a PDRMA defensive driver course and if we are comfortable with them back in that role.

2. **Mini Van Update** We went back to the drawing board and test drove 2 hybrid minivans. After much contemplation we've decided we aren't ready to go that route until we have a garage to park the vehicle indoors.

3. **Other**

XII. **Closed Session None**

XIII. **Adjournment Arnold/lovinelli motioned** to adjourn the meeting at 4:59pm. The motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Marianne Birko, Executive Director,

mb/ Nov.12, 2024 minutes