

West Suburban Special Recreation Association

October 11, 2022

WSSRA Offices

2915 Maple Street, Franklin Park II, 60304

MINUTES

- I. Chairman Jackie Iovinelli called the **meeting to order** at 4:06pm those present included:

Mike Sletten, River Forest Park District
Sandy Lentz, Park District of Oak Park
Jackie Iovinelli, Park District of Forest Park
Dan LoCascio, Park District of Franklin Park
Ted Gruber, Elmwood Park
Greg Stanczyk, Veterans Park District

Deborah Gayon, Sandy Fejt, Berwyn Pk Dist
AnneMarie Flaherty, Norridge Park District
Anna Wegrecki, Village of Harwood
Heights arrived 4:12pm

Not in Attendance: Village of Riverside EA
Village of North Riverside, EA,
North Berwyn Park EA

Others in Attendance:

WSSRA staff: April Ryan, Annie Hart, Marianne Birko, Geri Estvanik, WSSRF

- II. **Approval of Agenda** Lentz/Sletten **to approve the agenda. The motion was unanimously approved.**
- III. **Approval of the Consent Agenda** Lentz/Sletten **motioned to approve the Consent Agenda including the September 13, 2022, Minutes, Financial Report & Disbursements. Roll call vote showed 9 yes votes, and the motion was approved**
- IV. **No Public Comment**
- V. **Under the Foundation Estvanik reported on behalf of the Foundation Board,**
The WSSRF is currently focusing on three upcoming events: Event 1 It's not too late to join the **WSSRF's in-person "Fall in For Our Stars" Casino Night** at the Cheney Mansion this Friday October 14, 2022. It will be a wonderful evening filled with Casino Gaming fun, cocktails, heavy appetizers, Great Raffle prizes and Nine Amazing Live Auction items. Please join us. You can get your tickets on wssra.net or call the office. Hope to see you there!
Event 2 WSSRF's Holiday Solicitation will go out in November along with Giving Tuesday, on November 29, 2022, **Event 3** The WSSRF will close out the year with **Holiday Concert** held on Friday, December 16 at the Thatcher Woods Pavilion. Tickets will be sold through WSSRA and PACTT so Save the Date and watch more information that will be out soon. **As always, the Foundation Board of Directors thanks all of you for your continued support.**
- VII. **Under Committee Reports**
A. **Finance Committee Birko** shared the Committee met on October 4 to discuss 2023 Shares, budget planning, and health insurance. Details were shared later in the agenda.
B. **No Other**
- VIII. **Unfinished Business**
A. **Approval of 2021 Audited carry-over** Per the 2021 approved audit WSSRA has a carryover of \$54,003. Per the WSSRA Carry over policy 50%;\$27,002 goes to the Partner shares and 50%;\$27,001 goes to the WSSRA Facility Fund, which is currently at \$518,175, bringing the new total to \$545,177. **Sletten/Lentz motioned based on the The Finance Committee's recommendation the WSSRA Board follows the WSSRA Fund Balance Policy and split the \$54,003 dollars from the 2021 carryover funds; 50% \$ 27,001 goes to the Facility Fund and 50% \$27,002 goes back to reduce the partners shares in the 2023 budget. The motion was approved by roll call with 9 Yes votes**
B. **Approval of the 2023 Preliminary Partner shares** The WSSRA Finance committee reviewed and recommends the 2023 Partner Shares with no rate increase as noted in the share chart . **Sletten/Lentz motioned the WSSRA Board of Directors approve the recommended 2023 WSSRA Partner shares that will be corrected once the 2021 EAV's are in. The motion was approved by roll call with 9 Yes votes**

C. Park District of Forest Park Building & Land purchase Update Iovinelli updated the WSSRA Board of Directors on the Park District of Forest Park's land purchase agreement. They have secured the perimeter of the property and will begin demolition by early November. They are working with Burke Engineering, waiting for ComEd and Nicor to remove supplies for demolition and then the planning will begin for a 20,000 sq feet building

D. No other

IX. **Under New Business:**

A. **Approval of Salary Range Updates** Birko shared in accordance with the WSSRA Board Policy we review the Salary ranges for the Full-time positions every 3 years. Annually the ranges are increased on the lower and upper end by the CPI to keep them current. Once this is done the staff compare the ranges with similar sized SRA's as noted in the chart. While this was done last year, staff believe in the current climate of staff hiring challenges that we review and update the ranges again this year to stay competitive. **Sletten/Stanczyk motioned the Board of Directors approve the WSSRA Salary Ranges as recommended by the WSSRA Finance Committee once again this year to stay competitive. The motion was unanimously approved.**

B. **Recommended 2023 Proposed Budget and Budget Narrative Review**

Birko presented the 2023 proposed budget as reviewed and recommended by the Finance Committee and requests feedback from all partners. Please call with any questions in this regard. The budget will be approved at the November 8, 2022, meeting.

C. No other

X. **Under Correspondence No Comments**

XI. **Under Board Reports** Fejt reported the **Berwyn Park District** re-introduced everyone to Deborah Gayon the Superintendent of Recreation. Fejt said BPD just completed a highly successful 8th Annual Brew Fest. They made a few changes, upped the fees, and had a wonderful day! This Saturday is their Halloween Candy Carnival with a variety of Halloween activities. They are doing less Halloween due to their current state of being down 5 staff. They are amid budget planning too. **Sletten reported the River Forest Park District** began the Keystone project which will include tennis courts, basketball & batting cages and all is going great. They just held their Halloween event in the Thatcher Woods Forest Preserves and it was well attended. RFPD is currently hiring for a maintenance position and just hired a new Athletic Manager who is starting Monday. They also dissolved their Foundation. **Lentz reported the Park District of Oak Park** recently won an Emerald award for Carroll Park building. It was one of the earliest net zero buildings in the state. They too are getting ready for their Halloween events. They are 50% complete on construction for the new CRC facility. They are on schedule to open in late spring for the Grand Opening! She reported staffing continues to be a challenge! Next weekend will be IAPD Best of Best event of which the PDOP will be getting a Sustainability Award for 7th year in a row! Something the district is very proud of! They too are currently working on the 2023 budget and hope to be complete by mid-November. **Wegrecki reported the Village of Harwood Heights** just held a car show on September 24 which also included a craft fair that has really grown in popularity and was very busy! She notes the Youth Commission sports have started and they are planning their Halloween party coming up. Also, in collaboration with the Youth commission, they planted 50 trees which came from the Morton Arboretum. **Gruber reported the Village of Elmwood Park** Just started volleyball camp with 30 kids on Saturday mornings. Their co-ed basketball registration started this week and Summer Bocce ends this week with the Fall Bocce starting next week. They are also preparing for their Annual Halloween party and 500 pumpkin give away! **Flaherty reported the Norridge Park District's** Fall programs are underway and they have Halloween events coming up too. Their Afterschool Enrichment collaborative with District #80 continues to be successful with a contract to lock it in for this school year. They are using some of their grant funds to support the program. They are also looking at piloting a similar program at District #79. Early childcare continues to have the largest staffing challenges which is resulting in a waitlist. NPD just shut down their ball fields this week, and will begin work on 2 of the fields to make improvements. They also submitted for OSLAD grants for upcoming projects. **Stanczyk reported the Veterans Park District** is working on rebranding Bulger's Park in Melrose Park as a Community Center. Recently they implemented 2 Early Childhood Peewee Drop-in playtimes with great success. They are also putting the finishing touches on their "Funtober" Halloween events including the Edible Haunted House event, the Skull painting event, and the Family Pumpkin Carving event this Friday. They are currently taking registration for the

Youth Basketball league which starts in January, and they have added a skills training that takes place this weekend! They are currently preparing their Winter/Spring Fun Guide. **LoCascio reported the Park District of Franklin Park** held their Annual Fall Fest Parade on Sunday and had a great turnout! They are getting ready for a collaborative volleyball League and will be competing with Norridge Park District. They are also winterizing their beehives after a very sweet year collecting over 120 pounds of honey this year! **Iovinelli reported the Park District of Forest Park** "Where every day is a Walk in the Park." The Splash pad update is the gumball machine is up and they are currently laying the Life Floor. It looks like game board pieces. With one pad completely finished they are still hoping to do a "Dry Opening" so people can walk through and see it! The leased pocket parks throughout town, have received 1 grant and they are waiting on OSLAD grant for second one and are going out to bid for 3rd one. Forest Park will be hosting the Fall Fest after the Co-ed softball tournament. Upcoming are the Casket Races in downtown Forest Park next weekend and the Trunk or Treat event will be held at the end of the month. Two staff and a Board member attended the NRPA conference and attended some great sessions. Forest Park will also be receiving an award at the "Best of the Best" on Friday night and the District will also be represented with staff and a Board member at the WSSRF "Fallin For Our Stars" event. Iovinelli mentioned Forest Park has a camera system that is tied to the Police department which is helpful in avoiding any vandalism in the park. Something others should consider...

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

A. 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 November 1, 2022. The WSSRA Board of Directors will vote on the requests at the November 8, 2022, 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.

B. Director attends NRPA Birko thanked the board for the opportunity to attend the NRPA conference. It was great to be back since last attended in 2018. Birko made many connections with professionals across the country as well as learned about updates of the pressing issues facing all of us. An event highlight was meeting Temple Grandin an amazing woman who has not let her disability define her. She has become an important spokesperson for the field of Parks and Recreation. As she tells her story she reminds us of how we all have the power to create inclusive environments for all persons to enjoy. Check out the movie "Temple Grandin" if you care!

C. Recognition of Joe Modrich's Retirement Birko recognized Modrich for his Retirement and the 20+ years of service he has provided WSSRA on the WSSRA Board of Directors representing the Park District of Franklin Park. Joe shared his thoughts and thanked the board for their support of WSSRA and the mission. The work we do here is so important!

D. Thank you to River Forest Park District for once again hosting the Makin' Tracks Community Run/Walk event on Saturday, September 17th. IT was a WONDERFUL day to enjoy the beautiful, scenic Village of River Forest! WE are so grateful to be the recipient of the proceeds for this event. Thank You!

E. WSSRF "Fallin for Our Stars" Fundraiser Friday, October 14th Join us this coming Friday for the Foundations 4th annual fundraising event; "Fallin for Our Stars" cocktail party & Starlit Casino night that will be held at the lovely Cheney Mansion in Oak Park courtesy of the Park District of Oak Park. Guests will enjoy the opportunity to play Casino Games, enjoy cocktails and light appetizers and to purchase raffle tickets and bid on the 9 LIVE AUCTION items including **2 UNITED AIRLINES TICKETS, a Fabulous 3 night Get Away, Blue Man Group tickets, Chicago Blackhawk tickets, Bulls Tickets, and Bears tickets and more!** A special thanks to many of our partners who donated to the raffle and are sponsoring the event. It is not too late to join in the fun. Go to www.wssra.net for more information.

F. Staff Report: April Michalski reported

1. Fall Programs are in full swing and go until November 12. Overall, enrollment is good. We cancelled 2 virtual programs due to low enrollment. Highlights include a new collaborative program, Beyond the Bell, with

2. Berwyn North School District 98 which is scheduled to begin on October 18. Our adults have enjoyed visiting Navy Pier and the Chicago Red Stars soccer game. Our youth Outdoor Adventures program is popular this season with 12 participants enrolled. The group will enjoy a trip to Wildwood Nature Center and Brookfield Zoo.
3. **Imaginarium Sensory Room** is open for private family play sessions and school and pre-school group visits. All visits can be scheduled on our website at wssra.net. Your support advertising this to your pre-school groups would be most appreciated!
4. **Special Olympics**
 - i. **Ok Classic** On September 24 WSSRA Bobcats Softball players played the Opportunity Knocks Warriors at their annual softball tournament, the game resulted in a tie this year.
 - ii. **Volleyball** Our volleyball team took 4th place at the Special Olympics regional volleyball tournament on October 2.
 - iii. **Basketball** Bobcats Basketball kicked off on October 4, we have 37 athletes registered this season and will be back to three teams.
5. **Inclusion** WSSRA is currently supporting 27 participants in 32 inclusive programs and aftercare programs. Staffing continues to be a challenge, any requests coming in will take a minimum of two weeks to secure staffing.
6. **Seasonal Staff Updates** Our Staff Manager, Maria, is continuing to hire seasonal staff to work fall programs and inclusion. Staff will be attending job fairs at OPRFHS, East and West Leyden High School monthly and Morton College in November among countless other events in our communities.
7. **Upcoming Special Events**
 - i. **Boo Bash** WSSRA is excited to collaborate with the Park District of Oak Park to offer a new sensory-sensitive special event this year. Families will enjoy Halloween activities and a photo opportunity with the Great Pumpkin at the Cheney Mansion on October 30.
 - ii. **Turkey Bingo** WSSRA is attending North Riversides Turkey Bingo event on November 18. Participants will have the opportunity to win a turkey, ham, pie and more.

G. Staff Report: Annie Hart reported

1. **WSSRA Marketing** WSSRA Public Relations Coordinator, Nicole Walsh has been communicating with all Partner agency Marketing and Public Relations staff to help update their websites with WSSRA's updated logo and information. This is critical in helping get the word out about WSSRA programs and services. Please connect with your staff and make sure they have what they need from Nicole to get your site updated as soon as possible. WSSRA will be hosting a lunch in the new year for all WSSRA Partner District PR and Marketing Staff. Please encourage your staff to attend.
2. **Safety** WSSRA Safety Committee has been reformed to include 2 new staff members. Joining Annie are Staff Manager; Maria Ramirez, Program Manager; Carla Pakenas, and Recreation Specialist; Megan Foster. The group is spending the next several staff meetings to reintroduce PDRMA's CORE 6. We have also implemented a Stretching Policy for programs, where staff will stretch and talk about reversal posture stretching on a regular basis. WSSRA completed its Fleet Form with PDRMA this week and look forward to forward to feedback on where we can continue to grow as a safe agency.
3. **Vehicle Vandalism** Hart updated the board on the vehicle vandalism and the steps we are taking to communicate with local police and the school district. She noted we are also looking at other possible parking locations.
4. **No Other**

XII. Closed Session None

XIII. Possible Action following closed session None

XIV. Adjournment Sletten/Wegrecki moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:33pm. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Marianne Birko, Executive Director