

West Suburban Special Recreation Association
September 10, 2024
Village of Harwood Heights
7300 Wilson, Harwood Heights, 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
Megan Siska, Village of Riverside
Ted Gruber, Village of Elmwood Park
Mike Sletten, River Forest Park District

Cathy Fallon, Berwyn Park District arrived 4:04pm
Kelly Diaz, North Berwyn Park District
Nate Brown, Norridge Park District
Greg Stanczyk, Veterans Park District
Dan LoCascio, Park District of Franklin Park

Not in Attendance: EA Village of North Riverside

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

i. Approval of Remote Attendees meeting Qualifying Event: No One attended remotely

ii. Approval of Agenda Gruber/Iovinelli motioned to approve the agenda. A roll call vote resulted in unanimous approval

iii. Approval of the Consent Agenda Iovinelli/Gruber motioned to approve the Consent Agenda including the July 9, 2024, Minutes, July and August Financial reports and Pre-paid Disbursements for July & August 2024. Roll call vote showed 11 yes votes and the motion was approved.

IV. No Public Comment

V. Under the Foundation Birko reported on behalf of the Foundation. She shared the Foundation is currently working on the following events: *The River Forest Color Run* Will take place again this year on Saturday, September 21 at the Priory. Bring the whole family to this very unique 1-mile Fun Run. Register now at the River Forest Park District at RFparks.com. All of the net proceeds will benefit WSSRA! *2024 Fallin For Our Stars Casino Night* The Foundation is finalizing their planning for the 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. Included in your packet is the sponsorship information. Please consider supporting the Foundation by donating or considering a sponsorship and plan to join us for the event! It is guaranteed to be a FUN night! *Holiday Solicitation* The Foundation is also making final plans for their Holiday Solicitation campaign taking place online and through the US mail during the month of December. The final version of the Holiday Solicitation will be shared next month. *WSSRA hiring assistance* The Foundation is committed to supporting WSSRA in their search for staff for Fall programs and Special Events. 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 shared a special thanks to all of you for your continued support throughout the year.

VI. Under Committee Reports

A. Finance Committee Chairperson Sletten shared the committee met headed by Sletten met July 31 and September 4 to review discussions of the interest expressed by the Village of River Grove, WSSRA proposed 2025 shares and 2025 budget planning. More details to be shared.

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 WSSRA and Forest Park staff met with Perkins & Will to discuss the space planning and are excited about the possibilities. Birko reminded the board that WSSRA would continue with leasing their space

B. Village of River Grove Update Birko shared Mayor Guerin and the Village of River Grove Finance Committee met and voted to move the request forward to join the WSSRA consortium to the Full Board. The vote will take place at the September 16, 2024 Village Board meeting. Next steps is they will send the letter of intent. Once this is received by WSSRA, Birko will share the detailed report with the WSSRA Board.

C. No Other

VIII. Under New Business

- A. **Presenting the WSSRA 2025 Proposed Partner Shares** Birko shared the WSSRA Finance Committee reviewed and recommends the 2025 Partner Shares with a 4% rate increase over the 2024 shares to meet the demand for increased costs in providing WSSRA services. (Note the 2023 EAV's show the Tri-annual Reassessment of the communities south of North Avenue.) She further stated WSSRA has just returned to just above the 2019 share level. In 2020 there was a reduction due to COVID-19, 2021 \$75,000 reduction, 2022 \$50,000 reduction & 2023 had a 0% increase and in 2024 the shares increased by 4%. Included in the information share was a 2024 summary of projected year end expenses. A shares chart showing a 4% increase without the Village of River Grove and a shares chart including the Village Grove. Both charts include the 2023 EAV's and the 2023 carry-over reduction of \$40,997.50. Also included in the information shared is the Maximum Allowable Contribution charts. The board was asked to take back to their boards and plan to vote on the shares at the October 1st Board meeting!
- B. **WSSRA Salary Range Tri-annual Updates** Birko reported per the WSSRA Board Policy attached is a summary of the Full-time staff positions and their salary ranges that are to be reviewed and updated every three years. Included in this review are the current ranges, current salaries, an SRA comparison of like size agencies and the current ranges increased on the lower and upper end by the sum of the last 2 years CPI which is 8.4%. The final recommendation proposed has been approved by the Finance Committee. **Iovinelli/LoCascio motioned** the WSSRA Board of Directors approves the proposed Full-time Staff salary ranges for 2025-2027 as reviewed and approved by the WSSRA Finance Committee. A roll call vote showed 11 yes votes and the motion was approved.
- C. **WSSRA Mini Van Replacement** WSSRA staff will be replacing the 2013 Dodge Grand Caravan this Fall. The WSSRF has agreed to purchase the replacement Mini Van with extended warranty for the Association.
- D. **WSSRA Disposal of Surplus Asset** Birko shared WSSRA is looking for authorization for the sale of the 2013 Dodge Grand Caravan Vin: 2C4RDGBG8DR623408 with 57,000 miles as required by the WSSRA Policy and park district code, 1205/8-22 as it is no longer necessary to this personal property. WSSRA will post a bid process to the partners accordingly. **Iovinelli/Sletten motioned** the WSSRA Board of Directors authorizes the sale of the 2013 Dodge Grand Caravan Vin: 2C4RDGBG8DR623408 with 57,000 miles as required by the WSSRA Policy and park district code, 1205/8-22 as it is no longer necessary for WSSRA to own this property.
- E. **No Other**

IX. Under Correspondence No Comments

X. Under Board Reports

Iovinelli reported the Park District of Forest Park "Where every day is a walk in the Park!" The softball field project is complete. The OSLAD project at Remembrance Park is 60% complete and they will have a soft opening of the playground sometime this fall. Fall Fest was last weekend and was a great success with 30 vendors and 500 guests attending. This coming weekend is their Fall Camp Out and the Pool is closed with a successful pool season. Iovinelli will be attending NRPA and recently spoke with Jeff Murphy at the Arizona State Conference. **LoCascio reported the Park District of Franklin Park** had a great summer taking over the staffing of Inclusion. They just celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the opening of the Ice Arena and had many special guests present. They are in the midst of completing a roofing project and are looking forward to the Fall session of programs and Fall Fest coming up! **Fallon reported for the Berwyn Park District's** Fall session of programs has begun and they too are submitting an OSLAD grant and a Morton Arboretum grant for trees. Fallon invited everyone to come by the Berwyn Brewfest happening this weekend where over 30 brewers will be present. **Gruber reported the Village of Elmwood Park** will be hosting their Back to School BBQ to celebrate the end of summer and head into Fall. The Summer Bocce session is coming to a close and the Fall session of Bocce immediately follows. They will be submitting an OSLAD grant for the pickleball courts, and they are getting ready for their travel Basketball season. **Brown reported for the Norridge Park District**, and all welcomed him to his new role as the Executive Director of Norridge Park District. They had their soft pool opening last Saturday and have received great reviews thanks to the work of Annemarie Flaherty and the staff and Board. Fall programs have rolled out including the dance programs. **Siska reported for the Village of Riverside** completed their final concert of season as it was rescheduled due to weather issues. They have their Touch A Truck event this week and Afterschool program enrollment is up. They are in the final phase of engagement with the Village's Master Plan and reporting to the Village Board should begin shortly. **Sletten reported for the River Forest Park District's** "Color Run" is coming up on Saturday September 21st. All are welcome and WSSRA benefits from the net proceeds for the event. They recently hosted a successful Rotary Food Truck Rally ending with a profit of \$38,000. The funds will go back to the community in Community grants given by Rotary. They are also submitting an OSLAD grant for Constitution Park. All three other construction projects resume. **Diaz reported the North Berwyn**

Park District's Annual Corrida del Mariachi 5k Run capped off at 1200 runners. Biggest number yet and on a great day with wonderful community participation. Summer programs went well and the Fall session of BASE Camp and Fall programs have started. Diaz encourage everyone to check out the new sign electronic sign at the JCV Activity Center on Harlem. Fall will be filled with activities celebrating the Hispanic Heritage month. **Stanczyk reported for the Veterans Park District** has established a new relationship with School District 87 and this summer was able to support the participants with a free breakfast and lunch throughout the summer this will continue with the Afterschool care they will be providing starting this fall. They were challenged this Fall with a Full-time preschool staff resigning just prior to the Fall session start. They have it covered with two newly hired Part time staff. They will be hosting the Fall Fest event coming up on September 28th. **Wegrecki reported for the Village of Harwood Heights** they hosted the first ever battle of the Badge, a softball game between the Police and Fire departments. The Fire department won both games. They will be hosting the Annual Car Show on September 15th and their Garage Sale on September 20 and the Annual Craft Fair on October 4th. Everyone is welcome. **Arnold reported for the Park District of Oak Park** who is currently in review of their Master Plan for Carrol & Field Recreation Centers and the Austin Gardens. They will be submitting an OSLAD grant for Longfellow Park and Rehm pool. They are currently working on a 5-year Comprehensive Plan which includes extensive Community engagement. The number one topic requested is an indoor pool which would require the local taxes to go up. They expect to go to referendum in 2026. 12 persons will be attending NRPA including 4 board members and 8 staff in hopes of clinching the Gold Medal Award. Staff will be presenting at NRPA on their Sustainability Journey. They will also be hosting their Fall Fest on September 21 at Rehm park from 10 – 2 and it is free for all! Everyone is also welcome to the engagement meeting at Field Recreation Center coming up on October 2 at 7pm. .

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

- A. **Upcoming events** WSSRA will be in attendance at many partner events coming up including the Park District of Franklin's Park Back to School event & 50th Anniversary Celebration of the Ice Arena, Enger School Open House, Veterans Park District Early Childhood Open House, North Berwyn Park District's Corrida del Mariachi Event, Berwyn Park District's Back to School Picnic, Park District of Oak Park's Fall Fest and the Monarch Festival with State Representative Abdelnasser Rashid with the Village of North Riverside as the host and the Norridge Park District's Pool Opening to name a few.
- B. **Fallin For Our Stars** WSSRF is in the final stages of planning for the upcoming Fallin For Our Stars Casino night at the Cheney Mansion in Oak Park on Friday, November 8th from 7:00 – 11:00pm. Birko reminded the board they can support this event through sponsorship and gift card donations and plan to attend the event too! See the enclosed Sponsorship and donation information.
- C. **NRPA Plans** Birko looks forward to attending the NRPA conference in Atlanta, Georgia October 8-10. Be sure to participate in the Gold Medal Awards ceremony where the Park District of Oak Park is a finalist!
- 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.
- F. **Staff Report: April Michalski, Superintendent of Recreation reported**
 1. **Programs** WSSRA participants and staff had a great time on the Wisconsin Dells overnight trip on August 26-28! Participants enjoyed water parks, mini golf, a duck tour, and shopping. Fall programs are set to begin on September 9 and run through November 9. Overall, registration is good with minimal waitlists. We are currently hiring additional staff to accommodate waitlists.
 2. **Special Olympics**
 - i. **Golf** Four athletes will represent us at the Special Olympics State Golf Competition in Decatur on September 6-7.
 - ii. **Bocce** We have 13 athletes competing in the Special Olympics Regional Bocce Tournament on September 14 at Grant Park in Northlake.
 - iii. **Volleyball** Our two volleyball teams will compete in the Special Olympics Regional Tournament on September 22 at Your High School in Elmhurst.
 - iv. **Basketball** The basketball season tips off on October 1, with 47 athletes already registered. We are anticipating having four teams this season.
 3. **Hiring Updates** WSSRA is hiring a full-time Program Manager to join our team. Our current Program Manager, Carla Slotarski, resigned from her position, and her last day with us is September 6. Carla accepted a position as Activity Director at the Libertyville Civic Center. We are also looking for seasonal part-time staff for programs and inclusion. Interested candidates can apply on our website at wssra.net.

4. **Inclusion** Our inclusion team is busy conducting participant assessment and observations. We are currently supporting 36 participants in 58 inclusive programs. For any questions regarding inclusion, contact Chris Sturm at chriss@wssra.net.

5. **Special Events**

- i. **Campfire at the Cabin** WSSRA's Annual Campfire at the Cabin event will be held at the Scout Cabin in Riverside on Friday, September 6 from 5:30-7:30pm. Families will enjoy an evening of outdoor games, pizza, smores and campfire songs.
- ii. **River Forest COLOR RUN** The River Forest Park District is hosting their second annual 1-mile COLOR RUN around Priory Park on Saturday, September 21. Participants will receive a white shirt and a goodie bag. All net proceeds benefit WSSRA. For more details and to register, visit <https://rfparks.com/Color-Run>.

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

1. **Transportation** Our Transportation Specialist, Jacob Kell, continues to gather information for our foundation for the purchase of an additional minivan. Jacob, along with other WSSRA staff has been working diligently to get all the buses serviced and several safety recalls taken care of before we started our Fall program season.
2. **Staff Manager Update** Joseph Juhasz started with WSSRA on September 26th. Joseph has a degree in Organizational Leadership with a minor in Computer Information Technology. Joseph has 7 years working as an HR Generalist and comes to us with a lot of experience using Paylocity, which has already shown himself to be very helpful.
3. **Safety** Due to staff turnover, WSSRA is updating its Safety Team. We have asked our Transportation Specialist, Jacob Kell, to step into the PDRMA Safety Team Leader role. Jacob will take over the team in the next few weeks once we have hired our new Program Manager.

4. **Other**

XII. **Closed Session None**

XIII. **Adjournment** **Sletten/LoCascio motioned** to adjourn the meeting at 4:52pm. The motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Marianne Birko, Executive Director
mb/September 10, 2024 minutes