

**West Suburban Special Recreation Association**

January 10, 2023

WSSRA

2915 Maple St, Franklin Park, IL

**MINUTES**

- I. Chairman Jackie Iovinelli called the **meeting to order** at 4:04pm those present included:

Mike Sletten, River Forest Park District

Jan Arnold Park District of Oak Park

Jackie Iovinelli, Park District of Forest Park

Dan LoCascio, Park District of Franklin Park

Ted Gruber, Elmwood Park

Ron Malchiodi, Village of Riverside

Colleen Broderick, Village of N Riverside

Cynthia Hayes, Berwyn Park District

Janet Mackin, North Berwyn Park

Annemarie Flaherty, Norridge Park District

Greg Stanczyk, Veterans Park District

Joe Zerillo, Village of HH (remote)

**Others in Attendance:**

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

- II. **Approval of Agenda** Arnold/Sletten to approve the agenda. The motion was unanimously approved.  
**Approval of Remote attendance** Joe Zerillo, Village of Harwood Heights Arnold/Sletten motioned, and it was unanimously approved.
- III. **Approval of the Consent Agenda** Arnold/Sletten motioned to approve the Consent Agenda including the December 13, 2022, Minutes, Financial Report & Disbursements for December 2023 Partner Appointments, Election of officers, 2023 Committee Appointments, 2023 Committee Tasks, Safety Committee statement and Approval of the Kaizen CPA's services. Roll call vote showed 12 yes votes, and the motion was approved
- IV. **No Public Comment**
- V. **Under the Foundation** Perez reported on behalf of the Foundation Board, The Foundation hosted their last three events with the two Holiday Concerts and the Holiday Solicitation in December. Both concerts were sold out and we are still collecting Holiday Solicitation funds. So far, we have raised \$20,000 which is an all-time high for the Holiday Solicitation! The Foundation is meeting next week to plan the 2023 budget and goals for the events of the year with an annual meeting scheduled for January 19<sup>th</sup>. They are excited to bring back the Family Bowl-a-thon in March and planning has begun for the Annual Derby Gala on Saturday, May 6 to be held at D'Agostino's in River Grove. They will also host the John Lannefeld Bocce Tournament in September, Fall in for Our Stars in early November, the Holiday Concert is set for December 8, 2023, and will close the year with Giving Tuesday and the Holiday Solicitation. The group is also focusing on recruiting some new members to support their ongoing efforts in supporting the mission of WSSRA. Thank you for your ongoing support in 2023. Warm wishes for a successful 2023!
- VII. **Under Committee Reports**  
A. **No reports**
- VIII. **Unfinished Business**  
A. **Acceptance of the 2023 Chairperson & Vice Chairperson** Sletten/Gruber motioned to approve Ron Malchiodi as the 2023 Chairperson and Jan Arnold as the 2023 Vice Chairperson. Roll call vote showed 12 yes votes, and the motion was approved  
B. **Park District of Forest Park Building & Land purchase updates** Iovinelli reported the Park District of Forest Park 2023 will be the planning year for the Harrison project. They plan to gather information from other districts who have expertise in forming partnership agreements as they begin to formulate their plans going forward.  
C. **No other**
- IX. **Under New Business:**  
A. **IAPD Membership Renewal** Birko reported that the IAPD information and training opportunities continue to be very relevant and the fact that WSSRA is no longer being charged a membership fee is a bonus. Arnold reminded folks that IAPD is a great resource, but we must make our voices known. Arnold/Iovinelli motioned to renew the IAPD membership in light of the many benefits that WSSRA receives. Motion was unanimously approved.

**B. Executive Director Goals** Birko shared she updated her 2023 goals based on the boards review feedback. Arnold asked Goal #4 be made measurable. The Board acknowledged the goals.

**C. No Other**

X. Under **Correspondence** **No Comments**

XI. Under **Board Reports:** **Arnold reported the Park District of Oak Park's** Seasonal brochure will be out January 27 and registration begins February 4. They will be going to bid shortly for the Anderson Park project using the Village funding. The project is scheduled to commence this summer. They are anxiously awaiting the OSLAD grant reports and the CRC construction project continues to be on schedule. The glass windows continue to be the delay. Day Camp registration starts soon, and they are watching closely some recent tagging that has been identified as gang related. **Hayes, the Interim Executive Director for the Berwyn Park District reported** the district closed their applications for the Executive Director search at the end of 2022. The board will be reviewing the 27 applicants and hope to have a new Executive Director by the end of February. They continue to work short staffed and are trying to fill 5 Full time positions. **Flaherty reported the Norridge Park District's** Finance Manager Jim Glaub is retiring February 24<sup>th</sup> after 26 years of service. His replacement is Gergana has been hired and will cross train with Jim for a few weeks. The pool project has added a diving well. **Sletten reported the River Forest Park District** has three board openings and three running. They are beginning the Master-Planning process with GSD and are considering starting with a community survey. They will be going out to bid for the Washington Playground in 2 weeks. **Gruber reported from the Village of Elmwood Park** basketball has started and the Indoor Golf league is going strong with 8 teams. The winter session of Bocce is up and running Monday through Friday. They will host Bocce with the Bunny in March due to last year's success with over 200 kids in attendance. **Broderick reported the Village of North Riverside** youth basketball begins Saturday and they are busy gearing up for summer and work on the upcoming special events for the year. **Stanczyk reported the Veterans Park District** basketball is kicking off and runs until the end of April. They continue to work on the rebranding of Bulger Park as a community center and are offering monthly Family Bingo nights and will also be bringing in some contractual programming with a heavy emphasis on early childhood to see what the community will respond to. They too are turning their attention to summer planning as well. **Mackin reported the North Berwyn Park District's** Maple pool demolition is almost completed, the winter brochure is up online, and they are offering family painting, and a Valentine's Day wreath making class to name a few. They are looking to change the board meeting times to accommodate the community requests. During the school year the Board meetings will begin at 6:30pm and during the summer the board meetings will begin at 5:00pm. **LoCascio reported the Park District of Franklin Park** is getting ready for winter, planning for summer, and going to bid for a window and door project for banquet hall and ice arena... **Iovinelli reported the Park District of Forest Park** is opening the splash pad in May, they recently signed a contract with Hacienda Landscaping for Popelka Park. They are currently finalizing the designs for Rieger Park of which they received an OSLAD grant for and will be going out to bid in March. They will be installing a camera system throughout the park similar to the school district and police department. The cameras will connect directly to the police department. They have three Board members running for re-election with 3 seats open. All are running unopposed. The PDOFP recently announced the 2023 Individual pool pass rates and that they are, not selling family pool passes and they are getting a lot of push back from community as a result. Finally, as you know we have struggled to hire Full-time and revamped the job posting to learn everything and received several applications. They conducted six interviews and found a candidate. Has accepted the position! **Malchiodi reported the Village of Riverside** the brochure is out basketball has started and they are busy planning for summer, requesting sponsorships and reaching out to the community to increase their facility rentals, themed parties, birthday parties etc. They will be sending out an RFP shortly for a community survey followed by a program and facility and department analysis. Hoping to get it out in early February. **Zerillo reported the Village of Harwood Heights** gave a shout out to WSSRA for their support with the Inclusion participants in the Fall session of programs. The Youth Commission also had a successful series of holiday events including the Christmas party and Singing with the Clerk! They are increasing rentals at the new Recreation facility and winter sports have begun thanks to the work on behalf of the Youth Commission.

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

- A. **Board Responsibilities and Expectations** Annually the Board of Directors and Alternates are asked to commit their support to the Association. [Attachment H/I](#) is a summary of your responsibilities to the board in this role. Please sign that you have reviewed and understand the list of Responsibilities and Expectations in this role. You are welcome to bring the signed document to the meeting or e-mail to me.
- B. **WSSRA Staff will attend the IPRA Annual Conference** Eight Full-time staff are scheduled to attend the IPRA conference on January 26-28, 2023. We are excited to return to this event in-person this year!
- C. **WSSRA will Co-Host the In-person Legislative Breakfast/Brunch on Friday, March 17, 2023, with the Park District of Forest Park.** This event is scheduled to begin at 11:00am. More information will be forthcoming on the platform to be used. A formal invite will be sent via e-mail to local Legislators & WSSRA Board Members. Please extend this invitation to your board members and RSVP your attendance to Birko.
- D. **Finance Manager Position Updates** WSSRA's Finance Manager's last day was December 28 and staff have been busy cross training all her responsibilities. We currently have no applicants after posting the position the last month with IPRA, Linked-In and sending to potential contacts. We will be reviewing other options in the next month. [Attachment J](#) is the job description. Please pass along to anyone that may be interested.
- E. **WSSRA Derby Gala 2023** Mark your calendars for Saturday, May 6, 2023, when the WSSRA/WSSRF will host the 22nd year of this very successful event. We plan to once again be at D'Agostino's in River Grove from 4:00 – 7:00pm. Mark your calendars and plan on attending!
- F. **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 2023.
- G. **Staff Report: April Michalski, Superintendent of Recreation reported**
1. **Programs** Winter registration is underway, programs begin on January 30 and run until March 25. Program registration is up compared to last year.
  2. **Hiring Updates** WSSRA is currently hiring for Winter, Spring, Summer, and Inclusion programs. Please refer all possible applicants 15 years and older to the [wssra.net](http://wssra.net)! Your support in our efforts to hire is truly appreciated!
  3. **Inclusion** We currently have 27 participants participating in 31 inclusion and aftercare programs.
  4. **Holiday Events**
    - **WSSRA Santa Express** Our Santa Express train was a great success. Participants and families were so happy to board the Metra train once again in Berwyn and head to the "North Pole" visit with Santa while each participant received a gift bag and gifts thanks to the donation from Thumbuddy Special who sponsored the event. Such a great event for our WSSRA families!
    - **Cookies with Santa** WSSRA once again had a successful collaboration with the Park District of Oak Park on December 14 to offer a sensory-friendly evening for families at the Cheney Mansion. Families enjoyed crafts, treats and a visit with Santa. All three time slots for this event sold out due to its popularity!
    - **Holiday Hullabaloo** WSSRA offered 6 days of activities during winter break. All six days successfully ran this year as both weather and illness did not cancel any events this year!
    - **Upcoming Events**
      1. **Master Chef** On January 13 we are offering a virtual cooking class. Kits will be delivered to participants and together with their families they will make pasta and their own homemade turkey meatballs!
      2. **Family Skate Night** WSSRA will host a Family Skate night at the Park District of Franklin Parks Ice Arena on Friday, February 10<sup>th</sup> from 7:00 – 8:30pm.
      3. **Recognition Banquet** WSSRA will be hosting the return of the Annual Banquet on Saturday, February 25 from 6:00 – 9:00pm at the Centre at North Park in Franklin Park.

H. **Staff Report: Annie Hart, Superintendent of Safety & Operations reported**

1. **WSSRA Marketing** WSSRA PR Coordinator, Nicole Walsh has been communicating with all agency Marketing and PR staff to help update their websites with WSSRA's updated logo and to help get the word out about our programs. Please connect with your staff and make sure they have what they need from Nicole to get your site updated as soon as possible. Nicole would like to host a lunch in the new year for all WSSRA member district PR and Marketing Staff, please encourage your staff to attend.
2. **Office** WSSRA is well into the process of changing over payrolls systems from PayCom to Paylocity. Hart and the Staff Manager have been spending a lot of time over the past couple weeks training and setting up our new system. This system will allow us to move to an electronic punch in time and attendance system for seasonal staff and inclusion aides. We did a test sample training with some staff during our Holiday Hullabaloo and will train the remaining staff during our Winter Seasonal training on January 18<sup>th</sup>. We will be doing our first payroll run on Wednesday for our first pay date scheduled January 13<sup>th</sup>.
3. **Vehicles** WSSRA is still waiting on parts for all 3 buses to replace the stolen catalytic converters. Hart has been in discussions with the local mechanic that assisted us in getting the buses working in the meantime. He is investigating a new way to secure the catalytic converter

XIII. **Adjournment** Gruber/Arnold motioned to adjourn the meeting at 5:00pm. Motion was unanimously approved

Respectfully submitted,



Marianne Birko, Executive Director

mb/ Jan 23 minutes