

West Suburban Special Recreation Association

March 10, 2020

Board of Directors

Held at: WSSRA Office

2915 Maple St, Franklin Park 60131

MINUTES

I. Chairman Mike Sletten called the **meeting to order** at 4:02pm those present included:

Mike Sletten, River Forest Park District
Jan Arnold, Park District of Oak Park remote call
Andrew Doss, Park District of Forest Park arrived
4:07

Annemarie Flaherty, Norridge Park District
Ron Malchiodi, Village of Riverside
Teresa Mrozik, Village of North Riverside
Sandy Fejt, Berwyn Park District

Joe Modrich, Park District of Franklin Park
Mark Sladek, North Berwyn Park District
Al Schmidt, Village of Elmwood Park

Others in Attendance:

WSSRA staff: April Ryan, Annie Hart, Marianne Birko

WSSRF, Beth Kaplan

Public, Andy Smolen

Not in Attendance:

Clyde Park District, Unexcused Absence

Harwood Heights, Excused Absence

- II. Flaherty/Mrozik **moved to approve the revised agenda.** The motion was unanimously approved.
A. Modrich/Mrozik motioned to approve Arnold 's participation remotely. The motion was unanimously approved.
B. No other
- III. A. Mrozik/Malchiodi **moved to approve the January 14,2020 Regular Board Meeting minutes. The motion was approved.**
B. Mrozik/Malchiodi **moved to approve the December 10, 2019.** The motion was approved.
- IV. A. Mrozik/Modrich **moved to accept the January & February 2020 Financial Report.** The motion was approved.
B. Mrozik/Arnold **moved to authorize payroll, prepaid disbursements #39146 and ending with check #39207 and authorizes payment of January & February 2020 payroll and disbursements debit charges and cash transfers totaling \$289,778.25 and authorizes payment of March 2020 disbursements #39208 and ending with check #39226 disbursements debit charges and cash transfers totaling \$23,347.49 pending the availability of funds. Roll call vote showed 10 yes votes and the move was approved.**
- V. **Public Comment –**
- VI. **Under the Foundation Report Birko reported, The Foundation Board met in January for their Annual meeting to approve the 2020 budget which includes a \$53,375 commitment to WSSRA for programs and services. The Foundation is excited to increase their support based on the success of the funds they raise. In 2019 the Foundation's exceeded their goal by \$33,030 and raised \$79,030! 2019-2020 Holiday Solicitation starts off our fundraising and this year we were successful in raising \$8,221 compared to 6200 in 2018. A great start to the New Year! The Foundation kicked off the year's events with the: The Wire Concert held on Saturday, January 18 and raised \$2,000 more dollars than last year. Tequila Tasting scheduled for March 1st cancelled due to the lack of pre-ticket sales. All sponsorships transferred their donations to the Derby Gala. WSSRF hopes to do this event in the summer months. Bowl-a-thon, which was held Saturday, March 7 from 12:30-3:00pm at Circle Bowl in Forest Park. Carol Milburn (Oak Park) and Chris Nakatsuka (Elmwood Park) chaired the event. Volunteers and WSSRA support staff**

coordinated the snack bar and assisted with the raffle. Every Bowl-a-thon participant received a free lunch and 2 games. This year's event combined our Saturday Bowling participants, WSSRA families and members of public. We had added incentives like water bottles, hats and sweatshirts for those who fundraised on our behalf. And the estimated funds raised are \$7,000 more than double past years due to a matching fund donation! **Plans are in the works for WSSRA's 2020 Annual Derby Gala event.** The Foundation will sponsor the silent auction and Derby Gala raffle. Rocio Perez Chairing the event with the Foundation. Letters have gone out to procure auction items. WSSRF welcomes donations from the WSSRA Board. Please contact Marianne at WSSRA about silent auction contributions or if you have ideas for locations that we should solicit. We want to top our \$50,000 profit of this event in 2018! Mark your calendar for September 5, 2020 and be there! **The Derby Gala raffle is all set.** The top prize is \$500 cash, second prize is \$300 cash, and third prize is \$200 cash. Everyone is encouraged to support the raffle.

Don't forget if you are purchasing anything on Amazon Smile go to [mile.amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com/mile) link and WSSRF will earn a 0.5% commission for every sale. The funds raised will support the Foundation. Go to [smile.amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com), select West Suburban Special Recreation Foundation as your charity the next time you make a purchase and WSSRF will benefit! Thank you always for your support.

VII. **Under Committee Reports**

A. **Finance Committee Report- Arnold reported the committee met on Tuesday, March 25 to review the study of Veterans Park District completed by staff. The next scheduled meeting is on March 31 at the PDOP at 1:00pm**

VIII. **Unfinished Business**

A. **Malchiodi/Mrozik motioned the WSSRA Board by roll call vote approve the continued use of accounting services provided by Russel P. Cannizzo Accounting Services/Certified Public Accountants for 2020. The motion was unanimously approved.**

IX. **Under New Business:**

A. **Andy Smolen, Knights of Columbus- Andy Smolen shared his heartfelt story of being a WSSRA parent whose daughter has used WSSRA services for the last 5 years. For the Smolen family WSSRA has been a game changer. Smolen is the District Deputy of the KOC State Council which raises over one million dollars annually in their Fall Tootsie Roll Drive. Of those funds they have given \$100,000 to Special Olympics and WSSRA has received over \$2,500 annually. Smolen would like to do more and asked for the WSSRA Partners to consider supporting this event by helping raise awareness and help secure volunteers locally. Smolen will work with Birko to get this communication out in the WSSRA communities. The event takes place September 18 & 19, 2020.**

B. **Clyde Park Districts withdrawal from WSSRA effective January 1, 2021 Mrozik/Flaherty motioned by roll call vote the WSSRA's acknowledgement the receipt of Clyde Park District's withdrawal effective January 1, 2021 per the Partnership provision in Section VIII, Article B of the WSSRA Amended & Restated Articles of Agreement approved on September 12, 2017. Per Partnership provision in Section VIII, Article B, Clyde Park District remains liable for its proportionate share of debts incurred prior to the date withdrawal is effective. This liability shall include, but is not limited to, obligations for unpaid operational expenses, long term debt, any remaining unfunded IMRF pension liability and liability for judgments against WSSRA. Modrich asked if there was anything in the bylaws that requires a partner to inform their residents first. Birko responded not at this time. Modrich noted despite staff's effort to inform this decision was made without the interest of the consumers in mind and this needs to be changed going forward. Sletten stated no matter what staff did the decision was predetermined and nothing would have changed it. The Roll call vote 9 Yes votes and Modrich was a no vote**

C. **WSSRA Partner Roles Birko reminded everyone that WSSRA is a collaborative of partners who believe in providing the best possible recreation services for your residents who have disabilities. For WSSRA to**

do this successfully we need each WSSRA Partner to be committed to being at the table to celebrate our successes, problem-solve our challenges, promote our services and do the hard work that it takes to keep WSSRA a strong and viable collaborative. The board discussed how we can prevent such an occurrence with a partner abandoning their commitment to the WSSRA and the residents with disabilities in their community.

D. Approval of Executive Directors Goals - Was deferred to next meeting

E. COVID-19 Updates- Modrich asked what others were doing to prepare for COVID-19? Modrich stated the Park District of Franklin Park staff were talking about phases of potential program cancellations based on the impact. He shared his concern that this could be BIG. Malchiodi also reported the Village of Riverside has been discussing COVID-19 at length and stated everything would be shut down if schools are closed.

F. Other

X. Under **Correspondence-** No comments

XI. Under **Board Reports –** **Modrich had no further report for the Park District of Franklin Park, Malchiodi reported the Village of Riverside** has been discussing COVID-19 at length and stated everything being shut down if schools are closed. Currently looking at their events and how to restructure if they close with COVID-19. They just completed their Spring/Summer soccer registration. **Mrozik reported the Village of North Riverside** is preparing for Robo calls and sanitizing stations. They are dependent on the Village setting the expectations. They are at the tail end of their BB season. They are finalizing their summer program guide. Camps are full with 50 on the wait list for Teen Camp. They are busy working on a solution and they have their Mother/Son dance coming up. **Schmidt reported for the Village of Elmwood Park's** Fight Night sold out and was once again a HUGE SUCCESS! Winter work is done on the pool and waiting for summer to fill. Bocce continues to be BIG and as a result they build 2 more new courts for a total of 6 courts already sold out for their upcoming season. Winter Carnival is coming this weekend and they are expecting big crowds. **Flaherty reported for the Norridge Park District** just filled their Aquatics Coordinator position. They have made other changes to the Organizational structure which resulted in eliminating the Administrative Services Manager position and they now have a Full-time Bookkeeper and Marketing and Public Relations position. **Doss reported for the Park District of Forest Park** who just hired a new Marketing Manager. The Roos membership is up to 5,300 as they celebrate their 2-year Anniversary. Softball is starting in June and they are using EPACT for their Day Camp paperwork processing system. **Sladek reported the North Berwyn** Park District just celebrated Dr. Seuss's Birthday with their annual bash. Over 50 kids attended. Spring Break Camp is coming up and on April 11th they will host their Annual Egg Hunt and Easter Basket delivery. They are also busy preparing for the Best of Berwyn recognizing the local youth and all their accomplishments. **Fejt reported for the Berwyn Park District** as she is 5.5 weeks into her new role as the Executive Director. Spring soccer registration is ending. They have several grant projects that have come through which includes new turf at the soccer field in July. They hired a new Recreation Manager and are preparing for their 100th Anniversary of Proksa Park. **Arnold reported the Park District of Oak Park's** Ice Show is this weekend, they are commencing the two park projects at Wenonah and Randolph and they are busy working on the design of the New Recreation Center. **Sletten reported the River Forest Park District** just opened their new website and are pleased with the results. They are continuing with their discussions for a new collaborative Recreation Center project which is estimated at 45-50 million dollars.

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

- A. **2019 Audit Update** the WSSRA Audit field work was completed in January & February by Lauterbach & Amen. The Audit draft should arrive by March 15 for review. A final report is pending the IMRF information being sent. Lauterbach and Amen will present the final audit at the May 12, 2020 Board meeting.
- B. **Legislative Breakfast Report** WSSRA Co-hosted this year's Legislative Breakfast with the Park District of Forest Park on Tuesday, February 11. We had 31 guests in attendance including Senate President Don Harmon and Representative Lilly, Representatives Welch, Ford, Willis and Stephens cancelled at the last minute. All shared an

optimistic view of the activities moving forward in Springfield but saw the budget deficit as obstacle Number 1! A special thanks to Jackie Iovinelli and the Park District of Forest Park's staff for co-hosting the event and putting on the beautiful brunch spread for all to enjoy.

- C. **Staff attends IPRA Annual Conference** WSSRA Full Time & Regular Part Time staff attended the IPRA Annual conference in January. Included in the correspondence file are staffs' session summaries of conference sessions they attended.
1. **Grant Update** WSSRA has submitted grant proposals for the following grants. Updates will be given as we hear about the results. OPRFCF Future Philanthropist \$3,618 grant for "Homemade in No Time" promoting healthy cooking and eating program for WSSRA's summer day camp.
 2. **Berwyn 708 Mental Health Board** programming grant for \$7,182 for a Sibshops Re-boot program. A mental health program for siblings of kids with disabilities. WSSRA is requesting support for the programs second as an opportunity to expand the current Sibshops program to meet 2 times per month due to the program's current success.
 3. **Berwyn CDBG Fund awarded** WSSRA \$12,000 in scholarship funds for seasonal programs and summer day camp for 2019 – 2020. The 2020-2021 CDBG grant will be submitted shortly.
 4. **Thumbuddy Special Scholarship fund** Birko will represent WSSRA at Thumbuddy Specials upcoming fundraiser and receive scholarship dollars for summer day camp.
 5. **WSSRA is submitting a request to Byline Bank** for a one-time Grant WSSRA for scholarship funding for day camp.
- D. **Derby Gala 2020** Will take on a new look at our new location; **The Riverside Golf Club**. We are excited about the addition of Steering Committee supporters Representatives, Lisa Hernandez, Chris Welch, and Bradley Stephens. Every event is dependent on our partners support. It would be great for each of our Partners to have a presence at the event. Mark your calendars for a New Date for Saturday September 5, 2020 from 2:00 – 6:00pm. Other exciting additions to the event include blackjack and roulette tables as well as guests will be able to download an app and continue to enjoy the all the Kentucky Derby fanfare in this beautiful setting. Guests will also enjoy complimentary valet parking. Please extend the invite to past and current board members and staff. **Help us fill the room, sponsor a table, donate and/or buy an Ad.** Promote your agencies facilities and programs through this opportunity. Thank you in advance for your support.
- E. **Annual Visits Birko** has begun her 2020 Annual visits presenting highlights of 2019. Presentations will begin with the Park District of Oak Park on March 5. Book your date now for her visit this year.
- G. **Staff Report: Prepared by April Ryan, Superintendent of Recreation**
1. **Programs** Winter/Spring Registration is underway. Programs begin January 27th. This upcoming season we are excited to offer a new Child-Caregiver Playgroup, Fun Fitness program and Stress Management class.
 2. **Special Olympics** WSSRA's had 3 basketball teams compete in the regional basketball tournament in late January, our bobcats blue and gold teams will be advancing to the state tournament at Illinois State University on March 14-15. We have 13 participants competing in the Special Olympics aquatics competition on March 5, all gold medal winners will advance to the State Summer Games in June.
 3. **Winter Programs** WSSRA cancelled our Child-Caregiver Playgroup for the winter season due to low enrollment, we are hoping to recruit more participants in order to run it in the spring. Our Sibshops program continues to be successful and have received great feedback from staff, participants and families. WSSRA submitted a grant proposal to the Berwyn 708 Mental Health Board to continue Sibshops Reboot and to offer the program twice a month.
 4. **OPRFCF Future Philanthropist** WSSRA submitted a grant proposal to the Foundation to fund "Homemade in No Time" for Day Camp. The goal of the grant is to expose campers to new foods and a variety of small kitchen appliances. We will know by April if we are selected for funding.
 5. **Imaginarium** WSSRA's Imaginarium sensory room officially opened on February 16. Our Sunday Funday program is off to a good start, we currently have 8 participants registered. We are waiting on one more piece of equipment to complete the room and will do a grand opening in late March or early April.
 6. **Day Camp** We currently have 82 participants enrolled in Day Camp & Community Cruisers, the lottery deadline is Friday, March 27th. Program Manager, Carlos Marroquin, has several presentations set-up over the next couple of months to recruit for camp.

7. **Hiring** Our Staff Manager, Carla Pakenas, is currently hiring Day Camp and Program Recreation Leaders and Inclusion Aides. Anyone interested can apply on our website at wssra.net.

8. **Special Events**

- i. WSSRA hosted our annual Recognition Banquet on Saturday, February 1st at the Center at North Park in Franklin Park, we had 125 staff, participants and family members in attendance.
- ii. WSSRF's Bowl-A-Thon event will be held at Circle Lanes in Forest Park on Saturday, March 7th.
- iii. WSSRA is hosting our annual Flap Jack Bunny Hop on April 4 at the Village of North Riverside.
- iv. On April 11 we are collaborating with the Park District of Oak Park for their Sensory Sensitive Sweets and Tea with the Bunny Event at the Cheney Mansion.

H. **Staff Report: Prepared by Annie Hart, Superintendent of Safety and Operations.**

1. **Inclusion** We currently are serving 44 participants inclusively in 41 programs this Winter season. 25 Inclusion Aides are scheduled. Inclusion Manager, Chris Sturm, and Recreation Specialist, Mia Leyba will continue to help support Inclusion Aides and participants this Winter while visiting program sites. Chris has also received a few requests for Spring Break Camps and is working to fill those staffing needs as well.
2. **SAFETY** Hart attended the Safety Program Administration for Agency Leadership Course through PDRMA on February 5th and been in talks to create a presentation with Tim from PDRMA on Driving and Backing which will be presented to WSSRA staff and drivers in May.
3. **OTHER** Our part-time front office receptionist resigned and her last day was February 28th. Two WSSRA staff attended the Employee Benefits Conference put on by Robbins Schwartz.

I. **No Other**

XIII. Schmidt/Mrozik **moved to adjourn** the meeting at 5:29pm. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Marianne Birko
Executive Director
mb/ March minutes