

**West Suburban Special Recreation Association**

March 9, 2021

Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors

Zoom meeting hosted at WSSRA Office

2915 Maple St, Franklin Park 60131

**MINUTES**

I. Chairman Jackie Iovinelli called the **meeting to order** at 4:01pm those present included:

Mike Sletten, River Forest Park District  
Kassie Porreca, Jan Arnold, PD of Oak Park  
Jackie Iovinelli, Park District of Forest Park  
Joe Modrich, PD of Franklin Park arrived 4:04  
Al Schmidt, Village of Elmwood Park  
Carlene Greifelt, Veterans Park District

Ron Malchiodi, Village of Riverside  
Teresa Mrozik, Village of North Riverside  
Sandy Fejt, Berwyn Park District  
AnneMarie Flaherty, Norridge Park District  
Mark Sladek, North Berwyn PD arrived 4:04

**Others in Attendance:**

WSSRA staff: April Ryan, Annie Hart, Marianne Birko

**Not in Attendance:**

Village of Harwood Heights, Excused Absence

II. Porreca/Fejt **moved to approve the agenda.** The motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

III. A. Fejt/Mrozik **moved to approve the January 12, 2021 Regular Board Meeting minutes. The motion was approved by roll call vote.**

B. Approval of Closed session minutes for January 12, 2021 were delayed until May 11, 2021 meeting.

IV. A. Fejt/Porreca **moved to accept the January & February 2021 Financial Report.** The motion was approved by roll call vote.

B. Schmidt/Sletten **moved to authorize payroll, the board, by roll call vote, authorizes payroll, prepaid disbursements #39810 and ending with check #39850 and authorizes payment of January & February 2021 payroll and disbursements debit charges and cash transfers totaling \$184,090.78 and authorizes payment of March 2021 disbursements #39851 and ending with check #39858 disbursements debit charges and cash transfers totaling \$15,133.29 pending the availability of funds. Roll call vote showed 11 yes votes and the motion was approved.**

V. **Public Comment** –None

VI. **Under the Foundation Report Nakatsuka reported,**

**This year the WSSRF is currently focusing on Four upcoming events:**

**Event 1** The “**Luck of the Irish**” Activity kits are currently being sold along with the “Pot of Gold” Reverse Raffle tickets sold at \$25@ or 5 for \$100. Top six winners get prizes and the top Winner Splitting the Pot. Tickets & “**Luck of the Irish**” kits are being sold on the website, wssra.net. Do not wait as they are going fast! All are invited to join in the culminating event of activities and dance on Sunday, March 14 from 4:00 – 5:00pm on Zoom.

**Event 2** The Foundation and WSSRA are busy getting ready for this year’s Virtual Derby Gala. It will feature special presentations, Cup & Ad Sponsorships, Cash Raffle, and the Silent Auction. The Foundation is inviting you to support the event in whatever way that you can by donating items to the raffle and participating as a Sponsor. Your support as always is greatly appreciated.

**Event 3** Planning is in the works for an in-person Bocce Tournament to be held at the Village of Elmwood Park’s. WE are very excited to be working with them on this First time ever offered event. More information to come soon.

**Event 4** We are very optimistic in hoping to bring back the in-person “Fallin For Our Stars” Casino Night at the Cheney Mansion. This event is tentatively scheduled for Friday, October 29<sup>th</sup>. It will be a Spooktacular event! So, mark your calendars! The Foundation Board of Directors thanks for your continued support.

VII. **Under Committee Reports**

- A. **Policy Committee** Malchiodi reported the Policy Committee met on Tuesday, January 19 at 10:00 via Zoom to continue discussions of defining the use of the SRA Levy and Maximum Allowable Contribution procedures. The Committee also met on February 16, 2021 to review and approve the updates to the Board Policy Manual to be reviewed later in the meeting.
- B. **No Other**

VIII. **Unfinished Business**

- A. **Acceptance of Additional Partner Appointments** (action)  
Veterans Park District has requested to change their Alternate Representative to the WSSRA Board of Directors to Greg Stanczyk, Assistant Director of Recreation for the period from January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2021. **Greifelt/Fejt motioned to approve the appointment of Greg Stanczyk as the Alternative Board Representative for the Veterans Park District. The roll call vote Showed 11 yes votes and the motion was approved.**
- A. **No Other**

IX. **Under New Business:**

- A. **Board Policy Updates for Review**  
The WSSRA Board Policy Committee headed by Malchiodi recommends the updates as reviewed by the Policy Committee. Birko reviewed the WSSRA Board Policy updates with the Board and the Board was asked to come prepared to approve those updates at the May 11, 2021 Board meeting.
- B. **Award Day Camp Bid for Transportation**  
Hart reported after requesting bids from three carriers and posting notice in the 2/11 Chicago Tribune, WSSRA received one bid for day camp transportation for the 2021, 2022 and 2023 Summer Day Camps. Hart clarified this is the fourth time we have gone out to bid for three years. She noted RichLee's bid reflects a 3% increase for busses, 3% increase for Field Trips and 9% increase in aides. The increase in aides is due directly to the minimum wage increases. WSSRA has worked with RichLee for many years and is comfortable with their current bid as a result. **Schmidt/Fejt motioned to authorize staff to accept the bid from RichLee Vans for Summer Day Camp transportation for 2021, 2022 & 2023 as the bid indicates. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote 11 yes votes and 0 no votes.**
- C. **No Other**

X. **Under Correspondence-** No comments

- XI. **Under Board Reports –Sletten reported the River Forest Park District's** Summer Day Camp guide is out and they are getting a good response so far. They are hosting a variety of Easter Bunny and Egg treasure hunt events. They continue to work on their Platform Tennis project. The Township Community Center project is officially taken off the table. **Schmidt reported the Village of Elmwood Park** are hoping to approve a 2% raise for all employees at the end of April. The CRC continues to grow in popularity with the golf simulators in place. Their recent Bocce Tournament hosting 76 teams was a huge success. The Gymnastics program has picked up in popularity with over 144 gymnasts registered. They will also be hosting indoor bags tournaments at the CRC and they plan to fill the pool by the end of April. It's a busy place. **Flaherty reported the Norridge Park District** is working on spring and summer activities. The park is PACKED with all ages enjoying the park! They love to see so many people enjoying the outdoors. They continue to be challenged by the youth (middle school / early high school) with over 50-60 on bikes and many with very poor behavior. They too to have the pool open. Summer Camp registration is open. They recently hired an Early Care / Preschool Director for our ECPS Academy. The position had been open over the past year and are excited for Mindy Cisneros to join the team and look forward to filling our rooms! The Park Board recently voted in January to place a referendum question on the April 6, 2021 ballot asking residents for \$3.5M to pay a portion of the \$6.5M pool replacement project. This is to replace our 60-year-old pool which is mechanically and structurally failing (average pool life span is 25-30 year). Staff will be busy

the next 5 weeks on community education and engagement. [www.norridgepool.org](http://www.norridgepool.org). **Sladek reported the North Berwyn Park District** hosted their Dr. Seuss Birthday Bash with a safe drive through opportunity and had great participation. They will celebrate the upcoming Easter holiday with an April 3 parade and a drive through extravaganza. They are also working on plans for a community Flea market. They will report on some property updates at the next meeting. **Arnold reported the Park District of Oak Park's** Winter program session is going well. Their Spring and summer day camp brochure is out, and registration begins this Saturday, March 13. They have opened their Basketball courts and Skateboard park which are open daily from 8:00 – 7:00pm. They started something new this winter called a "Sled Library" for donated sleds at Barrie sledding hill which was successful. This summer they plan to open both pools, Ridgeland with a 100-person capacity and Rehm site with a 150-person capacity for 90-minute time slots. They did cancel their egg hunts but are offering families the alternative to have a personalized visit by the Bunny and egg drop off to create your own hunt. They are looking forward to a more normal summer session. The Community Mental Health Board signed their agreement for the Community Recreation Center. So, the plans for the CRC continue to move forward **Fejt reported the Berwyn Park District** cancelled their Easter Egg hunt but are offering an alternative with a visit from the Bunny. They are currently showcasing the Shamrock Scavenger hunt. Spring registration for the sports programs has picked up and the brochure will be ready in April. They also picked up the \$5,000 in COVID relief funds from Cook County. **Iovinelli reported the Park District of Forest Park** is where every day is a holiday! They are having their Easter Egg Hunt and limited the groups to 50 registered persons. The Roos Recreation Center is open with safety protocols in place. Remote learning support continues. The skate park renovation construction plans will begin in spring and the Spray ground plans are in the works for tentative construction starting in fall. Forest Parks agreement with the Village for maintaining the pocket parks is set for June 1. Their Administrative office revitalization will take place in March and April and they are amid the Registration software transition too. Lots going on and they too received the \$5,000 Cook County COVID relief funds. **Mrozik reported the Village of North Riverside** is having a great response with registrations coming in daily. Many programs are so popular they are opening another section of the program. Day camp registration has started with 50 – 75% of the slots already filled. The seniors are enjoying a meal pick-up opportunities. They are also busy preparing for a variety of holiday activities for St Patrick's Day and Easter. They are delighted to see the 80 inter-squad basketball participants so happy and enjoying themselves. **Malchiodi reported for the Village of Riverside's** also snuck in a Basketball scrimmage season through School District 96 with great participation. The Quincy building project is done, and staff are moved in. They too are doing an Easter Egg drop off event and an in-person event outdoors. **Greifelt reported the Veterans Park District** is currently working on their program guide. They are hosting Four Easter Egg events and a Garage sale/Flea market. They are hosting a Senior corned beef luncheon for 40 persons and the seniors are so excited to be together. They too are planning to open their pool this summer! **Modrich reported the Park District of Franklin Park's** brochure is out, the pool will be open, and they will host day camps at multiple sites this summer. The Ice Arena is open, and programs are running. They recently hosted an Ice Show too! They too received the \$5,000 Cook County COVID relief funds. Lastly, they are busy preparing for their three parks projects for Timber, Hawthorne, and Little Pearl parks.

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

- A. **Staff attends IPRA Annual Conference** Four Full-time staff attended the IPRA Virtual conference on January 28-30, 2021. These staff need the CEU's to maintain certifications. All felt while the virtual was not ideal there were some great presentations, and all were able to attend/view more sessions due to the extended time that the information was available. A special congratulations to Iovinelli for her presentation on "The NEW Culture is Change!"
- B. **WSSRA Hosted a Successful Virtual Legislative Breakfast on February 22** The breakfast was attended by six Legislators and 37 others. Thanks to all who were able to attend. A summary of the meeting and a copy of the IAPD Legislative platform was share.
- C. **WSSRA 2020 Audit Update** Staff have been working with Lauterbach and Amen staff since the end of January to complete the 2020 Audit. The preliminary audit report is expected by the end of the month and the final will be shared at the May 11 board meeting by a representative from Lauterbach and Amen.
- D. **WSSRA 2020 Annual Report Presentations Begin** WSSRA staff have been preparing the 2020 Annual Snapshot to be shared with the Partners. Our first presentation will be with the Park District of Oak Park. Please schedule a

time for Birko to present either virtually or in person.

E. **WSSRA Derby Gala 2021** Mark your calendars for **Saturday, May 1, 2021** when the WSSRA/WSSRF will host the 20<sup>th</sup> year of this very successful event. Due to the current CDC guidelines the event will once again be virtual. This year we are welcoming Mayor Serpico and continuing with all of our other Steering Committee members including House Speaker Emanuel Walsh. The solicitation letter will go out next week so anything you can do to support this event both in Sponsorships and donations will be greatly appreciated.

F. **Staff Report April Ryan, Superintendent of Recreation Reported**

1. **Programs** Winter programs began on February 1 and run until March 27. In our current season, we are serving 58 individuals in our in-person programs and 49 participants in our virtual programs. Spring registration is underway, and program begin on April 5-May 22. Our spring brochure will remain digital, we are printing a limited number of brochures for Veterans Park District families and facilities.
2. **Day Camp** WSSRA's "**Out of This World**" Day Camp registration begins on March 8<sup>th</sup>. Registration will be taken on a first come, first served basis. In-person day camp will be broken into two sessions running June 21-August 6. At this time, we have four facilities confirmed, Pershing School in Berwyn, Hester or Passow School in Franklin Park, the Park District of Forest Park, and Kahl Park in Northlake. WSSRA is also offering a virtual day camp option that will run 3 days per week for 2 hours per day. The dates will align with our in-person day camp.
3. **Veteran's Park District** Staff have been busy connecting with school districts to inform them of our new partnership with VPD. WSSRA presented to School District 89 professionals on February 11 and staff are very excited for collaboration opportunities.
4. **Special Olympics** Two athletes competed in the Special Olympics Basketball Skills on February 18, one athlete received 1<sup>st</sup> place and the other received 3<sup>rd</sup> place. Both athletes were thrilled to compete!
5. **Imaginarium Sensory Room** WSSRA's currently has 8 families participating in private play sessions. The Imaginarium Sensory Room is open 3 days per week, families must preregister for their 45-minute play session in advance. Play sessions are \$5 per individual visit, or \$10 per family visit. WSSRA continues to advertise through the brochure, the website and through all social media as well as through our partner districts.
6. **Special Events**
  - i. **Virtual Valentine's Day Dance** On Saturday, February 13 WSSRA hosted a virtual Valentine's Day Dance, the event was a success, and everyone had a great time.
  - ii. **Family Skate Night** A special thank you to the Park District of Oak Park for hosting WSSRA for our Family Skate Night on February 19. The 28 participants and family member in attendance really enjoyed the opportunity.
  - iii. **Hippity Hoppity Hunt** This family friendly event will be held on two separate dates (one north and one south location) with multiple time slots. Families will enjoy a socially distanced visit with the bunny, an egg hunt, sensory egg coloring, and more.
    1. **March 20** The Village of North Riverside
    2. **March 27** Bulger Park Community Center, Northlake
  - iv. **Master Chef** Due to popular demand, WSSRA is offering another virtual cooking class on April 2. Participants and families will make homemade pancakes, sausage, fresh fruit, and breakfast muffins.
  - v. **Birthday Visit** Starting in the spring, participants can invite WSSRA staff to their home for a socially distanced outdoor birthday visit. The visit will include a photo opportunity, a birthday gift bag, and a staff sing-along.

F. **Staff Report: Annie Hart, Superintendent of Safety and Operations Reported**

1. **Inclusion** WSSRA is currently supporting 9 participants in 3 programs. Chris and Mia have been busy doing observations. Our Inclusion Team is currently getting ready for summer trainings and presentations at member districts. If you have not already scheduled our Team to present at your day camp trainings, feel free to reach out to Chris and get one scheduled.

2. **WSSRA Vehicle Vandalized** We recently discovered that the catalytic converter had been stolen from one of the Buses in our parking lot. The bus is currently at the mechanic and scheduled to have its catalytic converter replaced this week. We filed a police report with the Village of Franklin Park as well as a claim with PDRMA. We are in discussions to determine if there are any other options to keep our vehicles more secure.
3. **New Registration System** We have continued the process of training for our new registration system, SmartRec by Amilia. Staff seem very positive about the transition and we plan to be go live by May 1<sup>st</sup>.
4. **Summer Day Camp Transportation** As reported earlier in the meeting WSSRA is accepting the bid from RichLee Vans.

H. **No Other**

XIII. **Closed Session** No Closed Session

XIV. **Possible Action following closed session** No Action

XV. **Adjournment** Schmidt/Fejt moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:13pm. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Marianne Birko  
Executive Director  
mb/ March21 minutes