

**West Suburban Special Recreation Association**

**March 12, 2024**

**WSSRA**

**2915 Maple St, Franklin Park, IL**

**MINUTES**

**I. Chairperson Ron Malchiodi called the meeting to order at 4:08pm those present included:**

Jake Worley-Hood, Park District of Oak Park  
Jackie Iovinelli, Park District of Forest Park (Left meeting at 3:50pm)  
Dan LoCascio, Park District of Franklin Park  
Ron Malchiodi, Village of Riverside  
Colleen Broderick, Village of North Riverside

Ted Gruber, Village of Elmwood Park  
Anna Wegrecki, Village of Harwood Heights  
Michael Sletten, River Forest Park District  
Cathy Fallon, Berwyn Park District  
Kelly Diaz, North Berwyn Park District

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

**Not in Attendance:** Norridge Park District EA, Veterans Park District EA

**Approval of Remote Attendees meeting Qualifying Event: NA**

- II. Approval of Agenda Iovinelli/Gruber motioned to approve the agenda. The motion was unanimously approved.**
- III. Approval of the Consent Agenda Iovinelli/Fallon motioned to approve the Consent Agenda including the January 9, 2024, Minutes, December corrected Financial Report, January and February Financial reports and Pre-paid Disbursements for January, February & March 2024. Roll call vote showed 9 yes votes and Broderick Abstaining, and the motion was approved.**

**IV. No Public Comment**

- V. Under the Foundation Birko reported for the Foundation is currently preparing to host the: 2024 Family Bowl-a-thon taking place on Saturday, April 20, 2024. It will be held at the Circle Lanes in Forest Park from 1:45 – 3:30 coinciding with the WSSRA Saturday Bowling programs. The Foundation is also preparing for the 2024 Derby Gala planned for Saturday, May 4, 2024. It will take place at D'Agostino's in River Grove from 4 – 7:00pm. You can participate in a variety of ways. Be an Ad Sponsor, donate items to the Silent Auction such as Birthday parties, Pool & Ice-skating rink day passes, Bocce or Golf time or any other ideas that you might have. All donations are welcome. We would love to see you all there. Tickets and sponsorships and raffle tickets are available on the Derby Gala website. Go to wssra.net and click on the Derby Gala link. Thank you for being a part of it! **WSSRA hiring assistance** The Foundation is committed to supporting WSSRA in their search for staff for programs and summer day camp. 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 thanks you for your continued support throughout the year!****

**VI. Under Committee Reports**

- A. Policy Committee Chairperson LoCascio thanked the Committee for their work to present the updated Personnel Policy Manual. He reported the Committee met February 15<sup>th</sup> to continue the review and complete the updates of the WSSRA Personnel Policy Manual to be reviewed later in the meeting.**

**B. No Other**

**VII. Unfinished Bus Acceptance of the 2024 Chairperson & Vice Chairperson**

- A. Park District of Forest Park Building Updates Iovinelli reported the Park District of Forest Park and WSSRA attended the February 8<sup>th</sup> Forest Park School Board meeting and presented the request again as did the Village of Forest Park. The Forest Park School Board held a vote on whether to Lease the building at the conclusion of the meeting and the board vote unanimously agreed to lease the building with no other decisions being made. Iovinelli shared there was a recent newspaper article that stated the Villages recreation program was moving to the building this summer. No further information was shared with the Park District of Forest Park Staff. Iovinelli stated the Park District of Forest Park board is continuing to meet with architects for building design ideas.**

**B. No Other**

**VIII. Under New Business**

- A. WSSRA Personnel Policy Manual Updates (information)  
Birko shared the WSSRA Policy Committee has reviewed and updated the WSSRA Personnel Policy Manual using**

the PDRMA manual as a template. She reviewed the highlights and the board commented on

- 4.13 Sletten recommended putting a monetary cap on the Employee Fee Reduction policy.
- Diaz suggested it say Part time vs. Regular vs. Part-time.
- Broderick suggested update wording for Employee Incentive Program for employees 1 – 3 years.
- Correct Year 4 to say 3 days vs. 2.
- Sletten suggested updating Work related recognition leave immediate family member gift more vague and correct Departure as Voluntary departure.

**B. Transportation Bid Discussion & Recommendation** Hart reported that staff submitted and posted the summer day camp transportation bid as required with one response from First Student. Their bid came in double the previous year's bids and staff recommended not accepting the bid and recommended the following:

1. Re-bid the process
  2. Change the bid process to 1-year with an option to renew for year 2 and 3.
  3. Re-evaluate summer transportation to determine other ways to cut expenses
  4. Request a bid from previous bidders
  5. Request receipt of the new bid process by April 30<sup>th</sup>.
  6. Allow staff to approve the bid and move forward with the Boards formal approval at the May 14<sup>th</sup> Board meeting
- Sletten/Fallon motioned the WSSRA Board of Directors accepts the updated Transportation bid process as proposed Roll call vote showed 10 yes votes and the motion was approved.**

**C. Approval of WSSRA Shares Billing To Be Sent In An Electronic Format**

**Birko reported due to the challenges of the WSSRA Shares being lost and not arriving in the US Mail staff are proposing all WSSRA Quarterly Shares billings be sent via email. Payment can continue to be paid by check or a secure ACH account can be set up with partners.**

**Fallon/Sletten motioned the WSSRA Board of Directors approves by roll call vote WSSRA's ability to send the Quarterly Shares billing via E-mail. Roll call vote showed 9 yes votes and the motion was approved.**

**D. No Other**

**IX. Under Correspondence No Comments**

**X. Under Board Reports** **Wegrecki reported the Village of Harwood Heights** the Youth Commission Easter Event is March 23rd for all ages up to Age 10 from 1:00 - 3:00 pm. The Event includes an Easter Basket parade and contest, Egg Hunt, Coloring Contest and of course a visit from the Easter Bunny. They will be hosting Kindness Day April 20th For the community to participate in. The Village will be obtaining 25 trees this year from Morton Arboretum. Planning ahead the Village Fest and Carnival will be held August 1-4. Four days of summer fun! The Recreation Center will be hosting two Family Movie Nights Friday, March 15th 6:00 pm "Migration" and Friday, April 12th 6:00 pm "Wish"  
**Fallon reported the Berwyn Park District** is getting 60 trees from the Morton Arboretum at the end of April. They are continuing to work on their Master Plan and have a lot of fun events coming up including their egg hunt, family dance and puzzle palooza events. **Sletten reported the River Forest Park District** is working on the Master Plan, collaborating with Dominican to build a synthetic turf field that will be home to the Dominican's Women's Softball team, and they are also hosting the easter event! **LoCascio reported the Park District of Franklin Park** continues to work on their Capital projects replacing windows and doors at the Centre at North Park and the Ice Arena. They also just replaced the carpeting in the Banquet Hall at North Park. They are also replacing insulation in bathrooms at the ice arena and getting a new roof. They are hosting a public meeting to acquire land and they are working to update the website. They just held a successful Daddy Daughter Dance in February, and their basketball leagues are going well. They too are getting ready for Easter activities. **Broderick reported for the Village of North Riverside** and shared their just hosted their Mom and son bash and coming up they have the Bunny Bingo, spring break camps and in May will host their Touch a Truck, and are getting ready for the youth soccer league, summer camp and summer programming. **Diaz reported for the North Berwyn Park District** hosted a Mario Party this past weekend. It was a sold-out event with photo booths, games- a lot of fun had by all. They are getting ready for Easter with a parade and egg hunt. They will also be hosting a fashion show in recognition of Earth Day, all clothes are made from recycled materials. They also received funds for trees and will finally be moving to online registration. They will also be putting a lift for accessibility to the second floor at the JVC Center. **Worley-Hood**

**reported the Park District of Oak Park** has reached 20% of community are Members of the CRC. They are members of the walking track, afterschool program, and/or fitness center. The Summer day camp registration was a success this year and they have started a capital campaign to redo the entrance to the Oak Park Conservatory. **Gruber reported the Village of Elmwood Park** is holding a spring carnival event on March 30 which will include a bounce house and carnival games. They will also host “Bocce with the Bunny” on March 29, and they just finished in-house basketball league, and their camp registration opens April 1. **Malchiodi reported the Village of Riverside** will have their second expansion to add persons from the wait list for summer day camp and they are in the Survey Phase of the Master Plan which includes the Program and Facility analysis.

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

- A. **WSSRA Co-Hosted a Successful Legislative Brunch** A Big Thank you to the Park District of Forest Park for once again Co-hosting the Legislative Brunch on Friday February 23rd. It was a great success thanks to the participation of all of you. WE had over 50 guests present and 4 Legislators & Staff including Deputy Majority Leader Elizabeth Hernandez, Assistant Majority Leader, Representative Camille Lilly, Representative LaShawn Ford and Staff for Representative Norma Hernandez. Unfortunately, Speaker Welch had to call in sick and was not able to attend. Peter Murphy, Jason Anselment, and Mitchell Remmert from IAPD updated us on the forthcoming platform and other Legislative issues impacting all of us. Guests had the opportunity to have 1 on 1 conversations with those present and a delightful lunch was enjoyed by all. Thanks for being a part of this important event!
- B. **WSSRA Derby Gala 2024** Mark your calendars for Saturday, May 4, 2024, when the WSSRA/WSSRF will host the 22nd year of this very successful event. The event will be at D’Agostino’s in River Grove from 4:00 – 7:00pm. Solicitation letters have gone out and the invite will go out this week. I hope each partner will support the auction by donating items such as pool passes, birthday parties or other items. In addition it would be great to have 100% of our partners present at the event. If you cannot attend, please consider sending a staff to represent your community! Thanks in advance for your support.
- C. **Partner Annual Presentations** Birko continues to present to partners and most recently to the Berwyn Park District, the Village of Riverside and coming up the Park District of Oak Park. Let me know a date that works for you!
- D. **Paid Leave For All Workers Updates** Birko continues to advocate for SRA’s being exempt but has not heard anything more from Legislators of any Amendments being considered. I have had Zoom meetings with Representative Ford, and Lilly and have a few more coming up.
- E. **Staff Report: April Michalski, Superintendent of Recreation reported**
  - 1. **Winter Programs** Winter programs wrap up on March 23 and spring program registration is underway. As mentioned, we have made several changes to our program offerings this season to help manage waitlists and we are happy to report the changes have worked out well. We were able to accommodate
  - 2. **Day Camp** We held our day camp lottery and accepted 82 participants into camp, 25 participants are currently on the waitlist. The waitlist will be reviewed weekly, and we will continue to add participants as staff are hired. We are still working on securing facility space for camps. So far, we have been approved to use space at the Park District of Forest Park, Cheney Mansion in Oak Park, Pershing school in Berwyn, Forest Park Middle School, Elmwood Elementary School in Elmwood Park, and Kahl Park in Northlake.
  - 3. **Community Cruisers Adult Day Program** We held our lottery for Community Cruisers for the summer season. Due to increased interest in the program, we are adding an additional group this summer. We currently accepted 21 participants into the program.
  - 4. **Special Olympics** WSSRA has 11 athletes competing in the Special Olympics Regional Swim Meet on March 21 at Metea Valley High School, Naperville and 11 athletes competing in the Special Olympics Regional Powerlifting Tournament on March 23-24 at Marmion Academy High School in Aurora. Gold medal winners will advance to the state summer games in June.
  - 5. **Hiring Updates** Summer hiring has begun! WSSRA staff are working hard to recruit applicants. Staff are attending several upcoming job and volunteer fairs. On March 7 staff are attending a Best Buddies meeting and Job Fair at OPRF High School to promote volunteer and job opportunities with WSSRA. Staff are also attending East Leyden’s Career Fair on March 20. We are returning to the group interview process for Day Camp and are offering 5 days of interviews over spring break on 3/23, 3/28 and 3/29, 4/3 and 4/5 in hopes to get more folks in and hired earlier.
  - 6. **Inclusion** Spring Inclusion requests are coming in, we currently have notifications for 24 participants. As you plan for summer staff training, please consider having our Inclusion Team come present. Trainings can be scheduled with our Inclusion Manager, Chris Sturm, at [chriss@wssra.net](mailto:chriss@wssra.net).

7. **Upcoming Events**

**Flap Jack Bunny Hop** WSSRA is hosting our annual pancake breakfast on Saturday, March 16 at the Park District of Forest Park. All WSSRA Families will enjoy a visit with the bunny, crafts, games, an egg hunt, and a pancake breakfast.

**Sensory Sensitive Treats with the Bunny** The Park District of Oak Park and WSSRA are offering a sensory friendly spring event at the Cheney Mansion on Saturday, March 23. Families will enjoy crafts, treats, and a visit with the bunny!

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

1. **Payroll Taxes Update** Our payroll company, Paylocity, filed a 940 on behalf of WSSRA with a Q4 FUTA variance of \$22,497.39. (Note this did not come up last year as 2023 was the first full year with Paylocity) Unfortunately, WSSRA was not correctly set up in Paylocity as FUTA exempt during the implementation. WSSRA immediately contacted Paylocity to address the issue. After several weeks of research on our end and back and forth with Paylocity the situation has been corrected and moving forward we are set at FUTA exempt within Paylocity. All FUTA wage liabilities have been removed and we expect to receive a credit within the next 45-30 days. Paylocity has waived all fees that would have been incurred for amending all 941s from 2023. You will see in the January financial report the Q4 variance listed under 5130 and as the credit comes in that balance will go down to \$0.
2. **Vehicles** Staff are busy refining details for summer, including vehicles and drivers, as the number of requests for transportation continue to increase.

H. **No Other**

XII. **Closed Session None**

XIII. **Adjournment Sletten/LoCascio motioned to adjourn the meeting at 5:25pm. Motion was unanimously approved**

Respectfully submitted,



Marianne Birko, Executive Director  
mb/ March 24 minutes