

West Suburban Special Recreation Association

May 10, 2022

Located at the Studio at Hett Park

3600 19th Street

Berwyn, Illinois

MINUTES

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

Mike Sletten, River Forest Park District arrived 4:09
Sandy Lentz, 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

Greg Stanczyk, Veterans Park District
Teresa Mrozik, Village of North Riverside
Sandy Fejt, Berwyn Park District remote
Janet Mackin, North Berwyn Park District
Ron Malchiodi, Village of Riverside

Others in Attendance:

WSSRA staff: April Ryan, Annie Hart, Marianne Birko, Mark & Carol Sladek & Al Schmidt

Not in Attendance:

Village of Harwood Heights EA
Norridge Park District EA

- II. Mroziki/Fejt **motioned to approve the agenda. The motion was unanimously approved.**

- III. **Approval of Minutes** Malchiodi/Mrozik **motioned to approve the March 15, 2022, Minutes. The motion was approved**

- IV. A. **Mrozik/Gruber moved to accept the March & April 2022 Financial Report. The motion was approved by roll call vote.**

B. **Lentz/Malchiodi moved to authorize payroll, The board, by roll call vote, authorizes payroll, prepaid disbursements #40149 and ending with check #40184 and authorizes payment of March & April 2022 payroll and disbursements debit charges and cash transfers totaling \$278,046.62 and authorizes payment of May 2022 to be paid disbursements #40185 and ending with check #40199 disbursements debit charges and cash transfers totaling \$30,946.33 pending the availability of funds. Roll call vote showed eight yes votes and the motion was approved by roll call vote.**

- V. **Public Comment** –None

- VI. **Under the Foundation Birko reported, The WSSRF is currently focusing on Four upcoming events:**

Event 1: The Foundation and WSSRA completed a successful In-person Derby Gala which took place on Saturday, May 7, 2022, at D'Agostino's Pizza & Pub in River Grove. It featured special presentations, Cup & Ad Sponsorships, Cash Raffle, and the Silent Auction. Thank you all for your support and participation. The numbers are looking like the best year yet!

Event 2: Planning is in the works for an in-person Bocce Tournament to be held On September 10th at the Village of Elmwood Park's. WE are very excited to be collaborating with them again this year. This event has been named in memory of John Lannefeld, former WSSRA Board member and great supporter of everything WSSRA.

Event 3: The "Halloween Fun" Activity kits will be sold along with the " the Reverse Raffle tickets sold where the Top six winners get prizes. All are being sold on the website starting in late August. wssra.net. They will be available after the Derby Gala!

Event 4: **WSSRF will welcome** back the in-person "Fallin for Our Stars" Casino Night at the Cheney Mansion on Friday October 14, 2022. So, mark your calendars!

- VII. **Under Committee Reports**

A. **No Report**

VIII. **Unfinished Business**

A. Acceptance of updated 2022 Partner Appointment for North Berwyn Park District & the Park District of Franklin Park Fejt/Lentz motioned to have the Board of Directors Accepts the North Berwyn Park District New Board Representative Janet Mackin and Alternate Representative Joe Vallez and The Park District of Franklin Park's new Board Representative Dan LoCascio and Alternate Representative Liz Visteen. Roll call vote showed unanimous approval.

B. Park District of Forest Park Building & Land purchase Update

Iovinelli updated the WSSRA Board of Directors on the Park District of Forest Park's pending land purchase agreement closing on Tuesday, May 17th. Next steps include demolition, property development planning and fundraising.

IX. **Under New Business:**

A. 2021 WSSRA Audit presentation by Lauterbach & Amen

Courtney Clement from Lauterbach & Amen provided an overview of the audit and was available to answer any questions. She reported the firm has found WSSRA staff to be attentive and gave a positive report on WSSRA's current financial standing. She stated that WSSRA had a "Clean" audit report which is the highest ranking you can receive. There were no questions asked. 2021 Audit will be approved at the July 12th board meeting.

B. Consent Agenda Approval

Sletten has requested the WSSRA Board consider a Consent Agenda for future board meetings to increase the efficiency of the meetings. **Sletten/Lentz motioned to approve the Consent Agenda for future meetings. By roll call vote the motion passed.**

C. Resolution #2022-02 Acknowledgement of Joe Modrich's Retirement Birko shared the Resolution thanking Joe for his 22 years supporting WSSRA on the board. **Mrozik/Malchiodi motioned to approve. The Board approved the motion**

D. Resolution #2022-03 Acknowledgement of Mark Sladek's Representation on the WSSRA Board. Birko shared the Resolution thanking Mark Sladek for his 20 years of service on the WSSRA board. **Mackin/Mrozik motioned to approve. The Board approved the motion.**

E. Resolution #2022-04 Acknowledgement of Al Schmidt's Representation on the WSSRA Board. Birko shared the Resolution thanking Al Schmidt for his 8 years of service on the WSSRA board. **Gruber/Fejt motioned to approve. The Board approved the motion.**

F. No Other

X. **Under Correspondence-** Birko shared the file with no comments

XI. **Under Board Reports – Gruber reported the Village of Elmwood Park's** summer bocce leagues are booming with 110 teams outdoors and thirty-two teams indoors. They are busy preparing for summer dealing with the annual pool issues. **Mrozik reported the Village of North Riverside's** new Athletic Coordinator started a very successful spring soccer league and is adding more for the summer. They will be saying goodbye to their retiring Pre-school Coordinator and will be replacing her with a Coordinator who will oversee pre-school and day camp. Staff are also involved in the budget process as well. **Malchiodi reported the Village of Riverside** is hosting an in-person Open House of their new Recreation Center on May 15 and will have bags, games, obstacle courses and more for the public to enjoy. They will also be hosting a first-time ever summer concert series as well. Summer camp registration is going well with a wait list as they look for additional space to expand through the schools. They will also be

hosting a Fishing Derby on June 4th. **Sletten reported the River Forest Park District's** summer camps are full and
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are preparing for their tennis court re-build starting in the fall. They are also preparing for the upcoming Memorial Day Parade! **Lentz/Arnold reported for the Park District of Oak Park** is focused on the CRC project which continues to be on schedule despite the rain they are pouring concrete. Camps are full and have waitlists, until they find qualified staff. The Village of Oak Park is holding a 4th of July parade and the fireworks are still to be determined. PDOP and OPRFHS are working on a joint project to bring a track on site. They have water in the Ridgeland Commons pool for the lifeguard swim tests tomorrow, Rehm is getting filled but they are still about 20 lifeguards short so they have made adjustments in the pool schedule as a result. The Pleasant Home geothermal project is completed and they have recently hired a new Early Childhood Director and are still looking to hire a Data Analyst/Administrative Assistant. Arnold shared others should investigate the ComEd outdoor lighting deals which can save you a great deal of money. Reach out if you have questions. **Stanczyk reported the Veterans Park District** hired a new Recreation Coordinator who will start the beginning of June. They have a delayed start pool opening for June 6th and they are also still looking for staff. They are also in the middle of two park projects in River Grove and Melrose Park. **LoCascio reported the Park District of Franklin Park** said farewell to Joe Modrich who retired April 30 from being the Director for the past 22 years and worked 38 years at the Park District. They are currently transitioning staff into their new roles with several staff on leave. Their pool is filled and have completed several park projects with openings this week. They are enjoying the 10,000 tulips that were planted last year! **Fejt reported the Berwyn Park District's** summer camps are moving along. The new manager of athletics is bringing in new and things including a soccer camp this summer. They too will have a summer concert series in the park. The superintendent of parks is on FMLA, so they are all picking up the slack in the parks as there is lots to do this time of year. **Mackin reported the North Berwyn Park District** is busy preparing for the "Best of Berwyn" Citizen Awareness program. Local Eighth grade students who want to participate go through an extensive application and interview process and are highlighted at the culmination dinner and ceremony where these amazing youth are recognized for their good work in the community of Berwyn. There is great community involvement in Best of Berwyn including many local businesses and administration. NBPD will be hosting "Art in the Park" on June 11, and they are also going to referendum to determine whether to raise taxes to keep the VFW building to renovate or sell and replace the Maple Park pool with a splash pad. The vote will take place on June 28th. **Iovinelli reported the Park District of Forest Park "Where Every day is a Walk in the Park"** noted the splash pad construction is behind schedule and will not open until late July. They will be moving forward with the renovations of two of the four pocket parks and will be closing on the Harrison property on May 17th. They will then begin the demolition, planning and rebuilding process. They will be hosting their annual July 4th celebrations and fireworks. They will round off the summer with their annual No Glove Nationals Softball Tournament where they are looking to secure over 100 volunteers. Lastly on May 1st they restructured all their Full-time staff positions to streamline responsibilities and supervision. As a result, they will be hiring a Recreation Supervisor and a Maintenance position.

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

- A. **WSSRA Derby Gala 2022** The Horses were lined up for the 2022 Derby Gala which was held this past, Saturday, May 7, 2022, from 4:00 – 7:00. The new venue D'Agostino's Pizza & Pub in River Grove was a hit and all who attended had a great time. A special thanks to all for your participation and support. Look forward to representation at the event by all WSSRA partners next year.
- B. **Senate Bill 3972, Career Connect Program Passed** through both the Senate and House and is on the Governor's desk for his signature. This bill is an opportunity for "the State Board of Education and the Department of Human Services to jointly establish and administer the Community Career Connections Program. This program will provide high schools the ability to establish a credited program for applicants

Professional certification; DSP certification".

- C. **Harris Fawell Presentation** Birko took the lead to write the Resolution that honors the work of Harris Fawell. She collected all the resolutions passed by the State, IPRA, ITRS and many of the SRA's and compiled them into a hardcover book that she presented to the Fawell Family on behalf of the SRA's at a dedication ceremony that took place on Thursday, April 28, 2022, in Naperville. The family was touched by everyone's acknowledgements.
- D. **Staff Report: April Michalski reported**
1. **Program Highlight** WSSRA offered a new program in the winter, Dobbins Theater. We had eight participants registered for the program, the group developed and preformed a short musical production based on the movie Grease. The program was a tremendous success, and the participants did an amazing job. The production can be viewed on our YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8BNbuWGV6uQ>.
 2. **Spring and Summer Programs** Spring programs run until May 14, we have approximately 200 participants and family members participating in Spring programs and special events. Summer registration opens on May 9 and program are set to begin on June 6. We are excited to bring back overnight trips in August.
 3. **Day Camp** WSSRA's Dino-mite day camp registration underway, we currently have 80 participants registered for day camp. There are two camp sessions running June 13-July 29, we expect to have five campsites this summer.
 4. **Special Olympics** WSSRA had nine athletes compete in the Special Olympics Spring Games on April 30 and May 1, three athletes received gold medals and will advance to the state games. We have 14 participants competing in the Special Olympics State Summer Games on June 17-18 at Illinois State University. Athletes will compete in bocce, swim, track and field and powerlifting.
 5. **Staff Updates** WSSRA hired two new full-time staff in April. We hired **Alex Reynaga** as a Recreation Specialist. Alex is overseeing Adult and Social Club programming. Alex completed his education at St. Ambrose University, he has a Bachelors in Sports Management and a Master's in Organizational Leadership. Alex has worked in the Therapeutic Recreation realm part-time for 7 years. **Maria Losselyoung** accepted the Staff Manager position and will be overseeing hiring, onboarding, training, recruitment and retention of seasonal part-time staff and volunteers. Maria completed her undergraduate at Western Illinois University in Elementary Education and later went on to Dominican University to complete her Master's in Special Education. Maria has spent the last 20 years teaching in regular and special education classrooms. Maria has worked part-time with WSSRA in many different capacities for about 6 years.
 6. **Seasonal Staff Hiring** WSSRA is aggressively seeking to hire seasonal staff for all summer positions, if you know anyone who might be interested, please direct them to apply on our website at www.wssra.net.
 7. **Inclusion** We currently have 37 participants participating in 41 inclusion and aftercare programs. Please reach out to Chris Sturm at chriss@wssra.net if you would like WSSRA to implement a training for staff during your summer staff training.
 8. **Imaginarium Sensory Room** WSSRA is offering a new Sensory Seekers program in our Imaginarium Sensory Room. The program is targeted for special education classrooms within our partner communities. Visits are one hour; 30 minutes will be spent in the Imaginarium and 30

minutes will be spent completing a sensory art or science project. For more information contact Bethany Pastrana at bethanyp@wssra.net.

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9. Special Events

- **Bunny Bonanza** WSSRA is hosting a Spring family event on April 2 at North Riverside Recreation Center. Participant and will enjoy games, crafts, face painting and a visit with the bunny.
- **Sensory Sensitive Treats with the Bunny** WSSRA is collaborating with the Park District of Oak Park on April 3 for another spring family event. Participants will enjoy crafts, treats and a visit with the Bunny.

G. Staff Report: Annie Hart, reported

1. **Transportation** We currently have 41 participants signed up for Day Camp transportation which is higher than last year. We will continue to work with RichLee this summer as we accepted their bid last year for 3 years. We are still waiting for a string on better weather to move forward with wrapping the three newer vehicles. Also, we currently still requiring all to wear masks while on our buses.
2. **Office** WSSRA has hired a Front Office Assistant scheduled to start mid-May. Jenna has worked with WSSRA as both a Recreation Leader and an Inclusion Aide out in the communities over the past several years and is familiar with some of our participants and families. Jenna will work Monday – Fridays in the afternoons and be available to help out extra during busy times.

H. No Other

XIII. Adjournment Sletten/Malchiodi moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:05pm. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Marianne Birko, Executive Director
mb/ May 10,22 minutes