

## West Suburban Special Recreation Association

October 3, 2023

WSSRA

2915 Maple St, Franklin Park, IL

### MINUTES

I. Chairperson Ron Malchiodi called the **meeting to order** at 4:02pm those present included:

Jan Arnold, Park District of Oak Park **remote**

Jackie Iovinelli, Park District of Forest Park

Dan LoCascio, Park District of Franklin Park

Ron Malchiodi, Village of Riverside

Anna Wegrecki, Village of Harwood Heights 4:10

Colleen Broderick, Village of N Riverside

Karen Stille, River Forest Park District

Ted Gruber, Village of Elmwood Park

Greg Stanczyk, Veterans Park District

Kelly Diaz, North Berwyn Park District 4:15

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

**Excused Absence:** Berwyn Park District

II. **Approval of Agenda Iovinelli/Gruber to approve the agenda as corrected. The motion was unanimously approved.**

a. **Approval of Arnold attending remotely, Iovinelli/Gruber. The motion was unanimously approved.**

b. **Approval of Karen Stille as RFPD Alternate Representative for this meeting Iovinelli/Gruber. The motion was unanimously approved.**

III. **Approval of the Consent Agenda Gruber/Iovinelli motioned to approve the Consent Agenda including the September 12, 2023, Minutes, September Financial Report, and Disbursements for September 2023. Roll call vote showed 9 yes votes, and the motion was approved**

IV. **No Public Comment**

V. **Under the Foundation Birko reported on behalf of the Foundation Board, and stated the Foundation is preparing for the Annual Fall in For Our Stars Casino night event on Friday, November 10<sup>th</sup>. It will be held at the Cheney Mansion in Oak Park. We are busy securing raffle prizes, gift cards or certificates valued at \$25 or more and sponsorships. Please consider supporting us in some way and joining us for the event. It is a great night out for some gambling fun for prizes. There will also be live entertainment and a LIVE AUCTION. So don't waste a moment and get your tickets now! Go to wssra.net! Hope to see you there!**

WSSRF will close the year with the Holiday Concert, which is set for Friday, December 8, 2023, held at the Trailside Forest Preserve Pavilion, Giving Tuesday, and the Holiday Solicitation.

The group continues to focus on recruiting new members and helping WSSRA recruit staff for seasonal programs!

As always thank you for your continued support of their ongoing efforts in supporting the WSSRA mission.

VI. **Under Committee Reports**

A. **Birko reported the WSSRA Finance Committee** headed by Chairperson Arnold headed by Chairperson Arnold reviewed and accepted the proposed 2024 WSSRA Budget at the September 19, 2023, meeting. Details will be shared later in the agenda.

B. **Flaherty reported the Policy Committee** met September 28<sup>th</sup> to revisit the Board Policy manual and continue the review and updates of the WSSRA Personnel Policy Manual.

VII. **Unfinished Business**

A. **Park District of Forest Park Building Updates** Iovinelli shared the Forest Park School District #91 are having a Community Harvest Forum this evening. All Forest Park community members were invited to share their voice and vision of the Grant White School. Iovinelli stated the Park District board and staff would not be present as they did not want to impede or influence the voice of the people. She stated the Park District is prepared to move on to plan B if they are not included in the plan by the School District.

B. **Approval of the 2024 WSSRA Partner Shares** Birko shared the WSSRA Finance committee reviewed and Recommends a 4% increase in the 2024 Partner Shares to meet the demand for increased costs in providing services **Iovinelli/Gruber motioned to approve the 2024 Partner Shares pending the addition of 2022 EAV's. A roll call vote had 11 Yes votes and 0 No votes. The motion passed unanimously.**

C. **Approval of the WSSRA Board Policy Manual Updates** Flaherty shared the Committee revisited the SRA Levy Policy and made one change to page 7. Broderick still believes the language of this SRA Levy policy is still too limiting. "Birko stated the current policy is not meant to be limiting but to serve as a reminder of the partners responsibility of how the funds should be

used. Birko also stated that ultimately the responsibility of how the funds are used lies solely with the partner and their accountability to the tax payers.” **Arnold/Iovinelli motioned to approve the updated Board Policy Manual as presented A roll call vote had 10 Yes votes and Broderick voting No. The motion passed.**

- D. Approval of Mini-Van Bid** Hart shared based on Board approval Staff went to bid to lease a Honda Odyssey Mini-Van as the replacement vehicle. Two bids were opened according to plan on Thursday, September 28<sup>th</sup> from McGrath Honda of St. Charles, and Honda on Grand in Elmhurst. Hart shared the bids were \$216 apart in total cost and has chosen the Elmhurst location as they have the vehicle on the lot ready for delivery and the cost savings of being more local for problem-solving should there be any mechanical issues. **Arnold/Iovinelli motioned the Board of Directors approve the Honda Odyssey 3-year lease agreement with Elmhurst dealership for approximately \$4,536 per year with a \$10,000 down payment. The roll call vote passed unanimously with 11 Yes votes.**

C. No Other

**VIII. Under New Business:**

**A. Presentation of the 2024 Proposed Budget and Budget Narrative Review**

Birko presented the 2024 budget & budget Narrative as recommended by the Finance Committee. Included in this discussion was the proposed 3.5% Merit for FT & RPT staff. The combined merit average between the partners & SRA’s 3.66%. There were no questions. Birko asked the board to be prepared to vote on the budget at the November 14<sup>th</sup> board meeting.

**B. No Other**

**IX. Under Correspondence No Comments**

- X. Under Board Reports:** **Wegrecki reported the Village of Harwood Heights** is hiring two New Police Officers. They are hosting a Flu Shots & Open House Drive-thru Friday, Oct 6<sup>th</sup> from 1:00-7:00pm. & Saturday, October 7<sup>th</sup> from Noon-3:00pm. The Open House includes many equipment demonstrations, therapy dogs, photo booth, food & refreshments and much more. The Senior Assistance Center will host their annual Fall Festival - Sunday, October 15<sup>th</sup> at the Village Hall Recreation Center from Noon - 3:00 pm. Tickets are \$35 and includes food and beverages. There's also Bingo, Football Squares and Raffle Prizes. All things Halloween is coming starting with the Youth Commission Halloween Party on Saturday, October 28<sup>th</sup> from 1:00pm - 3:00pm. Activities will include coloring & costume contest, and other fun programs. In addition they will host a local home decorating contest as well. Judging by the Village Trustees will take place on Monday, October 30 when gift certificates to our local restaurants will be awarded. The VHH Trick or Treat Hours is on Tuesday, October 31<sup>st</sup> from 3:00 pm - 8:00 pm. **Arnold reported the Park District of Oak Park** had a great fall fest last weekend. Arnold invited anyone interested in volunteering for the upcoming Frank Lloyd Wright race on Sunday, October 15 there are shift openings from 6:00-10:30am! PDOP recently hosted a celebration event at the CRC with Senate President Harmon, Representative La Shawn Ford, and Representative Camille Lily as a thank you for their funding support. PDOP is a NRPA Gold Medal finalist and hopes to bring home the GOLD form NRPA National Conference in Dallas, Texas. Three staff and three board members are attending. Lastly it was great seeing WSSRA’s Boxability event in action at the CRC last week! **Broderick reported the Village of North Riverside’s** building is currently being taken over by theatre group; North Riverside Players as they present their show Spamalot. They will be hosting The Great Pumpkin event on October 24 and hosting their 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala is on Friday, October 20 at the Riverside Golf Club and Turkey Bingo on November 17<sup>th</sup>. They look forward to having WSSRA present with a group and close the season with Breakfast with Santa event on December 10. **Stille reported the River Forest Park District** just hosted a successful Inaugural “Color Run” to benefit WSSRA and replace the former ‘Makin Tracks event. They have lots of ideas to grow it going forward. They too are hosting a large Halloween event on Friday, October 6, the Halloween Hoot N’ Howl event will include live music, inflatables, hayrides, pumpkin decorating and more and they will also be hosting the Jigsaw Puzzle competition on October 20. All things playgrounds is happening in River Forest as they wrap up the Washington Park Playground which is expected to open soon. Stille is especially impressed with the communication board is a great addition along with many other exciting features the community will enjoy. **Flaherty reported the Norridge Park District** is also getting ready for their Fall events. The focus currently is on the demolition of the pool. Soon to follow is the re-building of their New Aquatics Center. They are currently looking at re-organizing their Finance Department since the 27-year Finance Employee recently retired. **LoCascio reported the Park District of Franklin Park** held their Annual Fall Fest and parade this past Sunday and had a great turnout. They are currently working on a 2 -5-year Capitol project plan for the parks. LoCascio shared he recently had a discussion with Mayor Guerin from River Grove and shared he expressed interest in pursuing a partnership with WSSRA. **Malchiodi reported the Village of Riverside** is getting ready to host their Fall events including the Drive Thru Haunted House on

October 21, the Tower Lighting, the Costume Parade and the Trunk or Treat event on October 18. They are inching forward with the Disc Golf project as the disc golf baskets have been purchased. They are currently working on the placement with the residents. **Gruber reported for the Village of Elmwood Park** and shared their Sip & Stroll event on September 9 was a great success with over 500 persons in attendance. They just held a successful Get Fit fair on September 29, and they will be hosting their annual Halloween Party on October 31<sup>st</sup>. They are currently gearing up for Basketball season which starts soon. **Iovinelli reported the Park District of Forest Park** had a successful campout event, they recently hosted a Coed Softball Tournament and will be hosting their Trunk or Treat event on Saturday, October 28<sup>th</sup>. Work has begun on Reiger Park, and they are beginning the planning for the Remembrance Park Project. Iovinelli and 3 Board members will be attending NRPA, and their Youth Soccer Coach is getting the "Best of the Best Sportsmanship Award" as well as Roy Sansone is receiving the 20-year Board membership award at the Best of the Best IAPD Gala. Congratulations Roy! **Stanczyk reported the Veterans Park District** just had their Autumn Fest on September 30 with over 2000 in attendance where they gave away 600 pumpkins. Coming up for their "Funtober Events" they will be hosting the Haunt on Hirsch Block Party on October 20 at Bulger Park, Family Pumpkin Carving on October 27<sup>th</sup>. They are currently gearing up for winter/spring programming and the preparation of the program guide content. Their targeted Early Childhood programs are filling up fast with 8 -10 participants. The Peewee playtime program has helped with the enrollment. Registration has started for Youth Basketball league and looks like another busy season! **Diaz reported for North Berwyn Park District** will also be recognizing Mark Sladek for his long-term commitment as a Board member with the 25-year IAPD Board membership Award at the Best of the Best IAPD Gala. Congratulations Mark! NBPD just hosted the Hispanic Heritage Month event on September 23 which featured music, dancing, food, and vendors and was held at the at the North Berwyn Park District. Coming up they will host a Pokémon event on October 7 and all things Halloween with Movies in the Park featuring "ET" on October 20, Halloween House Decorating Contest on October 26, Spooky Stories in the Park on October 27<sup>th</sup> and Trunk or Treat on October 28<sup>th</sup>. Staff are also busy gathering information from residents on what pool options to consider while they plan for the green space at . Cost will be a huge consideration.

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

- A. **WSSRA Quarterly Board Training Success** Birko presented her fourth and final topic on "WSSRA's Share Formula, History and budget Planning process" on September 27, 2023, and it was attended by 7 partners and staff. Based on the feedback shared, we all learned something new about the WSSRA Partner Shares and the budget planning process.
- B. **Partner Annual Presentations** Birko is scheduling Annual presentations to meet with your boards and share the Annual report and WSSRA updates. Birko will be presenting to the Park District of Forest Park's Board on Thursday, October 19<sup>th</sup>. Call or email Birko with dates and times that work for you in 2023.
- C. **Attend the WSSRF "Fallin For Our Stars Event"** Birko invites all to support the WSSRF FFOS Casino night on Friday, November 10<sup>th</sup> from 7:00 until 11:00pm at the PDOP's Cheney Mansion. Guests will enjoy an evening of Casino gaming, food, drink, raffle, and outstanding LIVE Auction items to bid on. Not able to come then consider a donation or sponsorship. Participation by each of the WSSRA Partners is critical to this event's success. For more
- D. **WSSRA Attends Partner Events** In August & September WSSRA supported many partner events including the information go the [www.wssra.net](http://www.wssra.net) North Berwyn Park District's Corrida del Mariachi 5kRun/Walk, the Berwyn Park District Back to School Picnic, the Riverside Final Concert, the North Riverside 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary parade, and Chili Cook off, the River Forest Color Run, the Opportunity Knocks Softball Tournament in Forest Park and the WSSRF Bocci Tournament at the Village of Elmwood Park's CRC. At each one of these events WSSRA staff shared information about programs with consumers and recruited staff. Thank you for the opportunity to be included in these important community events.
- E. **Staff Report: April Michalski, Superintendent of Recreation reported**
  1. **Programs** The start of our fall season is going well. This month our school-aged participants are visiting Brookfield Zoo and Goebbert's Farm. Our adult group enjoyed a trip to the Morton Arboretum and are going to Windy Acres Farm in Geneva on October 13 for their fall festival. We have many great trips planned for our teen and adult social club groups this season, they will see a Red Stars soccer game, visit Sonny Acres farm, attend a football game at North Central College, and enjoy an evening at Dave and Busters. We are working on accommodating our waitlists. Our Food Critics program is very popular this season, we are adding three additional Food Critic program dates to accommodate the waitlist.
  2. **Special Olympics**
    - i. **Softball-** Our Bobcats Gold Softball team took first place in the Special Olympics state softball tournament on September 9 in Springfield.

- ii. **Bocce-** WSSRA had 11 athletes compete in the Special Olympics Regional Bocce Tournament on September 16 at Grant Park in Northlake, two athletes won a gold medal and are advancing to the state summer games in June.
  - iii. **Floor Hockey-** WSSRA had 12 athletes compete in the Special Olympics Regional Floor Hockey Skills Competition on September 17, five athletes won a gold medal and are advancing to the state competition at Northeastern University on November 18.
  - iv. **Volleyball-** Our Special Olympics volleyball teams are wrapping up their season. Both teams are competing in the Special Olympics Regional Volleyball Tournament on October 1 at York High School in Elmhurst.
3. **Hiring Updates** Our Staff Manager is continuing to hire for the fall season, participants will be added off waitlists as staff are hired. We are orienting five new staff members on Thursday, September 28. Staff are attending Job fairs at Morton College on October 11 and a job fair at Mother McAuley High School on October 24.
4. **Inclusion** We are currently serving 36 participants in 56 inclusive programs. Please continue to send Chris Sturm inclusion notifications as you receive registrations at [chriss@wssra.net](mailto:chriss@wssra.net).
5. **Upcoming Events**
- i. **Boxability International Inc. Workshop** WSSRA hosted a boxing workshop on Thursday, September 21, we had a great turnout of 32 participants and family members. Participants were joined by Boxability Founders Brian Roman and Coach Dino Spencer. During the hands-on workshop, participants learned and practiced the fundamentals of boxing. Thank you to the Park District of Oak Park for hosting us!
  - ii. **OK Classic** WSSRA Bobcats Softball players took on the Opportunity Knocks Warriors in a friendly game of softball at their annual tournament on September 23. Unfortunately, the WSSRA Bobcats lost this year, but had a great time playing!
  - iii. **Sensory Sensitive Boo Bash-** WSSRA is collaborating with the Park District of Oak Park to offer a sensory-sensitive family Halloween party at the Cheney Mansion on October 22. Families will enjoy Halloween activities and a photo opportunity with the Great Pumpkin.
  - iv. **Trunk or Treat Events-** WSSRA is participating in three Trunk or Treat Events: The Village of Riverside on October 18, The Park District of Oak Park on October 27, and Northlake Public Library on October 28.
- F. **Staff Report: Prepared by Annie Hart, Superintendent of Business**
1. **Safety** Carla Slotarski has taken over management of our Safety Committee or Safety Team as we now call it. She has been working with me to manage meetings and manage Incident/Accident Reports. Carla and I are preparing for the Slips Trips and Falls Self-Assessment of the WSSRA Building to complete the next stage of the RMR.
  2. **Payroll System** WSSRA's Staff Manager, Maria Losselyoung, and I are attending annual Paylocity Conference, Oct. 3 – 5. We continue to learn more about the system and how to engage our employees more through the peer-to-peer recognition programs offered. We are excited to learn of some updates to the system as well as the updated app.
- G. **Other**
- XII. **Adjournment** Gruber/lovinelli motioned to adjourn the meeting at 5:14pm. Motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Marianne Birko, Executive Director  
mb/ October 23 minutes