

BOARD MINUTES

June 21, 2021

The regular monthly Board Meeting of the Board of Commissioners was called to order at 7:08 pm on June 21, 2021, at the Cynthia Neal Center, 8047 W. 91ST Place, Hickory Hills, Illinois.

The following commissioners were present: Kosnick, Morgan, Peterson. Absent: Zalas

Also present were Jennifer Fullerton, Executive Director, Jim Murphy, Maintenance Manager, Angel Sanchez, Recreation Manager and Tammy Muth, Business Manager.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Morgan moved, seconded by Commissioner Kosnick, to approve minutes of May 17, 2021.

Ayes: Kosnick, Morgan, Peterson. Motion approved.

Commissioner Kosnick moved, seconded by Commissioner Morgan, to approve minutes of June 1, 2021, Special Meeting. Ayes: Kosnick, Morgan, Peterson. Motion approved.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Commissioner Kosnick and Commissioner Morgan received a certificate from the Cook County Election for their 4-year terms. Commissioners received an updated staff phone list.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jack Sullivan sent a thank you card for the funeral flowers for JoCarol Sullivan (former commissioner). Also, there was a tree purchased from the funeral home and an email was sent that said the tree was planted in the Wisconsin's Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest due to destroying 300,000 acres of forest in the 2019 100-mile hour storm.

MAINTENANCE REPORT

Mr. Murphy presented the maintenance report, and it was placed on file. The splash pad opened June 7. There has been issues with the pad not starting up and was due to a software upgrade. Hacienda completed most of the landscaping around the Cynthia Neal Center. They are waiting for the rest of the plants to complete the job. The lift station for Krueger Park's hallway bathrooms was clogged with debris (facemasks, hand towels, tampon). The cost to repair was \$435. Director Fullerton said the garage was without power for a few hours today and it also included the Pepsi machine at the skate park and KM tennis courts. We received many comments from the splash pad participants that they can use the CN family changing bathroom instead of a portable toilet.

RECREATION REPORT

Mr. Sanchez presented the recreation report, and it was placed on file. For the senior luncheon, we will offer two luncheons in the fall. Luncheons with entertainment usually have a loss. To not have a loss for every luncheon, we would like to have an entertainer at every other luncheon. (At the end of the board meeting once staff was gone) Commissioner Kosnick asked if we could continue having entertainment for all senior luncheons. Director Fullerton said that is ok if the entire board is ok with the loss which is approximately \$400 to \$500 per luncheon. Commissioner Morgan and Peterson agreed. The first two camp sessions are filled, which is 131 children in all our camps. The school district approached us to use the KP parking lot with using 10 spots for teachers to park all day during the school year. We have 78 spots including handicapped and we fill our

parking lot frequently so we don't recommend this. We are working on the fall brochure, and we must keep in mind that minimum wage is going to \$12 on January 1, 2022. All the programs will increase approximately \$1 per program. Director Fullerton said the carnival is coming up August 26 to 29 and went over mega pass details. Commissioner Peterson asked if it was more difficult to hire staff for camp. Mr. Sanchez said it was harder because we didn't receive applications from college students. We received applications from a lot of high school students, and they are not as experienced which means more training. We kept increasing our capacity for camp as staff was hired. Director Fullerton said we have at least eight new employees that have never had a job. Many people are on unemployment because it pays better than working. We hired two 16-year-olds; one in maintenance and one in camp, which usually has a requirement to be 17 years old. Most of the splash pad staff are 16 years old. We have hired approximately over 24 new people so far this summer. It definitely has picked up with camp and registration for the programs for the summer. The \$11 is not cutting it and when it goes to \$12, all the employees making more than that also need to go up \$1 per hour. A wage of \$15 for full-time is average pay these days and everyone wants to make \$19 and \$20 starting pay and they will leave for that pay. Commissioner Morgan said one of the splash pad employees complimented the training by Ms. Muth and was very enthused about her job.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Ms. Muth presented the administrative report, and it was placed on file. Based on the preschool registration, we will have one teacher working a full day. The maximum will be 20 to 24 children based on the group. The dance recital was at Burbank Park District and went fine. The show was delayed due to letting the older girls have longer breaks.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Commissioner Morgan moved, seconded by Commissioner Kosnick, to approve Claim Ordinance 791. Ayes: Kosnick, Morgan, Peterson. Motion approved. The Invoice/Memo report was included in the board packet for a further explanation of the check register. Commissioner Peterson made note of the Investment Report of May 31, 2021, which includes the US Treasury statement. Director Fullerton said \$100,000 was invested in US Treasuries.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Playground Mulch Approval:

Commissioner Kosnick moved, seconded by Commissioner Morgan, for \$5,512.50 to purchase playground mulch from Cedar Valley for seven parks at 25 yards each. Ayes: Kosnick, Morgan, Peterson. Motion approved.

Fitness Center Air Conditioning Aeon Unit Repair:

The air conditioning went out in the Fitness Center on June 2 and is fixed as of today. Doornbos said it was a "surge." This was submitted to PDRMA for an insurance claim who hired Travelers since the claim is over \$10,000. We rented two air conditioning units for \$507 per week and we put our large fan in there that we use for concerts. Costs are up to \$14,000 as of today. Commissioners previously asked how much it would cost if we purchased a new HVAC unit. Doornbos sent a price which would be \$64,738 for a new Aeon unit. It had surge protection, but it failed. This repaired unit will have new surge protection installed. Commissioner Kosnick asked why is it a custom built unit. Mr. Murphy said it is an architect and engineer that designed it for

the fitness room to keep a constant temperature in there. Aeon units are very specific to control the cool temperature needed in the fitness center. This is what the experts told us to purchase in order to keep climate control in that room. They put a 20-ton unit up there that is big enough to handle the load where you want to put it. Custom is not the best word to use but they decide how big it has to be to cover the load. Director Fullerton said the architect told her the reason it was custom built unit is because we liked having the air conditioning very low in the old fitness center and it was always way below 70 degrees. Commissioner Kosnick said custom usually puts you in a different financial bracket. It is better to have more than not enough so with a bigger unit you don't have to maximize it. The future is we go in a different avenue. Director Fullerton said it still will cost \$65,000 even if it is not a custom unit. Commissioner Peterson said it would be cheaper for repairs. Director Fullerton said yes and the response time for the Aeon unit is a full day just to get in touch with them. Mr. Murphy said all the electronics are brand new in that unit now.

Marty Ptacek Park and Empty Lot off 78th Ct.

The 20-year lease was sent to School District 117 for Marty Ptacek Park so the park district can prepare to renovate the playground next summer. Then the School District asked for Jim and Director Fullerton to attend their Building & Grounds meeting on June 7. The school would like to move the playground to an empty lot they purchased last year that is between two homes and is also next to Conrady School. The current playground spot is a good location to add additional parking for Conrady School. The two lots that were purchased by the school are 39,600 square feet so it is a lot larger than the size of the current playground site. Upland Design sent a quote for \$141,848 which includes the architect costs of \$11,712 and a 10% construction contingency of \$11,830. The budgeted dollar amount for this project is \$141,000 and that is all we really have since we just spent \$3.5 million on the Cynthia Neal Center and Kasey Meadow Park. The current playground is from 2000 so we will have to continue to do repairs or remove it, if it is still there in a year or two. Director Fullerton called our financial advisor for bonds, Eric Anderson, and he said he can't give us an answer of how much we can borrow for the next bond because the 2021 Tax Levy has not come out yet. Director Fullerton showed the current playground and the empty lot of land off 78th Ct. We don't own the land so the first thing the school district has to do is call the city and find out what they need to do for a public hearing and inform the neighbors on the block and the community. We would have focus groups of what to put at the park after the community is on board with it. We also must be concerned about what is under the land and assuming it was a home that was there, it should be fine. The only way to do this is with a grant. At the board seat, is a quote to build a larger park gpt \$323,000 on this new land. We would have to get an OSLAD grant, and it would cost \$5,000 for Upland Design to write the grant. It would be a 4,200 SF playground with a 24' shelter, Ga Ga court, Baggo, rain garden and approximately 7 parking spots. It will have to be a 25-year lease and the school said that was fine. The \$323,000 is not enough to fill that land; however, that is enough to get started so 10 years, in the future the park district can add to that area. The school did not offer to put money into the playground. It is 78th Ct and ½ mile off 95th Street. The school district bought the land because if they expand Conrady School in any way, they must have detention. Commissioner Morgan asked what our original plan for Marty Ptacek Park was. Director Fullerton said it is a remove and replace playground project and we budgeted \$75 for that. Then it grew to \$141,000 because of some damaged curbing and replacing the swing set and benches. There is no land in Hickory Hills and that is the only park in that area now. There will be a 25-year lease with the school but even with an agreement, the owner can take that land back when they want. If the public hearing is not this year, then we won't be able to apply for the grant until the 2023 cycle. Mr. Murphy said we put in a new slide and swings recently so we can put repairs into it to last until 2023 or 2024. We don't know if we can develop it right now

without a public hearing and zoning. Commissioner Morgan asked if we have to have soil testing and a hydrostatic engineer. Mr. Murphy said we had it at Prairie View, but the land was a dump and had garbage on that land. This is different with the houses next to it. Director Fullerton said the school district would have to do this testing. We wouldn't apply for the grant until the 2022 year. Commissioner Peterson asked if we would have to do the maintenance of the park. Director Fullerton said once it is built, we would have to do the maintenance and cut the grass. Commissioner Morgan said you could wait for the grant, or the school could come up with some funds. Commissioners agreed to let the public decide if they want the park there. Find out what the zoning board wants and to make sure of the traffic going to the playground. They don't want the park district to battle with the neighbors since the school district owns the land. We will also need to know what age group they want it to service before the park district says yes or no.

School District 117 Request to Use Krueger Park Rec Center Parking Lot:

During the discussion of Marty Ptacek Park, Dan Ford, from School District 117, asked if they could have an agreement to use the Krueger Park Recreation Center for the Glen Oaks teachers to park on school days. Director Fullerton said she told them no at the meeting but after the meeting Mr. Murphy thought it was too quick of a response so she sent an email to the superintendent letting her know she will place it on the agenda for a board discussion. The superintendent said they would only need 10 parking spaces from 7:45am-4pm. This is still a lot when we only have 78 parking spots and 4 handicapped spots. The maximum for senior luncheons is 125 but some of them drive together and we could have 100 for pizza tasting and bingo. Currently, the park staff must park on the next block during these large events. Many years ago, the banquet hall next to the CN building wanted to use our parking lot for large banquets and would pay for it. Also, that same year, a church a few blocks away from CN also requested to use our lots for one or two big events at the church per year and they would bus from our lot. At that time, the park attorney advised us not to allow rentals for the parking lot because the use of the parking lots needs to stay open to the public so they can enjoy the open space, the parks and the playgrounds. The recreation manager also said no because he has seen the parking lot full with no available parking spots. Commissioner Kosnick said many years ago we allowed the teachers to park in the lot on the southwest corner and they ended up parking on the east where the elderly people park. It didn't work in the past. Commissioner Morgan said we are setting a precedence that we can't uphold. Then we have to do it for others. We simply can't because we need those spots. Mr. Murphy said when it snows some of those spots are taken up by the snow. Mr. Sanchez said the parents use our parking lot for drop off and pick up and they drive in the lot very fast because they are late. Mr. Murphy said they use that lot now in the morning and after school and told them that at the meeting. Commissioner Kosnick moved, seconded by Commissioner Peterson, to NOT approve the 10 parking spots to use by the School District 117 for teachers to park 7:45am-4pm. Ayes: Kosnick, Morgan, Peterson. Motion approved.

Electric Contract Renewal:

Our electric contract with Agera expires in October 2021. Currently, we are paying .06348 to Agera for a 36-month contract. The new contract will be with Constellation New Energy for .05908 for 63 months (5 years) and is the lowest rate we have seen since 2015. Typically, we would sign for two to three years but it was such a good rate, we decided to go with it for five years. The cost savings comes out to approximately \$1,393 per year.

Fall 2020 Bottom Line Report:

There was a 78% decrease in the bottom-line net revenue for the Fall 2020. The net revenue was \$11,609 in 2019 and \$2,541 in 2020. There were 1,790 enrollees in 2019 and 570 enrollees in 2020. All programs decreased except for senior programs. Most programs had very low enrollment. With COVID, there was limited capacity and people were scared to participate in many programs and events. The only programs that increased

were senior programs because we didn't have entertainment. It typically costs \$200 to \$300 so that is where the loss is. The summer 2021 registration is much better, and we have wait lists for some programs and camp so we are close to 2019 numbers but not above. We had 363 fitness members last year in May 2020 and we have 181 in May 2021. That is very low for the size of the fitness center.

Special Recreation:

Nicolette Lahman has been hired as the Executive Director of SWSRA. Nicolette previously worked at Covenant Ability Network of IL serving as their Executive Director. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Deafness Rehabilitation. Her start date is June 28. The superintendent of recreation is also no longer working at SWSRA. Oak Lawn Special Recreation has given her phone #'s and emails of the participants going to Oak Lawn. They tend to go to the same programs for five to 10 years and now they are becoming adults. We need to find out what they want in the future and SWSRA will help identify the residents of Hickory Hills that don't participate in anything and why they aren't going to any special rec programs. There is a young teenage boy that roams the neighborhood and in the winter, he doesn't wear shoes and proper clothing for the cold temperatures. He is the type of special needs population that we need to reach.

Coronavirus and Grants:

The district should be receiving \$5,385.40 from the FEMA grant. We may have to return \$1,900 if FEMA sends a list of expenses so I can compare to the costs submitted to Cook County. Right now they just show a description but not actual costs. IEMA said we have to wait until we receive the check for the full amount and then see if they have a list of expenses rather than a description.

Tax Objections:

The Office of the State's Attorney sent a letter dated May 11, that there have been tax objections filed against our district by tax rate objectors for 2011 through 2014 tax years. Scott Ginsburg from Robbins Schwartz is representing us as well as many other government agencies. Attorney Freeman sent an email and said the tax objections could take 10 years. One of the commissioners asked previously, who the tax objectors were. The objectors are taxpayers that sign up to challenge their property tax assessments. Some are big businesses who keep a tax attorney on retainer to fight for whatever money they get. Typically, the split is 2/3 for the taxpayer and 1/3 for the attorney. We can have two times the expenditures in each fund which at a first glance of the audit doesn't appear to be over that amount. Also, several of the special funds they mentioned did not have that much of a fund balance at the end of those years.

Vandalism:

Follow Up on Vandalism cases:

Ethan Hanahan who was joy riding through the Kasey Meadow Park fields on December 25, 2019, will be paying \$3,718.48. Mr. Hanahan pleaded guilty and will have to do some community service and pay the full amount of the damage. The \$3,781.48 will be paid through Social Services and he has until 5/31/2022 to pay the full amount.

On June 10, there was writing on the north wall at KP, near the ravine. The other morning, a young adult male had his dog off lease on the walking trail at KM. I told him there are no pets allowed and showed him the sign at the trail but he said he didn't care and left his dog off leash on the trail. That is when the police were called.

The police found him down the block and issued him a ticket and we wrote a letter banning him for a year. There have been many reports of dog bites to children and adults in the parks even though we don't allow pets. This past Friday, some teenagers were asked to leave the park because they tied the hands of a young boy. In the end, I believe the boy knew them and was joking around. The police sent a list of incidents that happened at the park.

Miscellaneous:

Amy Barnard will be attending the July board meeting. She is the person who approached us about the commissioner open seat. Commissioner Kosnick said he will be inviting Joe Mancuso. Director Fullerton said there will be a closed session item added to the agenda, as well, to discuss this after the commissioners meet them.

A commissioner asked if we could hold board meeting on holidays. Section 120/2.01 of the Open Meeting Act says meetings shall be held on a legal holiday if the regular meeting day falls on that holiday, so all of our meetings are regularly scheduled meetings.

Commissioner Peterson asked if the bank merger affects Memorial Park. Director Fullerton said it is an individual that owns the land, not the bank.

Ethics Commission:

Former commissioner Jo Carol Sullivan was on our Ethics Commission for many years. She has passed so the board will need to appoint another person. Jeff Michaels and Debbie Grad are the other two members that will remain. Commissioner Morgan moved, seconded by Commissioner Kosnick, to appoint Joann Jerantowski to the Ethics Commission. Ayes: Kosnick, Morgan, Peterson. Motion approved.

Commissioner Election:

New signature cards will need to be signed by each commissioner.

Commissioner Morgan moved, seconded by Commissioner Peterson to adjourn to the next regular board meeting. Ayes: Kosnick, Morgan, Peterson. Motion approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:04p.m.

Secretary

ATTEST:

President