

**BOARD MINUTES**  
**September 20, 2021**

The regular monthly Board Meeting of the Board of Commissioners was called to order at 7:00pm on September 20, 2021, at the Cynthia Neal Center, 8047 W. 91<sup>ST</sup> Place, Hickory Hills, Illinois.

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

Also present were Jennifer Fullerton, Executive Director, Jim Murphy, Maintenance Manager, Angel Sanchez, Recreation Manager, Tammy Muth, Business Manager, Monika Adamski, Lauterbach & Amen, Dorothy Thurman and Jenna Thurman.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Peterson moved, seconded by Commissioner Morgan, to approve minutes of August 16, 2021. Ayes: Kosnick, Morgan, Peterson, Zalas. Motion approved.

Commissioner Peterson moved, seconded by Commissioner Morgan, to approve the minutes of Closed Session August 16, 2(C)(3). Ayes: Kosnick, Morgan, Peterson, Zalas. Motion approved.

**SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Nothing to report.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Dorothy Thurman said she wanted to start off requesting Jenna's personnel file. There were conversations between Tammy, Jennifer and Jenna. Jenna said she had some conflicts with school and Tammy told her to look at her schedule so she could accommodate each other. That was August 10 and Jenna had tryouts for practice to join the volleyball team. She texted Jennifer since Tammy was on vacation and basically Jennifer told her it was her responsibility to cover and if she doesn't find a sub for work that she was going to the board of commissioners, and it was a big deal. That day I intervened and here are copies of the text messages (Ms. Thurman handed them to Commissioner Peterson). Commissioner Peterson said he has copies of the text messages already but will take them. I would like to add the letter of termination (Ms. Thurman handed it to Commissioner Peterson). It says "Dear Jenna: It is my understanding that you have resigned from your position at the Park District. Based upon your resignation as well as your failure to show up for work as scheduled on August 11<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>, please be advised that your position at the Park District is terminated effective as of the date of this letter. Please return your Park District keys to me no later than Friday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>. Thank you. Sincerely, Tammy Muth." The letter states that she resigned and was terminated. On August 10<sup>th</sup> at 3:37pm, Jenna received a group text from the staff on whether she had gotten Carolina to take her shift. On August 10<sup>th</sup> at 9:47pm, it states Jenna officially resigned and got a text back from Jennifer that she accepted her resignation. The fact that she didn't show up is inaccurate and that she is terminated is inaccurate. There is another matter to be brought up about her personnel file. There is another matter that she was upset about because someone slipped something in the doorway in the bathroom for the splash pad. I picked her up that day. I don't see anything in here that she didn't check it. So they had this little powwow, to make sure it would be checked in the future. She did go back and check. I was here, waited for her and watched her. The fact that she was told she didn't check it and did you go back and look at the cameras and that is how you know she didn't, is ridiculous. We want to verify that this was removed from her personnel file as well as formal or verbal or whatever might have been given to her that time. The fact is that it was a voluntary resignation. We have had a lot of issues, a lot of parents and kids have had the same issues that have been brought up. She was told from Tammy to look at her schedule for the splash pad. The fact that the information she was given was incorrect. I am not sure how everything goes and how board members and commissioners work. But also telling these kids one thing and that

the park district has to come before school activities. I want to make sure that the way it was handled and the way she was treated about the washroom, this is ridiculous. The fact that she was told and asked if she checked that door in the washroom. Did you receive a copy of the group text messages and I hope all board members have seen them? Director Fullerton said yes. Mrs. Thurman said that you all know the legalities of working with a minor worker and to request her personnel file. Director Fullerton said to Tammy Muth, you have the personnel file and you can hand the file to Jenna (Ms. Muth handed Jenna her personnel file). Commissioner Peterson will revisit this and said thank you for your time and the board will look into this. He asked if she has the keys and asked if we could get them back. (Jenna gave the keys to Tammy Muth). Ms. Thurman said she wanted to bring up the paychecks. She gave Sarah Udaykee permission to pick up her paycheck once and that was because my mother had surgery. Jenna sent it to her in a text message to pick up on a Thursday the week before. Jenna explained that Sarah picked up her check on her own accord. Then she talked to Sarah and Sarah said it was sitting on the front desk with her name on it. Someone had left it there for her to take. Then Jennifer pulled Sarah from the class she was teaching and left the children in the room unattended for 20 minutes with no instructions. What does the parent pay for. ... the parents as well (tape is muffled/inaudible so the reference is ...)... not talk to each other. Why would you pull Sarah out? She said Jenna's mom is pissed off at you and what Tammy..... It is not ok... I would like to see something come out of this because there were a lot of parents upset because children are not watched in the room..... I told the parents I would see what comes out of this and give them an update.... (There was silence on the tape as Mrs. Thurman went through Jenna's personnel file). Mrs. Thurman asked if there is anything about the verbal you gave her for the bathroom. Director Fullerton said yes that is in the permanent file and no, the bathroom incident is not in there. It was a verbal discussion.

Annual Financial Report – Director Fullerton said at 5:45pm there was a special board meeting to go over the budget, actual figures and the financial report/audit. This discussion takes place every year. Monika Adamski, audit manager, from Lauterbach & Amen presented the district's annual financial report. I wanted to thank the board since this is the first year as your auditor. I am here to answer questions you may have for the audit and the highlights of what happen this year and wanted to thank Jennifer and Tammy for the work on the audit since there is more work the first year. We'll start with the management letter. The purpose of this letter is to convene that we don't have any disagreements or difficulties with management during the course of the audit and the bottom of this letter shows no disagreements. In the audit on page 1 & 2 is the letter from Lauterbach & Amen on the letterhead and responsibilities of the auditor. The Management Discussion & Analysis is a very high level overview of the audit with charts and graphics. On pages 23 & 24, is the fund balance and income statement. You can see the excess of levy or over expenditures or excess/deficiencies of over and under. You can see the general fund has an excess of \$52,000 of operating income prior to the \$120,000 transfers to the capital fund so ending balance is \$712,000. The recreation fund has \$31,000 operating income prior to the \$100,000 transferred to the capital fund with \$1.4 million as your ending fund balance for the year. After that, the note in the financial statements explains the numbers on the front and then you'll find investments, polices, and capital assets, etc. In the back you'll find supplementary information and your non-major funds. Lastly, is the supplemental schedules and bond information. We are recommending as an improvement for the district that you look at the special recreation fund which is over budget. Management response is more for functionality and ADA improvements within the year. The second is GASB 87 Leases which is coming out in 2023 so we will work with Jennifer on this. This is an FYI if you enter in any leases, we'll have to look at them. Thirdly, is funds not compliance with the fund balance policy. We will be working with you updating the policy you have on the fund balance policy. Director Fullerton said the fund balance policy is old and says, "The park district will maintain a cash reserve in the amount of 30% of its annual operating expenses." I have gathered other fund balance policies and has reviewed them, circled sections of each one and sent to Beverly Meekins, the

accountant we work with, for her advice. She has another policy that is very broad and may work better for us. If you look at capital projects, we got a bond, so we had \$3.4 million in capital improvement expenditures, and in the policy, it says we should have kept \$1 million in it. When you get a bond and borrow the money and then not spend it, the bond holders don't want to see you borrow money and not spend it. That policy will have to be re-written. Mrs. Adamski said when you have a draft, we can look at it and give you our opinion. Director Fullerton said another point is the leases. We have one lease for a copy machine, so it is immaterial, correct? Mrs. Adamski said this comment is in every audit and is a requirement to put it in there even if they don't have leases, so you are aware of it. If you have one copier lease and it is not material to the fund or government, why would you have to do anything? Director Fullerton asked if there is a threshold or dollar amount for leases and when it is reported. Mrs. Adamski said there are no examples because we don't have enough information yet. It is all leases put together. Director Fullerton said on P. 34 it talks about custodial credit risk and concentration of credit risk. That section was sent to First Midwest Bank because it references the district's investment policy and it isn't that old. We had that policy re-written when we began with US Treasuries. We received Alsip Park District's investment policy and it was sent to Beverly Meekins. It is very long so we'll look at it in the next few months with the board. To recap, we will write a new fund balance policy and re-write the investment policy. Ms. Adamski said we will look it over and take care of anything we are missing in the audit report.

### **MAINTENANCE REPORT**

Jim Murphy said it was a difficult decision to retire but it is in the best interest of myself and my family, It has been a fabulous career and this board has been great and all the other boards I have worked with but I am ready for my next adventure in life. I learned a lot and tried my best to make our parks the best. I will be here until the end of February. Director Fullerton said we are going to miss you and you have worked so hard in those 36 years. We appreciate all you have done for the park district.

Mr. Murphy presented the maintenance report, and it was placed on file. After the carnival, we have put topsoil down and aerated and slit seeded from the bottom to the top of the hill and have had the water wheel out. The splash pad is not fully winterized yet. He showed the plants around Martin Park's pond which have been aggressive this year. They sprayed once per our contract and will do another treatment. Commissioner Peterson asked if we will keep a section. Jim Murphy said no we will get rid of it all which is how it was when we first developed it. Once you leave one section, it will just keep growing again and it doesn't guarantee that it will come back when we take it all down. The lightning detection box that we have will be sent to Thorguard and they will re-vamp it and send it back to us. We are still waiting for the new mower and don't know when it will come in. Commissioner Kosnick asked what part of the park has grubs. Jim said it is by the soccer field, the southwest corner and by the pond and west baseball field in the section of the outfield. It is sporadic. At Petkiewicz, we have some and Osborne Park too. We haven't had them in over 7 years, it is not worth it to treat the entire park, and it would be expensive. Next year, I would treat the soccer field. They do tend to come back the following season.

### **RECREATION REPORT**

Mr. Sanchez presented the recreation report, and it was placed on file. Sertoma will be sponsoring the Fishing Derby in 2022. We have one more year on the carnival contract and after next year we wouldn't have our guaranteed date. We would have to sign a new contract in January, and it would be for three years for the 2023 to 2025 carnival. August dates are difficult to get with other companies. We have a few organizations renting our fields at Martin and Krueger parks.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**

Ms. Muth presented the administrative report, and it was placed on file. We had a second teacher but there was a scheduling conflict, so we are in the process of hiring a teacher. It was posted on Indeed. A few students have come in since the report was written. The numbers for dance are continuing to grow but we will continue to promote dance. Commissioner Peterson asked how low is dance and asked if you still see some older dancers taking a lot of classes. Tammy Muth said that some classes are low with three or four kids and we are sending emails, it is on Facebook and on the marquee and website. We are not seeing the older girls taking five classes, but they are not doing that this year. Once they start high school, there are a lot of other sports, and it could be four to five days after school. This is the lowest in years but it is between school and COVID and dancing with masks on, where at private studios you don't have to wear a mask inside. We must follow the Governor's orders. Commissioner Kosnick asked about the check fraud. Tammy said nothing has come up on it and we have got our money back from it. Now, the bank is trying to get their money back from it. They have the person arrested and are working on prosecuting him.

## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Commissioner Peterson moved, seconded by Commissioner Morgan, to approve Claim Ordinance 794. Ayes: Kosnick, Morgan, Peterson, Zalas. 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 August 31, 2021, which includes the US Treasury statement. Director Fullerton presented the US Treasury statement. Commissioner Peterson moved, seconded by Commissioner Zalas, to approve the Operating Statements for April 30, 2021, Final, May 31, 2021, June 30, 2021, July 31, 2021 and August 31, 2021. Ayes: Kosnick, Morgan, Peterson, Zalas. Motion approved. Commissioner Peterson asked if the operating statements are more than usual. Director Fullerton said we have April to August to approve annually, at this time of year, due to waiting for the audit to finish. Then we balance the fiscal year and that is why April is a draft at first and now final. Then we send the fiscal year financials to history and start balancing May to August and give you those operating statements when that is all finished.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

The January park conference will be in-person this year and as soon as the details come out, Director Fullerton will contact the commissioners to see who is interested in attending.

### **Maintenance Manager Retirement and Job Posting:**

It is recommended to post the Maintenance Manager job posting. The plan is for Director Fullerton and Jim Murphy to interview and then hire the new person as soon as possible so Jim Murphy can train and work with this person for a few months. Jim's last day is February 28, 2022. A draft of the job posting, recommended salary range, and recent salary surveys were included in the board packet. It will be posted through IPRA and Indeed. The goal is to have the person hired by December 1.

### **Carnival:**

The Carnival took place from Thursday to Saturday, August 26-29. A spreadsheet of the revenue was included in the board packet. This was the highest in revenue. We expected it to be a lot higher since it was in August and seemed to be a lot more people than when we had it in May. The gross revenue was \$51,000 this year and last year was \$46,000 (in May). Not all expenses are in yet and the Carnival goes in the Summer bottom line

report. This is the first year we didn't get to see ending ticket numbers. We also changed the time we do the deposits. The day after the carnival was over is when we were supposed to meet and the owner, Juanita, didn't show or send a text back. She responded on Tuesday that she was ill on Monday. She gave us a sheet of paper with each ticket and the beginning and ending ticket numbers, but we did not get to physically see the ending ticket numbers like in years past. After this meeting on Tuesday, she said she would take pictures of them and send them to me. The next week she said they were in the office, the next week they were offsite and now she has stopped answering about the ending ticket number. We called the attorney, and it doesn't say they will show ending ticket numbers so we will have to add that to the next contract. The carnival company is selling tickets, so it is on the honor system, however, it is more transparent to show the beginning and ending ticket numbers. SWSRA is going to have a carnival and asked how the carnival went, so she said everything went well except not seeing the ending ticket number. There have been other times before the carnival when they didn't call us back until right before the carnival, for example, background checks on their workers. There are other very good things that they do. She contacted several other park districts, and they all get to see the ending ticket numbers. Commissioner Morgan asked when we renew with them, can we add the ending ticket number to the contract, so we see ticket number. Director Fullerton said yes, we can ask to have that added to the contract. Commissioner Zalas asked if you contacted the owner about the ticket numbers. Director Fullerton said yes, Juanita is the owner with her husband Rob Salerno. Thursday went very well with the special needs day from 3-5pm and the rest of the evening. The carnival staff volunteered their time for the special needs day and the rides were free to everyone who attended. There were 69 preregistered and 83 attended the special needs day. It rained so the carnival didn't open to the public until 6:30pm. Friday night was very busy at the carnival and two fights were reported. All daytime shifts went well. Saturday evening was very busy. There were 30 teenagers/young adults that started creating trouble at 6pm and this went on through the night until the police shut down the carnival at 9:15pm. There were large groups of people (30-60 people) running throughout the festival, using gang signs, fighting, and creating a disturbance. The police tried to break up the groups, but they kept coming back. Some officers got punched and hit but she didn't see it because it was in the ravine. We heard about someone with a gun. There was never a gun shot or shown. The carnival ordinances from the City are very old but it was in the board packet because there is some talk that there is a carnival ban. Can the City shut down the carnival? The mayor said they banned carnivals many years ago but let us have it since the park district has events that are well run. They are not saying we can't have the carnival, but they can shut us down. Commissioner Peterson said I was there Saturday night and it was unruly. There was a group of kids in the parking lot and the police knew it would go down. Then they went up the hill and kids and parents were leaving. That is when they shut it down. There were at least 30 people running but it was not 10. I didn't recognize anyone. Director Fullerton said there was one auxiliary and one police officer and then on Saturday, when she arrived, the police asked to add three more officers and she said you can add four if you want. When people were running around, we had five officers. One of the female officers got hit. Commissioner Peterson said he saw it and that is correct, and the police tackled her. Director Fullerton said the police reports were included in the board packet. One of the commissioners asked previously if other towns were involved. Director Fullerton said yes, and she thinks they said Worth and Chicago Ridge. Commissioner Zalas asked why they didn't call Bridgeview and Justice. Director Fullerton said she wasn't sure and that is what she wrote down. Commissioner Zalas said the meeting area is at the skate park. Director Fullerton said we have choices which are: hire private security and/or fence off the entire carnival at the top and bottom of the hill and charge an admission. The private security companies that have been called said we are too small for the cost of liability that they have to pay. The fence would cost \$6,000 to \$7,000 but then we would have to charge at the gate and

have enough staff or volunteers to work it. It was difficult getting some of the part-time staff to take the day shifts this year and there was only two of those. Do we want to charge just to enter the carnival? Juanita told her you could charge at the gate and give that person a ticket voucher, but she asked then who is paying for the fence? It is too labor intensive to fence it off. Commissioner Zalas said the private security still have to call the police. Commissioner Kosnick said you don't want to hire private security because they will show respect to the police but not the private security and they will charge at them. Commissioner Peterson said they did rush at the regular police officer. Commissioner Kosnick said you can put them in the wagon and take them away. Director Fullerton said the police chief said we don't have a transport wagon, nor do we want to be making massive arrests. She also read the rest of the email which was in the board packet. Commissioner Peterson asked if we pay the police force. Director Fullerton said yes. Commissioner Morgan asked how much it costs for the police, how many officers and were they all Hickory Hills police. Director Fullerton said that for the carnival this year it was \$3,000. They didn't give details on how many officers were on the invoice, and they were from Hickory Hills' police. Commissioner Morgan asked if you could hire police from other towns that are used to dealing with these problems. Director Fullerton said she didn't think you can do that. Should park districts not have the carnival anymore? Ms. Muth asked if we can break the contract. Director Fullerton said there is a way out if it didn't go well. The staff talked about how excited the kids were when the carnival was getting set up and when they were buying mega passes. After the discussion, it was decided to have the carnival and hire more Hickory Hills police officers.

#### **Skate Park Cameras:**

Security cameras were mounted on the garage roof for the skate park. The cost was \$1,590. These were added because we have an area near the back of a skate park ramp that has been getting hit with graffiti. The new cameras also look onto the skate park, the garage parking lot, and building. Ms. Muth said you can see the ramp and there are two on the building. One has a clear shot of the parking lot.

#### **Holiday Closings for 2022:**

Commissioner Peterson moved, seconded by Commissioner Morgan, to approve the 2022 Holiday Closings as presented. Ayes: Kosnick, Morgan, Peterson, Zalas. Motion approved.

#### **Spring 2021 Bottom Line Report:**

Spring 2021 net revenue was \$5,815 in 2021, \$1,073 in 2020 and \$38,390 in 2019. The enrollment was low in all program areas due to COVID. Number of classes was 55 in 2021, 30 in 2020 and 87 in 2019. All programs increased except for teens and trips since none were offered.

#### **Preschool 2020-2021 Bottom Line Report:**

Little Learners net revenue was \$10,957 in 2020/2021, \$23,405 in 19/20, and \$28,449 in 18/19. We had 105 enrollees in 20/21, 263 enrollees in 19/20 and 253 enrollees in 18/19. Before care net increased from \$1,105 in 19/20 to \$2,291 in 20/21. After care decreased from \$9,009 in 19/20 to \$1,483 in 20/21. Preschool opened at full capacity in 2019 with two teachers and then was shut down in March 2020. Enrollment in 20/21 was low due to COVID and only one teacher worked during the entire school year. There was a 39% decrease in salaries from the previous year. There was \$23,096 in refunds in 19/20 due to closing the preschool and giving refunds for time missed from mid-March to mid-May. Refunds in 20/21 were \$7,026.

**After School 2020-2021 Bottom Line Report:**

The After School net revenue was \$30,543 in 20/21, \$55,168 in 19/20 and \$70,258 in 18/19. Schools closed as of March 16, 2020, due to the Coronavirus and were in person in the 20/21 school year. There were 1,990 enrollees in 20/21, 6,091 enrollees in 19/20 and 8,296 enrollees in 18/19. Salaries were \$8,812 in 20/21, \$15,937 in 19/20 and \$21,744 in 18/19. Expenses were \$668 in 20/21, \$2,087 in 19/20 and \$2,003 in 18/19.

**Coronavirus:**

On Monday, August 30, the State of Illinois started to mandate indoor masks. We received a request on August 31, from a fitness center member to get a refund because he has to wear a mask. That request was denied. On the same day, we received a request from an after-school parent for a refund because his daughter's classroom had to quarantine because another student got COVID in their classroom. The park district does not give refunds for any type of illnesses, including COVID and quarantine time. The only time we gave credits and refunds is when all park facilities shut down in 2020 from mid-March to June 1.

**Vaccine Mandate:**

In the board packet was an email from PDRMA recommending park districts mandate the COVID vaccination. We are not mandated at the park districts to get vaccinated, however, staff are not supposed to enter a school unless vaccinated. There are some unvaccinated staff that work with children, but they don't walk into a school building. They are also saying that you must vaccinate to enter a school for a rental which would include our dance recital in May. We are unsure if this is only for staff or if it also includes attendees for the dance recital. The memo from PDRMA is a recommendation that staff who work with Pre-K or before and after school be mandated for the vaccine. Some of the staff for those programs are not vaccinated. There are three park districts that have passed the vaccine mandate. At one of the park districts. the vaccine mandate is for all staff and they will accept the weekly test, but they staff must pay for it. Another park district mandated the vaccine for all full-time and a third park district has it on their agenda to mandate staff this month. The exemptions are difficult to get for religious and health. If it was mandated, we would lose some excellent employees. Commissioner Peterson said if it is state mandate then it is not up to us. Also, who pays for the testing? Director Fullerton said it is not mandated for park district staff. Another park district said the employee must pay for the test but another one said you can't charge the employee so she is not sure if you can enforce this. Today, the governor is not mandating it for park districts so would you pass this mandate or not? No action was taken.

**Vandalism/Incidents:**

There was an incident at Kasey Meadow Park and the weekly report from the police is included in the director's report.

**Miscellaneous:**

The August fitness center and walking track report was included in the board packet.

**Receipts and Disbursements and Annual Financial Report:**

Commissioner Peterson moved, seconded by Commissioner Zalas, to approve RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS FOR FISCAL YEAR MAY 1, 2020 THRU APRIL 30, 2021. Ayes: Kosnick, Morgan, Peterson, Zalas. Motion approved.

Commissioner Peterson moved, seconded by Commissioner Morgan, to approve the Audit/Annual Financial Report for May 1, 2020 to April 30, 2021. Ayes: Kosnick, Morgan, Peterson, Zalas. Motion approved.

Commissioner Peterson moved, seconded by Commissioner Morgan, to convene to closed session at 8:42p.m. to discuss agenda item listed as: 2(C)(1) DISCUSSION OF APPOINTMENT, COMPENSATION, DISCIPLINE, PERFORMANCE, OR DISMISSAL OF SPECIFIC EMPLOYEE OF THE DISTRICT, INCLUDING HEARING TESTIMONY ON A COMPLAINT LODGED AGAINST AN EMPLOYEE TO DETERMINE ITS VALIDITY. Ayes: Kosnick, Morgan, Peterson, Zalas. Motion approved. The commissioners came out of closed session at 9:07pm and resumed to the regular meeting. A discussion took place to discuss the Maintenance Manager position. The position will be posted at the salary that was presented to the board. The section of the bachelor's degree will be taken out. Commissioner Peterson asked who is interested. Director Fullerton said there are two in-house maintenance candidates that are interested in the position.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10p.m.

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**Secretary**

**ATTEST:**

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**President**