



**Skokie Park District
FINANCE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday March 20, 2023**



The Finance Committee Meeting of Wednesday, March 20, 2023, was called to order by Finance Chairman Mike Reid at 6:15 p.m. In attendance were Commissioners Oshana, Jaffe, Desai, Vice President Reid, and President Aberman. Staff in attendance included Executive Director Michelle Tuft, Superintendent of Business Services William Schmidt, Superintendent of Recreation Breanne Labus, Superintendent of Parks and Planning Corrie Guynn, Assistant Superintendent of Recreation Mary Amato, and Marketing and Communications Manager Jim Bottorff.

Budget Introduction

Director Tuft opened the meeting with an introduction and explained the highlights and challenges in preparing this year's budget. This budget represents an assumption that park district operations will be back to normal, as of May 1, 2023. This year's budget includes the rearrangement of classes within the Recreation fund to reflect programming and management leadership. Funding of capital projects continues to be a challenge and playground replacements continue to be a priority. Three playgrounds, Central, Lawler and Pawnee Parks will be replaced in FY 2023-24. Also included is the pickleball court project at Oakton Park which consists of converting the sand volleyball courts behind Skokie Water Playground into six lighted pickleball courts. Staff have done a remarkable job putting this together.

Ms. Tuft highlighted the general assumptions in the budget book. Assumptions include:

- A utilities increase.
- A health insurance increase
- A 4% salary pool increase.
- A minimum wage increase, which has a district wide affect throughout all programs.

Each specific program area has also written assumptions and they are included in the presentation.

Budget Presentation by Fund

Mr. Schmidt started with a summary of the funds, operating, auxiliary, and capital, showing the addition or deletion to fund balances. This budget shows an increase to the total fund balance at the end of fiscal year 2024.

Mr. Schmidt described the Corporate Fund, fund 10, administration area only, explaining the highlights of the center. After answering all questions, Mr. Schmidt introduced Jim Bottorff, Marketing and Communication Manager.

Mr. Bottorff presented a detailed explanation of the Marketing and Sponsorship activities. Mr. Bottorff highlighted the increase in sponsorship dollars due to an increase in program opportunities. Mr. Bottorff went through the fundraising process and how those dollars are transferred to various areas. Mr. Bottorff explained that due to the pandemic the district has reduced actual printing costs and is using Facebook and other social media

to promote programs. This will continue in fiscal year 2023-2024. Budgeted in fiscal year 2023-2024 is new signage for Fitness First on the east side of the building pending Village of Skokie approval. When all questions were answered, Mr. Bottorff introduced Corrie Guynn, Superintendent of Parks and Planning.

Mr. Guynn went through revenues and expenses at Park Services. The highlights of the Park Service's budget included increases in minimum wage for part-time salaries and an increase in landscaping supplies. Mr. Guynn also mentioned that all open full-time positions will be filled and hiring for seasonal workers will return to pre-Covid levels. A part-time sustainability person was budgeted in fiscal year 2023-2024. Improvements at POOCH Park, if approved by the City of Evanston, are also included. After answering questions, Mr. Guynn introduced Superintendent of Recreation Breanne Labus.

Ms. Labus presented the Recreation Fund which includes Administration, Camps, Devonshire Cultural Center, Oakton Community Center, Childcare (TLC, SPACE), Teens, Special Events, and Festivals. Administration is where property taxes are collected. Expenses include the cost of the administrative staff and allocations. Property taxes collected here help fund other areas within the Recreation Fund. Camps were presented next and are showing a nice return; camp numbers are back to pre-covid levels. Ms. Labus discussed Devonshire, Oakton, and Childcare (Tot Learning Center and the SPACE program), citing the difficulty of staffing. Mrs. Labus mentioned the sprucing up of the interior of TLC during fiscal year 2023-2024. Mrs. Labus then covered the Teen programs, Special Events, and Festivals highlighting music from the bands booked for the upcoming Backlot Bash. With all questions answered, Mrs. Labus moved on to the Revenue Facilities Fund.

Ms. Labus began with Sports Park East which included field permits and program registrations. These revenues, and a portion of the Athletic Director's salary moved from the Athletic budget to Sports Park East. Mrs. Labus turned the program back to Mr. Guynn.

Mr. Guynn covered the Dammrich Rowing Center, which is budgeted to make a profit. He also discussed golf operations at Sports Park and Weber Park Golf Course which together are budgeted to make a profit. A new ball trajectory system (Trackman) was implemented in fiscal year 2022-2023 and will be enhanced in in fiscal year 2023-2024. Alcohol sales will hopefully be added into fiscal year 2023-2024 if a change to the agreement with MWRD can be approved. Mr. Guynn also covered Aquatics at Devonshire Aquatic Center, Swim lessons and Skokie Water Playground. Fiscal year 2022-2023 had a great swim season. Lessons finally returned to Niles North in March 2023 and are budgeted in fiscal year 2023-2024. After answering all questions, Mr. Guynn turned the program back to Mrs. Labus.

Ms. Labus presented the Weber Leisure Center budget which includes Fitness First. As mentioned in monthly board reports Fitness First membership is rebounding and staff are optimistic that this trend will continue. Ms. Labus presented the Skatium assumptions and budget. The Skatium will be back in full force and classes are filling. There is still a boiler issue at the Skatium but for the Skatium renovation project is almost complete.

Ms. Labus mentioned that Emily Oaks Nature Center was very busy this year due to people wanting to get out and feeling safe in an outdoor setting. Lee Hansen has been doing an excellent job running programs with a small staff to help her. Facility rentals show an increase in FY 2023 and FY 2024. Commissioner Oshana asked about possible

programs at EONC that would include the selling of alcohol. Staff will look into it. The Skokie Heritage Center (SHM) is seeing an increase in programming due to Amanda Hanson and Emily England taking a proactive role in DEI programs. After answering all questions, Mrs. Labus turned the program back to Mr. Schmidt to cover the auxiliary funds.

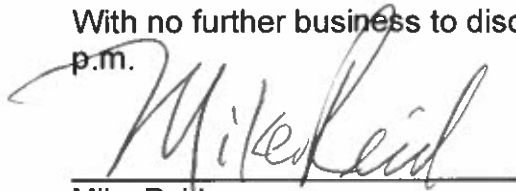
Mr. Schmidt covered the auxiliary funds; Special Recreation, IMRF, Liability, Social Security, Audit, and Debt Service. The major highlights were the plus and minus of the different fund balances due to the pandemic. Adjustment of next year's tax levy amounts will be required to bring fund balances back in line.

Mr. Schmidt then introduced Mr. Guynn who gave an analysis of the Capital Funds and explained what projects are included. The main projects were three playground renovations within the next fiscal year, finishing Menominee and Lorel parks and beginning Central park.

Ms. Tuft thanked the staff and Board for their time and described the procedural next steps for approval.

It was the consensus of the Finance Committee to prepare a Tentative Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for approval at the March 21, 2023, meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners so it can be on public display for the thirty-day period required to meet the legal requirements.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned by Chairman Reid at 8:45 p.m.



Mike Reid
Chairman Finance Committee



Michelle Tuft
Executive Director, Secretary

April 20, 2023