

**MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
SKOKIE PARK DISTRICT
APRIL 20, 2023
7:00 P.M.**

ATTENDANCE AT MEETING

Board Members Present:

President Susan Aberman
Vice President Michael Reid
Commissioner Minal Desai
Commissioner Ezra Jaffe

Others Present:

Executive Director/Secretary Michelle J. Tuft
Superintendent of Business Services William G. Schmidt
Superintendent of Parks, Planning & Facilities Corrie Guynn
Superintendent of Recreation Breanne Labus
Assistant Superintendent of Recreation Mary Amato
Marketing and Communications Director Jim Bottorff
Executive Administrative Assistant Ann Perez
Graphics Designer Rachel Pozner
IT Application/Help Support Specialist Amanda Catania

Absent:

Commissioner Mary Oshana

CALL TO ORDER

President Aberman called the regular meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners to order at 7:00 p.m. President Aberman called for the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

There were no citizen comments.

WEBSITE AWARD FOR THE MARKETING TEAM

President Aberman awarded and congratulated the Marketing Team – Jim Bottorff, Rachel Pozner, and Scott Walker for winning the second-place award for the IAPD Agency Showcase for the Website. Scott Walker was unable to attend. President Aberman, Jim, and Rachel posed for a photograph.

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE BOND ISSUE NOTIFICATION ACT

President Aberman called the Public Hearing on the Bond Issue Notification Act to order at 7:05 p.m. She asked for any comments regarding the General Obligation Alternate Bond sale, Series 2023A. There were no comments or questions. President Aberman closed the Public Hearing at 7:06 p.m.

**PUBLIC HEARING ON THE FY 2023-2024 TENTATIVE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATION
ORDINANCE #23-002**

President Aberman called the Public Hearing for the FY 2023-2024 Tentative Budget and Appropriation Ordinance #23-002 to order at 7:07 p.m. She asked for comments or questions.

There were no comments or questions. President Aberman closed the Public Hearing at 7:08 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL

Commissioner Jaffe moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Vice President Reid seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Oshana was absent. Motion carried. The Consent Agenda consisted of the minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting of March 20, 2023; the regular meeting of March 2023; bills payable for the month March/April 2023, Treasurer's Report, and Staff Reports.

ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE #23-003 PROVIDING FOR THE ABATEMENT OF CERTAIN TAXES LEVIED FOR THE PAYMENT OF THE PRINCIPAL AND THE INTEREST ON GENERAL OBLIGATION PARK BONDS, SERIES 2005B (CAPITAL APPRECIATION BONDS) AND ON THE PRINCIPAL AND INTEREST ON GENERAL OBLIGATION PARK BONDS SERIES 2021A, AND INTEREST COSTS ON THE SERIES 2013B, SERIES 2015B, SERIES 2017B AND SERIES 2019A ALL GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS (ALTERNATE REVENUE SOURCE BONDS OF THE SKOKIE PARK DISTRICT

Treasurer Schmidt requested the adoption of Ordinance #23-003. The Ordinance abates debt service and principal and interest on the refunding issue Series 2005B. Series 2021A, Series 2013B, Series 2015B, Series 2017B and Series 2019A are paid out of operations. This ordinance removes the bond and interest costs from the District's tax levy.

Commissioner Jaffe moved to approve Ordinance #23-003 to authorize the abatement of certain taxes levied for the payment of the Principal and Interest on General Obligation Bonds, Series 2005B, Series 2021A and interest costs on Series 2013B, Series 2015B, Series 2017B and Series 2019A of the Skokie Park District. Commissioner Desai seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners vote aye. Commissioner Oshana was absent. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF THE FINAL BUDGET & APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE #23-004 FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024

Treasurer Schmidt is asking the board to approve the Tentative Budget & Appropriation Ordinance #23-004 for Fiscal year 2023-2024. At the March meeting the Tentative Budget & Appropriation Ordinance was approved and then displayed for thirty days at Devonshire, Oakton, and Weber, and on the district's website. There were no requests to view the budget. The Final Budget & Appropriation Ordinance is the same dollar amount as the Tentative Budget & Appropriation Ordinance.

Vice President Reid moved to approve the Final Budget and Appropriation Ordinance #23-004 for fiscal year 2023-2034 in the total amount of \$30,470,587, including the five-year Capital Development Plan totaling \$7,276,812. Commissioner Jaffe seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Oshana was absent. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF SKATIUM CHANGE ORDER #7

Superintendent Labus asked for approval of change order #7 to extend the rental of the temporary electrical panel at the Skatium. The delivery date for the new electrical panel should be at the end of April or early May. Ms. Tuft said PDRMA has stated they will fully cover the cost of the insurance claim. Ms. Tuft said there will be another change order next month.

Commissioner Desai moved to approve Skatium Change Order #7 for \$10,419.00. Vice President Reid seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioner voted aye. Commissioner Oshana was absent. Motion carried.

ALCOHOL ORDINANCE

Superintendent Labus said last month the board discussed the Alcohol Ordinance and asked if Emily Oaks could be added. The Ordinance and guidelines have been updated to include Emily Oaks Nature Center and the Skatium Ice Arena.

President Aberman and Commissioner Jaffe had some concerns about allowing alcohol at the Skatium and Ms. Labus said it would be for facility rentals or special events, and supervisors have the authority to allow or deny.

Commissioner Jaffe moved to approve adding Emily Oaks Nature Center and the Skatium Ice Arena to the alcohol ordinance and guidelines for Skokie Park District facilities. Commissioner Desai seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Oshana was absent. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF REVISED FULL TIME COMPETITIVE PAY STRUCTURE

Treasurer Schmidt requested approval of the revised full time competitive pay structure which is reviewed annually. Staff is requesting to increase the ranges by 2.50% to keep up with inflation.

Commissioner Jaffe asked for more detailed information. Mr. Schmidt explained the process and Ms. Tuft said no employee's salary is increased unless they fall below the minimum. This year two employees will fall below the minimum and their salaries will be increased. Ms. Tuft said the district uses the recommended percentage increase from HR Source to move the pay scale and this is done to remain competitive in the job market.

Commissioner Desai moved to approve a 2.5% increase in the full-time salary range pay structure effective May 1, 2023. Vice President Reid seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Oshana was absent. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF THE ASPHALT IMPROVEMENTS BID

Superintendent Guynn requested approval of the asphalt improvements bid for the Weber Center employee parking lot, Mulford Park basketball court, Tecumseh Park basketball court, Lauth Park basketball court, and the Laramie basketball court with an alternate for paving the maintenance access path at the Weber Golf Course. The Seneca Park basketball court will have a complete replacement. Three bids were received and the lowest bidder was Chicagoland Paving at \$215,000. Staff is comfortable working with them as they have done projects in the past.

These projects were budgeted at \$209,000. Lauth Park is included, but Lauth is also included in a grant application. If the grant is received the Lauth Park courts will be removed from this project as a deduct change order for \$9,000. If a grant is not received other projects that have been budgeted will be reviewed to determine where the funds should come from.

Commissioner Desai moved to approve the bid of Chicagoland Paving for \$225,000 for the Asphalt Improvements Project. Vice President Reid seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Oshana was absent. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF THE FITNESS FIRST EQUIPMENT BID

Superintendent Guynn requested approval of the Fitness First equipment bid for one Elliptical machine, one recumbent cross trainer, and two treadmills.

Commissioner Jaffe asked how we dispose of the old equipment. Mr. Guynn said it is put on Craig's List and Obenhaus auction site. The equipment was budgeted at \$35,700 and a bid of \$34,500 was received from Direct Fitness Solutions. The low bidder did not meet the specifications and was therefore not selected.

Vice President Reid moved to approve the bid of Direct Fitness Solutions to provide fitness equipment replacements for \$34,500. Commissioner Desai seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Oshana was absent. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF THE DEVONSHIRE, GROSS POINT AND LOCKWOOD PARK BALLFIELD FENCING RENOVATIONS BID

Superintendent Guynn requested the approval of the Devonshire, Gross Point and Lockwood Parks ballfield fencing renovations bid. \$215,000 was budgeted for this project. Two bids were received, and the low bidder was Pro Line Fence at \$113,991. The scope of the work includes removing and replacing backstops at each of the three parks. The concrete work will be handled separately.

Commissioner Jaffe asked about the timeline for this project and Mr. Guynn said it will be done in the fall.

Commissioner Jaffe moved to approve the bid of Pro Line Fence, Inc. for \$114,475.49 for the Devonshire, Gross Point and Lockwood Park Ballfield Fencing Renovations. Commissioner Desai seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The next regular and annual meetings of the Board of Park Commissioners is Tuesday, May 16, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Desai asked about the group that wanted a dog park at Devonshire Park. Vice President Reid said he went to the park twice and could not find a location that would work for a dog park. Commissioner Desai said people are using the tennis courts again as a dog park. She saw this at approximately 5:30 - 6:00 p.m. Ms. Tuft asked Mr. Guynn to look into it. Mr. Guynn said the police and Animal Control were very good with checking on it. Signs have been posted and people can get ticketed if necessary.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Ms. Tuft asked to set a date for the dedication of the Weissburg Park Arboretum. The date of June 6 at 6 p.m. was selected.

Ms. Tuft said that yesterday the camp survey was sent to those who registered for summer camp this year. Ms. Tuft will inform the board of the results.

The Village of Skokie put up signage where the composting bins are being added at Central Park. The Village received a complaint from a resident that does not feel it is the right place for

composting. President Aberman suggested moving forward with the pilot program for several months, to see how it is received by residents in the neighborhood. If complaints are received, the location can be revisited.

Commissioner Desai asked if we received any complaints about the composting at other parks and none have been received.

The board consensus was to move forward with adding Central Park as a composting location and to monitor complaints.

Ms. Tuft asked Mr. Schmidt to inform the board of the district's renewed bond rating from Moody's. Mr. Schmidt said the district received the same bond rating of Aa2 and was told it is difficult to do better than that for a park district. Vice President Reid said it was a fantastic rating.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Jaffe asked if there was an update on the Bessie Rhodes School sale. Mr. Guynn said the Village has not updated him. Ms. Tuft said staff are trying to figure out which land parcels are district property.

Commissioner Jaffe received a request from a person that attended the public hearing for the pickleball courts at Oakton Park about the court dimensions. Ms. Tuft asked Commissioner Jaffe to forward the email to her and she and Mr. Guynn can help answer questions and provide the dimensions. Mr. Guynn said the bid went out today.

Commissioner Jaffe asked about the next step for Skokie Sports Park East. Ms. Tuft said funds have been budgeted to begin the planning process. Commissioner Jaffe asked about a timeline and Ms. Tuft explained that planning would not begin until fall. In the meantime, Mr. Guynn said the fence that divides Sports Park and Sports Park East has been removed and staff are almost done with the wood chip path. Mr. Guynn is meeting with the Village tomorrow to discuss the plantings. Staff will keep the area mowed and it will look better kept this year. Trees and perennials will be planted in the fall.

Commissioner Jaffe said he received compliments regarding the Devonshire Theatre. Residents said how great it is and how it is booming. He asked if there was any way to expand offerings. President Aberman said there are so many more plays than in the past. Ms. Labus said we absorbed Thin Ice Ensemble and have opportunities to expand. She will take a look at the offerings as the attendance and revenue numbers come in over the next year.

President Aberman asked about the discussion on the Skokie Parent Group Facebook page that says the district is not accommodating children with special needs. Commissioner Jaffe said the comments were vague. President Aberman said we work with M-NASR and are very accommodating. Ms. Labus said we provide reasonable accommodation, but sometimes parents don't think it is enough. Ms. Labus said parents compare the park district to school districts and school districts have more resources. Ms. Tuft will reach out to one of the people complaining to see if she can get details.

NATIVE PARK NAMES

Ms. Tuft updated the board regarding addressing the district's native park names. The district is working with the Mitchell Museum. She explained that the first step was to draft a land acknowledgement statement. Amanda Hanson-Putziger wrote the statement and the executive director at the Mitchell Museum had some minor changes. A draft copy is included in the board packet and Ms. Tuft asked the board to let her know if they have any comments or suggestions.

The next step in the process is a community listening session that will be held as a hybrid meeting. Residents can comment on the land acknowledgment statement and will have input into how to address the park names. After the listening session the land acknowledgment statement can be officially approved by the board. Then work will begin on addressing the individual park names. The Mitchell Museum will facilitate talks with each of the tribes. Ms. Tuft asked if the board wanted to be included. Commissioner Desai said to let the board know the dates selected and if they can attend, they will.

The date of June 1 at 6:30 p.m. was chosen for the community listening session. In-person location to be determined.

BOARD MEETING BROADCAST OPTIONS

Ms. Tuft said the board asked her to look at broadcast options for the board meetings. The two options that she looked at were YouTube and SkokieVision TV. There are two YouTube options, livestreaming the meeting or recording the meeting and posting them. There would be little cost with this option other than purchasing cameras. The Village of Skokie uses SkokieVision TV. It would cost the park district approximately \$11,000 to purchase the equipment needed for SkokieVision TV and there could be additional costs of \$50,000 - \$60,000 for cameras.

President Aberman said broadcasting the meetings would be in response to one person's comment. The issue is transparency. President Aberman said if we post the board packet on the website, we would be transparent at no cost. The staff can monitor how often the packet is viewed and then the board could revisit broadcasting. President Aberman just attended an IAPD meeting where she inquired about what other area park districts do. Many post their board packets online and most don't broadcast the meetings. Commissioner Desai said questions or comments could be emailed. Commissioner Oshana sent an email today asking if residents email in questions or comments, could they be included in the board packets. Ms. Tuft said the emails can be included in the board packet.

Commissioner Jaffe said we should post the board packets, monitor the viewing, and make it more intuitive on how to send questions and comments. He thinks this is a good start.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Jaffe moved to enter into Executive Session meeting to discuss Executive Session meeting minutes for the purpose of approval of the minutes, semi-annual review of the minutes, and to authorize the destruction of executive session recordings pursuant to Section 2(c)(21). Vice President Reid seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioner voted aye. Commissioner Oshana was absent. Motion carried.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

The regular meeting reconvened at 8:17 p.m.

Commissioner Desai moved to approve the Executive Session Minutes of February 21, 2023. Vice President Reid seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Oshana was absent. Motion carried.

Following review of Executive Session Meeting Minutes dating from January 2004, Vice President Reid moved to release the minutes from

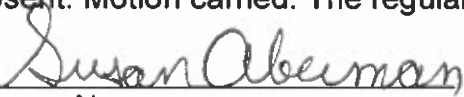
- March 15, 2005
- June 21, 2005
- April 25, 2006
- June 20, 2006
- July 17, 2007
- July 15, 2008
- May 19, 2009
- June 15, 2010
- July 21, 2015
- January 26, 2016
- July 19, 2016
- June 15, 2017
- October 17, 2017
- September 17, 2018
- August 20, 2019
- October 19, 2020
- September 14, 2022
- February 21, 2023

and to have those remaining minutes not previously released remain closed because the need for confidentiality still exists as to all or part of the minutes. Commissioner Desai seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Oshana was absent. Motion carried.

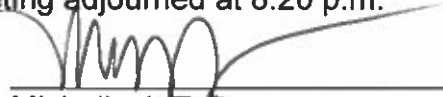
Commissioner Desai moved to approve Ordinance # 23-005 authorizing the destruction of verbatim recordings for the closed session meetings of March 16, 2021, May 18, 2021, June 1, 2021, June 3, 2021, and September 14, 2021. Vice President Reid seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Oshana was absent. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice President Reid moved to adjourn the regular meeting. Commissioner Jaffe seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Oshana was absent. Motion carried. The regular meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.



Susan Aberman
President



Michelle J. Tuft
Secretary

May 16, 2023