

**MINUTES OF THE  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
SKOKIE PARK DISTRICT  
August 17, 2021  
7:00 P.M.**

**ATTENDANCE AT MEETING**

Board Members Present:

President Susan Aberman  
Vice President Michael Reid  
Commissioner Ezra Jaffe  
Commissioner Mary Oshana

Absent:

Commissioner Minal Desai

Others Present:

Executive Director/Secretary Michelle J. Tuft  
Superintendent of Business Services William G. Schmidt  
Superintendent of Parks Corrie Guynn  
Superintendent of Recreation Breanne Labus  
Superintendent of Facilities Jon Marquardt  
Executive Administrative Assistant Ann Perez  
Human Resource Manager Lynn Seebacher

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS**

There were no citizen comments.

**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 Desai was absent. Motion carried. The Consent Agenda consisted of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 20, 2021; bills payable for the month of July/August 2021, Treasurer's Report, and Staff Reports.

**PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL – REVIEW, UPDATE AN APPROVAL**

Executive Director Tuft introduced Ms. Lynn Seebacher, Human Resource Manager. Ms. Seebacher put together the updates for the Personnel Policy Manual with the assistance of Attorney Jim Griffin of HR Source. Ms. Tuft explained that there were not many significant changes to the policy manual and highlighted the new polices and policies that were revised significantly. The two new policies are: Reasonable Accommodations for Religious Practice or Belief and Paid Parental Leave Policy. The Reasonable Accommodations Policy is mandated by law. The Paid Parental Leave Policy will support new parents by providing eight weeks of paid parental leave.

Ms. Tuft explained that she has been trying to get the Paid Parental Leave Policy approved for a few years and was happy that she could do so now. She explained the importance of the

policy that will support new parents. Through the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) employees are currently eligible for 12 weeks of unpaid leave time. Vacation and sick leave time can be applied to their leave so the employee can continue to draw a salary. The district also has a benefit through IMRF that allows staff to collect disability for two weeks for regular birth delivery, or four weeks for a Caesarian delivery.

Ms. Tuft said that because most staff use their earned sick and vacation time for parental leave, they are usually paid for most of their parental leave. Thus, paying the employee for eight weeks will not burden the district financially and will allow parents to have sick or vacation days when they return to work. Ms. Tuft said the Skokie Public Library recently approved a similar policy.

President Reid said this is a trend for employers and he knows individuals who receive this benefit. Commissioner Oshana said employees having fertility treatments use up their sick leave time and vacation time very quickly prior to giving birth. President Aberman said the new policy will discourage employees from coming to work when they are ill in order to save sick time for their parental leave. Ms. Tuft said it is a great benefit and would like to have it approved.

The revised policies are the Whistleblower Compliance Policy and Appendix D - Criminal Background Check Policy. The Whistleblower Compliance Policy was rewritten to include newly required language. The Criminal Background Check Policy was revised, and employers are now required to notify an employee or applicant of a conviction report. The employee or applicant has ten days to respond if the conviction is valid or a mistake.

One policy was removed. Ms. Tuft said the attorney suggested removing the Child Labor Laws: Employment of Minors Policy as the district does not hire anyone under 16 years of age.

Commissioner Oshana moved to approve the revised Personnel Policy Manual for all staff dated August 2021. Commissioner Jaffe seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Desai was absent. Motion carried.

#### **SAFETY MANUAL AND CRISIS PLAN – REVIEW, UPDATE AND APPROVAL**

Ms. Tuft said as part of the Distinguished Parks and Recreation Agency (DPRA) process the Safety Manual needs to be review and updated. Mr. Scott Runkle and Ms. Seebacher reviewed and updated the policy. The updates were more procedural, with no significant changes. The HIV Policy and Crisis Plans were revised. Commissioner Oshana asked if an Active Shooter Plan was included. Ms. Tuft said each facility has their own specific plan and staff attended Run, Hide and Fight training for Active Shooter training a few years ago. President Aberman asked if Covid-19 was added. Ms. Tuft respond no and said the district has a separate document for Covid-19 that can be revised as protocols change.

Vice President Reid moved to approve the Safety Manual. Commissioner Oshana seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Desai was absent. Motion carried.

#### **IRPA ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT CARD – REVIEW, UPDATE AND APPROVAL**

Superintendent Guynn said as part of the DPRA process the environmental report card needed to be reviewed. Ms. Lee Hansen worked with the Environmental Action Team to complete the self-evaluation report card. Ms. Tuft said she thought the score was a little low

and that the district will work to improve the score. Several examples where improvement could happen were discussed. Commissioner Jaffe asked how often this process is done. Mr. Guynn said usually every five years. The report card is a good tool to help the district evaluate its environmental practices.

Commissioner Jaffe moved to approve the updated IPRA Environmental Report card. Vice President Reid seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Desai was absent. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF OSLAD GRANT PROGRAM RESOLUTION OF AUTHORIZATION FOR CENTRAL PARK**

Mr. Guynn asked for approval of the OSLAD program resolution of authorization for Central Park. The resolution states that the Board is aware of the project and guarantees the funds are available to complete the project. Commissioner Jaffe asked if the Central Park public hearing was a typical meeting. Mr. Guynn said it was not a typical meeting as there were no children present. President Aberman said children have such good ideas for the playground equipment and said that the next public hearing notice should include a statement that children are encouraged to attend. Mr. Guynn received approximately 10 letters of support for the project from the public. Commissioner Jaffe posted the information on Facebook which generated some of the letters. Mr. Guynn said if Commissioner Jaffe has contacts for more letters, he is able to receive additional letters of support. Ms. Tuft said the OSLAD grant application is due September 1, 2021.

Vice President Reid moved to approve the execution of the OSLAD Grant Program Resolution of Authorization for Central Park. Commissioner Oshana seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Desai was absent. Motion carried.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

The next regular meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners is Tuesday, September 14, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.

**COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

President Aberman said the Skokie Covid-19 cases are at 2.9%. Vice President Reid said he heard that Chicago will be requiring masks indoors in public places beginning Friday.

**DIRECTOR COMMENTS**

Ms. Tuft asked the board for possible dates in October to schedule the Board's DEI Workshop. Members of the Admin team will also attend. The three-hour workshop will take place on a weekday from 6 – 9 p.m. October 26 and 28 were chosen as possible dates. Ms. Tuft will reach out to the DEI consultant for their availability and will inform the Commissioners when a date has been selected.

Ms. Tuft asked for dates for the second Seneca Park public hearing. The board determined that the hearing would need to wait until October. Ms. Tuft will contact Rabbi Posner to check his availability. October 6 at 7 p.m. was suggested as a tentative date to present to Rabbi Posner. Once a date is determined, a location will be selected. Ms. Tuft said she does not have the final revised plan but can show the board a tentative plan after the meeting.

Ms. Tuft asked the Commissioners traveling to the NRPA Conference if they preferred receiving a check prior to the conference or if they would rather submit receipts afterwards for reimbursement. Consensus was to submit receipts after the conference.

Ms. Tuft discussed an email that was sent to Commissioner Oshana from a resident. The email was in regard to the Skokie parks with Native American names. Ms. Tuft said that one idea for honoring the Native American tribes that the parks are named after is to install signs at the parks with QR codes that link to the Skokie Park District website. The website will have information on the history of the Native American tribe the park is named after. Commissioner Oshana suggested posting a link on how to support Native American tribes. Ms. Tuft said that would be a different link to the GIS system.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

Commissioner Oshana asked about international drive-in movies. Superintendent Labus said this was discussed with staff and is planned for next summer. Some movie choices will be presented in a survey to the public.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Jaffe moved to adjourn the regular meeting. Vice President Reid seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Desai was absent. Motion carried. The regular meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

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Susan Aberman  
President

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Michelle J. Tuft  
Secretary