

**MINUTES OF THE  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
SKOKIE PARK DISTRICT  
MAY 21, 2024  
7:00 P.M.**

**ATTENDANCE AT MEETING**

Board Members Present: Commissioner Susan Aberman  
Commissioner Ezra Jaffe  
Commissioner Antonia Kasalo-Terihaj  
Commissioner Courtney Williams

Absent: President Mike Reid

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

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**CITIZEN COMMENTS**

Mr. Eric Muceus presented a letter requesting that the board honor Emily Oaks Nature Center Manager Lee Hansen. The board will review the request.

**PUBLIC HEARING ON THE FY 2024-2025 TENTATIVE BUDGET AND  
APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE #24-001**

Commissioner Aberman called the Public Hearing for the FY 2024-2025 Tentative Budget and Appropriation Ordinance #24-001 to order at 7:01p.m. She asked for comments or questions and there were none. Commissioner Aberman closed the Public Hearing at 7:02 p.m.

**CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL**

Commissioner Jaffe moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. President Reid was absent. Motion carried. The Consent Agenda consisted of the minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting of March 13, 2024, minutes of the Regular meeting of April 16, 2024; bills payable for the month of April/May 2024, Treasurer's Report, and Staff Reports.

**ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE #24-003 PROVIDING FOR THE ABATEMENT OF CERTAIN TAXES LEVIED FOR THE PAYMENT OF THE PRINCIPAL AND 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 approval of Ordinance #24-003. Mr. Schmidt said this ordinance abates the principal and interest on the bonds listed so they do not go on the tax roll and constituents do not get taxed. Commissioner Aberman asked for any comments or questions and there were none.

Commissioner Williams moved to approve Ordinance #24-003 to authorize the Abatement of certain taxes levied for the payment of the Principal and Interest on the above-mentioned General Obligation Bonds, Series 2005B, Series 2021A and interest costs on Series 2013B, 2015B, Series 2017B, Series 2019A and Series 2023A of the Skokie Park District. Commissioner Jaffe seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted. President Reid was absent. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF THE FINAL BUDGET AND APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 ORDINANCE #24-002**

Mr. Schmidt requested approval of the Final Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Ordinance #24-002. Mr. Schmidt said a budget hearing was held and there were no comments. The final budget needs to be approved and the Ordinance is filed with Cook County. Commissioner Jaffe thanked Mr. Schmidt for his hard work on the budget.

Commissioner Jaffe moved to approve the Final Budget and Appropriation Ordinance #24-002 for the fiscal year 2024-2025 in the total amount of \$31,890,353 including the five-year Capital Development Plan totaling \$7,442,941. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. President Reid was absent. Motion carried.

**ATTORNEY'S REPORT**

Ms. Tuft introduced the park district attorney Mr. Andrew Paine from Tressler LLP to the board and staff. Mr. Paine was glad to meet the new Commissioners and board members. He has been working with the park district since 2008. He is always available if there are any questions.

Commissioner Jaffe asked what current issues Mr. Paine is working on with the park district and Mr. Paine said he was working on contracts with Mr. Schmidt, a scholarship foundation, and the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District lease renewal. Commissioner Aberman thanked Mr. Paine for coming to the meeting.

**APPROVAL OF DEVONSHIRE AQUATIC CENTER SOLAR PANEL BID**

Superintendent Guynn requested approval of the Devonshire Aquatic Center Solar Panel Bid. The panels are for the roof at the Devonshire Aquatic Center and will be installed on the pool's bathhouse. Only one bid was received from Windfree Solar for \$83,722.00. \$70,000 was budgeted for the project, but rebates will reduce the overall cost of the project.

Commissioner Williams asked why there was only one bidder and Mr. Guynn said there are not a lot of bidders on smaller solar panel projects. This is the third solar panel project and there have only been two bidders at the most.

Commissioner Jaffe asked what estimated savings will come from the panels. Mr. Guynn said it is not a major offset. However, with the change to LED lighting in the facilities and parking lots, combined with the solar panels district wide, there has been significant savings. A million-kilowatt hours have been saved over the last four to five years.

Commissioner Jaffe moved to approve the bid of Windfree Solar for \$83,722 for the Devonshire Aquatic Center Solar Panel bid. Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. President Reid was absent. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF POOCH PARK FENCE BID**

Superintendent Guynn requested approval of the Pooch Park Fence Bid. The fencing on the north end of the park will expand the overall park square footage. Pooch Park is on Metropolitan Water Reclamation District property, which is leased, and the costs are split with the City of Evanston. The overall improvements are budgeted at \$250,000 and our costs will not exceed \$125,000. There were three bidders, and the lowest bidder was Complete Fence for \$28,700.

Commissioner Jaffe asked if the Memorial Wall was still being considered and Ms. Tuft said staff is still discussing it.

Commissioner Williams moved to approve the bid of Complete Fence for \$28,700 for the Pooch Park Fencing bid. Commissioner Jaffe seconded the motion on a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. President Reid was absent. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF SKOKIE PARK DISTRICT FLOORING BID**

Mr. Guynn requested approval of the Skokie Park District Flooring Bid for Oakton Community Center, Weber Leisure Center, and Devonshire Cultural Center. There were three bidders. The low bidder was Scharm Floor Covering at \$130,995. The bid included an alternative to have the main entrance lobby bathrooms at Oakton. Scharm Flooring has successfully completed a number of flooring replacements and staff recommend using them again.

Commissioner Jaffe moved to approve the bid and alternate 1 by Scharm Floor Covering for a total of \$143,328 for the Skokie Park District Flooring Bid. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. President Reid was absent. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF THE SPORTS PARK EAST CONTRACT**

Mr. Guynn requested approval of the Sports Park East Contract. Two firms were asked to submit proposals, Gewalt-Hamilton and Wight Construction. Staff are recommending Wight Construction. Wight recently worked on the Skatium renovations, and staff are happy with their work. They have also done several smaller projects in the district. Ms. Tuft said their proposal was also less expensive.

Once the contract is approved planning can begin. The proposal includes meetings with the public, board, and staff.

Commissioner Williams asked if there will be a conceptual design and an additional bid for the execution of the project. Mr. Guynn confirmed.

Ms. Tuft explained that although planning occurred for this site in 2015, the process will start over because the needs of the community and staff have changed. Staff would like to build a sports facility with indoor turf. However, the district would need to go to referendum to fund the project and a referendum is a huge undertaking. There are consultants who can do an analysis to see if a referendum could pass in Skokie. The board will have the final approval on the project.

Commissioner Jaffe moved to approve the proposal from Wight Construction for conceptual design services for Sport Park East for a sum of \$45,000. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. President Reid was absent. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF SPORTS PARK WALL PANEL BID**

Mr. Guynn requested approval of the Sports Park Wall Panel Bid. Mr. Guynn said a bid was approved at the February board meeting for \$88,000 and Alternate 1 for \$52,000 was turned down. After meeting with the contractor, it was determined that there was a miscommunication.

The project was budgeted this correctly and the bid came in really low because they did not bid it correctly.

Commissioner Williams moved to approve the initial bid and Alternate #1 from Thatcher Oaks Awnings for \$140,000 for the Skokie Sports Park Wall Panels. Commissioner Jaffe seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. President Reid was absent. Motion carried.

### **APPROVAL OF URBAN FOREST MANAGEMENT POLICY**

Mr. Guynn introduced Horticulturist Supervisor Jim Hallm and Horticulture III and GIS Coordinator Hannah Kosiek to the board. They applied for a grant that would cover orchard plantings at Winnebago Park, some seasonal staff labor, and arborist trainings. The USDA grant requires the district to have an Urban Forestry Management Policy. Approving this policy will complete the grant application. Commissioner Williams thanked staff for their initiative.

Commissioner Aberman asked about having fruit trees as they attract bees. Mr. Guynn said there are native plants and community gardens at many parks and there hasn't been a problem with bees.

Commissioner Jaffe asked about cicadas in Skokie and Mr. Hallm said he is not concerned. Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj said they are totally harmless.

Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj moved to approve the Urban Forest Management policy as proposed effective May 21, 2024. Commissioner Jaffe seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. President Reid was absent. Motion carried.

### **ADA EVALUATION AND TRANSITION PLAN UPDATE**

Commissioner Aberman commended the ADA Evaluation and Transition Plan update. She said it was easier to read in the new format.

Mr. Guynn gave a brief explanation to the new Commissioners and explained that reviewing this annually is a requirement of the Distinguished Park and Recreation Accreditation (DPRA). Another audit will need to be completed in the near future.

Mr. Guynn said we received a lot of positive feedback from the ADA garden plots which opened up a month ago.

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

The next regular meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners is Tuesday, June 18, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. Commissioner Aberman will be out of town.

### **COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS**

Commissioner Jaffe said the new Oakton Park pickleball courts look great. Mr. Guynn has not received any complaints. Commissioner Williams has played there every day. She confirmed that the rules will be posted soon. She said so many people are excited about pickleball. She said a person asked her about online reservations and another person asked to have a squeegee available.

Commissioner Williams asked when the pools open. Mr. Guynn said Devonshire Aquatics Center opens on Saturday, May 25 and Skokie Water Playground opens on Monday, June 3.

Commissioner Aberman said Festival of Cultures was great and there were a lot of people at the event.

Commissioner Aberman attended the Ice Show, and it was great. Commissioner Aberman said the Ice Show was dedicated to Melinda Greenwood and her family really appreciated it. Ms. Greenwood recently passed away and supported the Skatium and volunteered at many of their events. Her children also skated and worked at the facility.

Commissioner Williams gave kudos to the staff working in the parking lot during the ice show.

Commissioner Aberman asked about the rental revenue and attendance at the Exploritorium and Oakton Center. Ms. Tuft explained that rental revenue depends on which rooms are rented as the fees vary depending on size. The Exploritorium numbers are lower this spring, likely due to the beautiful weather.

#### **DIRECTORS COMMENTS**

Ms. Tuft said the State of the Village luncheon is on June 14, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Commissioners Jaffe and Kasalo-Terihaj are attending.

Ms. Tuft will be setting up new Commissioner orientations. Jim Bottorff wants to have the photographer there so he can take headshots. After the meeting, the Commissioners will discuss a time to meet.

At the June 3 Village of Skokie board meeting, the Mayor will present a proclamation declare Pride month in Skokie. Cassie Schaeffer and Ms. Tuft will be there, and Commissioners are invited to attend.

Mr. Schmidt was approached by the sons of Mr. Robert Ruhe, the former Skokie Park District Executive Director from 1954 - 1966. They want to start a scholarship fund. The district has already received \$5,000 and they want to donate an additional \$15,000 once the scholarship fund is set up.

Staff wants to use this money to provide kids that age out of the Action for Children program. Action for Children ages them out at age 12. Families can apply for assistance and the scholarship money can be used to attend park district programs.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

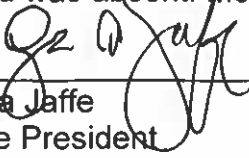
There was no old business.


#### **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

**ADJOURNMENT OF THE REGULAR MEETING**

Commissioner Jaffe moved to adjourn the regular meeting. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. President Reid was absent. Motion carried. The regular meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

  
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Ezra Jaffe  
Vice President

  
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Michelle J. Tuft  
Secretary

June 18, 2024

**ANNUAL MEETING OF THE  
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SKOKIE PARK DISTRICT  
MAY 21, 2024**

**ATTENDANCE AT MEETING**

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Commissioner Ezra Jaffe  
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Absent: President Mike Reid

Others Present: Executive Director Michelle J. Tuft  
Treasurer William G. Schmidt  
Superintendent of Parks, Planning & Facilities Corrie Guynn  
Superintendent of Recreation Breanne Labus  
Assistant Superintendent of Recreation Mary Amato  
Marketing and Communications Manager Jim Bottorff  
Executive Administrative Assistant Ann Perez

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 8:05 p.m.

**LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Ms. Tuft said the Land Acknowledgement will be read at the annual meeting and proceeded with the reading.

**APPOINTMENT OF TEMPORARY SECRETARY**

Commissioner Aberman moved to appoint Superintendent Tuft as the temporary Secretary to conduct the election of President of the Board of Park Commissioners for the fiscal year 2024-2025. Commissioner Jaffe seconded the motion. On a voice vote, all Commissioners voted aye. President Reid was absent. Motion carried.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Temporary Secretary Tuft entertained nominations for the office of President of the Board of Park Commissioners. Commissioner Williams nominated Susan Aberman for President. Commissioner Jaffe seconded the motion. No other nominations were made. Secretary Tuft closed the nominations. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Reid was absent. Motion carried. Commissioner Aberman was elected as President.

President Aberman asked for nominations for Vice President. Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj nominated Commissioner Jaffe. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. No other nominations were made. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye.



Commissioner Reid was absent. Motion carried. Ezra Jaffe was elected as Vice President.

Commissioner Jaffe moved to appoint Michelle Tuft as Secretary of the Board of Park Commissioners. Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj seconded the motion. On a voice vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Reid was absent. Motion carried.

Commissioner Jaffe moved to approve the appointment of William Schmidt as Treasurer of the Board of Park Commissioners. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. On a voice vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Reid was absent. Motion carried.

### **APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

President Aberman asked the Board to review current committee chairs and to choose a committee. The committee chairs are as follows:

Vice President Jaffe – Finance Committee  
Commissioner Williams – Recreation Committee  
Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj – Parks Committee  
Commissioner Reid – Marketing Committee

No motion required.

### **APPOINTMENT OF OPEN MEETINGS ACT OFFICER AND ALTERNATE**

Commissioner Jaffe moved to appoint Michelle Tuft as the open meetings act officer and Bill Schmidt as the alternate. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. On a voice vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Reid was absent. Motion carried.

### **APPOINTMENT OF FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT OFFICERS**

Commissioner Jaffe moved to appoint Michelle Tuft, Bill Schmidt, Corrie Guynn and Breanne Labus as Freedom of Information Act Officers. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. On a voice vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Reid was absent. Motion carried.

### **ADOPTION OF OFFICIAL MEETING DAY, TIME, AND LOCATION**

The board meetings are the third Tuesday of each month with one exception. Ms. Tuft explained that the April board meeting is usually moved back one week to allow thirty days after the budget is approved at the March board meeting.

Ms. Tuft asked if the board meeting time could be changed to 6:00 p.m. Everyone agreed to move the board meetings to 6:00 p.m. beginning in June.

Commissioner Williams moved to adopt the third Tuesday of the month at 6:00 p.m. at the Weber Leisure Center as the official meeting date, time, and location for the Skokie Park District Board of Park Commissioners for the fiscal year 2024-2025 with the

exception of the April board meeting which will be held on the fourth Tuesday of the month. Commissioner Jaffe seconded the motion. On a voice vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Reid was absent. Motion carried.

**ADOPTION OF OFFICIAL DEPOSITORIES**

Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj moved that Wintrust Financial, Chase Bank N.A, Wells Fargo Corporate Trust Services, First Bank Chicago, Illinois Institutional Investors Trust, Bank of New York, Zions Bank, Park Ridge Bank and Ehlers Bond Trust Services be approved as official depositories for the Skokie Park District for fiscal year 2024-2025. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. On a voice vote, all Commissioners voted aye, except for Commissioner Jaffe who abstained. Commissioner Reid was absent. Motion carried.

**ADOPTION OF OFFICIAL SIGNATORIES FOR BANKING PURPOSES**

Commissioner Jaffe moved that the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer be designated as official signatories of the Skokie Park District for banking purposes for fiscal year 2024-2025. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. On a voice vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Reid was absent. Motion carried.

**ADOPTION OF OFFICIAL PUBLICATION FOR LEGAL NOTICES**

Commissioner Williams moved to designate the Pioneer Press - Skokie Review as the official publication of the Skokie Park District for the fiscal year of 2024-2025. Commissioner Jaffe seconded the motion. On a voice vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Reid was absent. Motion carried.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Jaffe moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Reid was absent. Motion carried. The annual meeting adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

  
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Ezra Jaffe  
Vice President

  
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Michelle Tuft  
Secretary

June 18, 2024