



**MINUTES OF THE
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
PUBLIC HEARING ON IMPROVEMENTS AT ONÖNDOWA'GA PARK
PARK SERVICES
OCTOBER 14, 2024 - 6:00 P.M.**

ATTENDANCE AT MEETING

Board Members Present: President Susan Aberman
Vice-President Ezra Jaffe
Commissioner Antonia Kasala-Terihaj
Commissioner Elsa Fischer

Others Present: Executive Director Michelle J. Tuft
Superintendent of Parks, Planning & Facilities Corrie Guynn
Office Manager Park Services Anjum Hava
Horticultural Supervisor Jim Hallm
Operations Supervisor Peter Haben

CALL TO ORDER

Executive Director Michelle Tuft called the public hearing of the Board of Park Commissioners for the improvements at Onöndowa'ga Park to order at 6:00 p.m.

INTRODUCTIONS

Executive Director Michelle Tuft introduced herself, President Susan Aberman, Vice President Ezra Jaffe, Commissioner Antonia Kasala-Terihaj, Commissioner Elsa Fischer, Superintendent of Parks, Planning & Facilities Corrie Guynn, Horticultural Supervisor Jim Hallm, Operations Supervisor Peter Haben and Office Manager Park Services Anjum Hava.

Onöndowa'ga PARK PLAYGROUND REPLACEMENT AND PARK AMENITY UPDATES

Executive Director Michelle Tuft explained the reasons for changing the name of Seneca Park to Onöndowa'ga Park and provided the history, research, and survey results behind the name change. Executive Director Tuft stated that the meaning of Onöndowa'ga Park is "People of The Great Hill" and that a new park sign will include a QR code that links to the Skokie Park District's website where there will be a pronunciation of the park listed as well as history, past and present, of the Onöndowa'ga Tribe.

Mr. Guynn presented the design for Onöndowa'ga Park playground and other amenities. The renovation will include a new park sign to reflect the corrected park name, playground equipment, water fountain with bottle filler, timber replacements, concrete repairs, benches, garbage cans, picnic tables, landscape improvements, and possibly a new shelter, depending on feedback received at this meeting.

There are two playground options. A playground with a shelter and a playground without a shelter. The playground without a shelter will provide more play value because there will be more funds available to spend on the equipment due to not paying for a shelter. The playground with a shelter will include a 16x16 shelter. The footprint and the orientation of the park will not change.

The new benches are memorial benches where personalized plaques can be placed on the bench.

The timeline is:

- Demolition will happen in November/December.
- Internal construction to take place through the winter.
- Installation and remaining construction will take place in late spring/early summer.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

A resident inquired if a study was done to determine how many people use the shelter throughout the year. Mr. Guynn said this park does not have a rentable shelter so there are no attendance figures or reports available.

A resident asked if the surface will be wood fiber or soft foam. Mr. Guynn said the surface will be engineered wood fiber as it is more cost effective.

Residents asked if there will be picnic benches placed in the area where the shelter is currently located, even if there is no shelter. Mr. Guynn stated that there will be picnic tables placed on concrete where the shelter is currently. Some residents said they prefer not having a shelter to avoid unnecessary hangouts that cause trouble in the neighborhood.

Residents asked if lights could be placed in the shelter. Mr. Guynn explained there is no electricity in the park so it would be expensive to add power. Executive Director Tuft agreed and said that installing electricity at the park would be expensive and would take away from the play value within the playground.

Residents inquired about planting areas. Mr. Guynn said trees would not be removed and the elevated beds will stay where they are and will be replanted.


Residents asked for signs regarding dogs in the park. Mr. Guynn said that there are signs in the park, but new signs are coming soon that will also include a QR code that directs patrons to the park ordinance which states the rules and regulations.

CLOSING COMMENTS

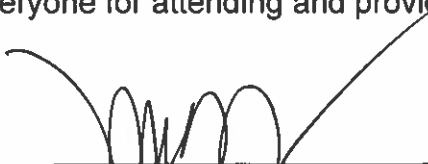
Executive Director Tuft stated that if there are ever any issues at the park that require immediate attention, call the Skokie police non-emergency number, and report it. The park district and the police department have a great relationship and work well together to address any problems or issues at any of the parks or facilities.

ADJOURNMENT

Executive Director Michelle Tuft thanked everyone for attending and providing input, and adjourned the meeting at 6:40 p.m.



Susan Aberman
President



Michelle Tuft
Executive Director

Vision Statement
The Skokie Park District envisions a community where all of its residents enjoy a high quality of life through leisure time pursuits, beautiful open spaces, and first-rate facilities.

Mission Statement
The Skokie Park District will realize its vision through teamwork, community partnerships, sound fiscal management, and creativity in every area of its operation.

Core Values
The Skokie Park District will fulfill its mission through:
●Commitment● Integrity● Innovation● Service ●Openness ●Environmental Stewardship ●Inclusiveness