

**MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
SKOKIE PARK DISTRICT
JULY 16, 2024
6:00 P.M.**

ATTENDANCE AT MEETING

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

Others Present: Executive Director/Secretary Michelle J. Tuft
Superintendent of Business Services William G. Schmidt
Superintendent of Recreation Breanne Labus
Marketing and Communications Director Jim Bottorff
Executive Administrative Assistant Ann Perez

CALL TO ORDER

President Aberman called the regular meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners to order at 6:00p.m. President Aberman called for the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

There were no citizen comments.

CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL

President Aberman removed the minutes for the June 18, 2024 regular board meeting from consent.

Vice President Jaffe moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried. The Consent Agenda consisted of the bills payable for the month of June/July 2024, Treasurer's Report, and Staff Reports.

There was a correction to the June 18, 2024 minutes. The motion to approve the 2024-25 District and Division goals was added. Vice President Jaffe moved to approve the amended minutes of the June Regular Board meeting of June 18, 2024. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL FOR THE RENTAL OF TENTS, CHAIRS, TABLES, FENCING AND
LIGHTING BID FOR THE BACKLOT BASH 2024**

Superintendent Labus requested approval for the rental of tents, chairs, tables, fencing and lighting bid for the 2024 Backlot Bash. Ms. Labus said there was one bidder, House

of Rental, for a cost of \$39,217.50. The bid was a few hundred dollars less than last year's bid. The total may change depending on the number of sponsorship and/or community resource tents. The District has a good relationship with House of Rental and has used them for many years. Staff recommend approving the bid.

Commissioner Jaffe asked if the number of tents is the same as last year and Ms. Labus said it may fluctuate depending on the sponsorship and/or community resource tents. Ms. Labus said sponsorship for Backlot Bash is looking great and asked Jim Bottorff what has been received to date and he said \$44,000.

Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj was contacted by someone interested in being a sponsor. Ms. Labus said to email her the information and she will pass it on to the Sponsorship Coordinator.

Commissioner Williams moved to approve the House of Rental bid of tents, chairs, tables, fencing, and lighting at the Backlot Bash in 2024, with the option to renew for \$39,217.50. Vice President Jaffe seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

REVIEW OF SKOKIE PARK DISTRICT VISION STATEMENT, MISSION STATEMENT AND CORE VALUES

Executive Director Tuft asked the board to review the District's Vision Statement, Mission Statement and Core Values. Ms. Tuft feels they represent what the park district is and has no recommended changes.

President Aberman asked for the new Commissioner's input. All Commissioners reviewed them and did not have any changes.

Antonia Kasalo-Terihaj moved to approve the park district Vision Statement, Mission Statement, and Core Values. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioner voted aye. Motion carried.

NATIVE PARK NAMES

As part of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives the district is addressing its native park names. Staff has been working with the Mitchell Museum in Evanston who is assisting with reaching out to tribal nations, to seek their opinions on the park names. A community wide listening session was held last year and tribal nations were sent a survey early this year.

There were only four responses to the survey, and one email, from the following tribal nations: Pohatan (2), Sequoya, Menomonie and Seneca.

The Pohatan Nation recommended changing the park name to a tribe native to Skokie as they are located in Virginia. Ms. Tuft suggested renaming the park to one of the tribes recognized in the District's Land Acknowledgement Statement, and recommended Potawatomi Park. Potawatomi was a prevalent tribe in the area. There

was discussion and Ms. Tuft will reach out to the Potawatomi tribe to see if they would be interested in having a park named after their tribe.

The recommendation for Sequoia Park was to change the spelling to Sequoyah, which is the way the native tribe spells it.

The tribe recommendation for Menominee Park is to change the park name to Mamaceqtaw Park, their native language, and eliminate the word zoo from the sign.

At Seneca Park, the recommendation is to change the name to Onodowa'ga Park, their native language, and add People of the Great Hill under the name. This is how the Seneca Nation refers to their tribe.

All the other native parks will keep their current names unless the district is approached by the tribal nation and then discussions can resume.

Vice President Jaffe said it is important that we understand the pronunciation of the park names. Staff will make sure information on how to correctly pronounce the new names is available on the website.

Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj moved to change the name of Sequoia Park to Sequoyah Park. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. On a roll call vote all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj moved to change the name of Menominee Park to Mamacequaw Park. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj moved to change the name of Seneca Park to Onodowa'ga Park (People of the Great Hill). Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

President Aberman suggested looking into what other park districts or county forest preserves have done when renaming native parks and name pronunciations.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The next regular meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners is Tuesday, August 20, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

This was the first time Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj attended the Hot Dogs in the Park event and said staff did a great job and that it was a lot of fun.

Commissioner Williams enjoyed the 4th of July Parade and complimented Vice President Jaffe who played some really good music.

President Aberman said the fireworks show was fabulous and the traffic leaving the fireworks show, despite the Oakton Bridge being under construction, was very organized. The Skokie Police did a great job directing traffic.

Commissioner Williams said people came to see the fireworks from Chicago because Navy Pier did not have the fireworks show this year and enjoyed it.

Commissioner Williams said the new rack system at the Oakton pickleball courts is great. People are loving it, and residents understand how to use it now.

Commissioner Williams and Vice President Jaffe received a message on Facebook from the Skokie Pickleball group asking for designated times for Open Play on Wednesdays from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. and Sunday 9 to 11 a.m. Ms. Labus said there are many hours of open pickleball and suggested calling these time slots something different. It was suggested to come up with another name for these times. Ms. Labus will look into it.

Vice President Jaffe asked about renting the Oakton Park pickleball courts. Ms. Labus said she and Allan Khnanisho are looking into this, we do not currently rent them.

Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj asked if the park district did all the work at Schack Park. Ms. Tuft said the school asked to use the tennis court for storage during the renovation and then resurfaced them. A damaged sidewalk was repaired by the park district but will be reimbursed by the school district. Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj said it looks really good.

DIRECTORS COMMENTS

Ms. Tuft reminded the board to sign up online for the Liponi Mini-Golf event on Wednesday, August 7 at Sports Park.

The next Hot Dogs in the Park event is at Shabonee Park on Tuesday, July 23. Buona Beef will give out free sandwiches and sell them as well.

Ms. Tuft informed the board that there are upcoming input planning sessions for Sports Park East. Three sessions are planned with the affiliates, staff, and the general public. The consultant will attend the August board meeting to facilitate an input session with the Commissioners.

President Aberman received an IAPD email about the Consolidated Elections in April 2025. The filing dates have moved up four weeks. Signature packets can be picked up on August 20. There will be four open positions on the board, one 2-year term, two 6-year terms, and one 4-year term.

Ms. Tuft asked if the board wanted to consider the candidates that applied for the open commissioner positions earlier this year, to fill former Commissioner Reid's open board position. They decided to interview the top three candidates based on the current

commissioner's recommendations. President Aberman will distribute the questions and commissioners can edit them. The interviews will be done in one night. Ms. Tuft and President Aberman will organize the meetings and work on dates for the interviews.

Ms. Tuft recommended naming a park after former Commissioner Mike Reid. She would like to honor him for his over twenty years of service on the Park Board of Commissioners. She passed out the park policy for naming parks and provided a list of parks that could be renamed. The Commissioners reviewed the list and agreed on the possible parks to be renamed. Ms. Tuft will have Mr. Reid select the park.

President Aberman said she spoke with a representative from Cook County and they suggested honoring Mike Reid by organizing a drive by parade. The Commissioners thought these were all great ideas.

OLD BUSINESS

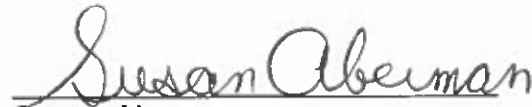
There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

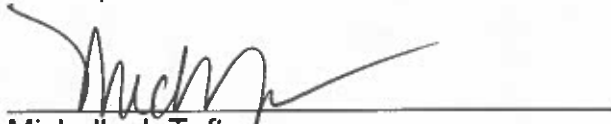
There was no new business.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE REGULAR MEETING

Vice President Jaffe moved to adjourn the regular meeting. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried. The regular meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.



Susan Aberman
President



Michelle J. Tuft
Secretary

August 20, 2024