

**MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
SKOKIE PARK DISTRICT
NOVEMBER 19, 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

Remote Attendance: Commissioner Elsa Fischer

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
Business Services Manager Laura Le
IT System and Support Manager Amanda Catania
IT Assistant Dylan Kehoe
Executive Administrative Assistant Ann Perez

CALL TO ORDER

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

President Aberman asked Commissioner Fischer to confirm that her audio is working properly acknowledging that she could hear all board members. President Aberman asked all board members if they could hear Commissioner Fischer, and all responded yes.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

There were no citizen comments.

CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL

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 minutes of the Public Hearing for Onöndowa'ga Park of October 14, 2024, Regular Board Meeting of October 15, bills payable for the month of October/November 2024, Treasurer's Report, and Staff Reports.

4TH OF JULY PARADE COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON REPORT

Mr. Richard Evonitz from the 4th of July Parade Committee spoke to the Board and presented parade pictures showing participation in the parade. Mr. Evonitz said the committee was very grateful for the Park District's support. Mr. Evonitz said the committee members are all volunteers who are dedicated and devoted citizens of Skokie that feel very passionate about the 4th of July parade. There were seventy-nine parade units in the 2024 parade, and it brought a lot of joy to the community.

President Aberman thanked Mr. Evonitz for his report and service. Ms. Tuft also thanked Mr. Evonitz for his dedication and service to the community.

APPROVAL OF THE TAX LEVY ORDINANCE #24-005

Treasurer Schmidt presented the tax levy process and discussed it in detail. The proposed 2024 tax levy is \$9,793,000 which does not include debt service costs, or the loss and cost factor added by the County. The rate increase is 3.4% and the EAV is estimated to increase by 1%. Vice President Jaffe said the report was great, stating the district is in a relatively healthy position and would like to review the increase next year in October.

Commissioner Williams moved to approve the 2024 Tax Levy Ordinance #24-005 in the amount of \$9,793,000. This does not include debt service costs, or the loss and cost factor added by the County. Vice President Jaffe seconded the motion. On a roll call vote all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

AUTHORIZATION FOR BUSINESS RELATED TRAVEL FOR PARK BOARD COMMISSIONERS

Mr. Schmidt said the board must approve business-related travel for the Commissioners who are attending the IAPD/IPRA Conference in January.

Vice President Jaffe moved to approve business related travel for President Aberman, Commissioners' Kasalo-Terihaj, Williams, and Fischer to the IAPD/IPRA Conference in January 2025. Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF CREDENTIALS FOR THE IAPD ANNUAL MEETING

Every year IAPD holds their annual meeting at the IAPD/IPRA Conference in January. The board must designate a delegate to vote, a first alternate, and a second alternate.

Commissioner Fischer moved to approve Commissioner Fischer as the Skokie Park District delegate, Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj as first alternate and Commissioner Williams as second alternate to the IAPD annual business meeting on January 25, 2025. Vice President Jaffe seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

VENDING CONTRACT APPROVAL

Ms. Tuft asked the board to approve a vending contract with Avcoa. The district has used Avcoa for over thirty years, but they only provided snacks in the vending machines. The new contract will include beverages. The district will receive 30% of the vending revenue. The vending machines are not a large revenue source, but they do provide a convenience for the residents that use our facilities. Avcoa will also be upgrading the vending machines. Vice President Jaffe asked if we pay any money up front and we do not.

Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj asked about having healthy snack options. Avcoa can provide healthy snacks in the machines.

Vice President Jaffe moved to approve the contract with Avcoa Inc. for all vending services. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN APPROVAL

Ms. Tuft said the comprehensive master plan expires in 2025 and it needs an update. The district has worked with Hitchcock Design Group to develop the last two plans and wants to continue to use them. The master plan is a big undertaking for staff who work with the consultant to compile information for the plan. This is also a Distinguished Agency Accreditation requirement.

Commissioner Kasalo-Terihaj moved to approve the Comprehensive Master Plan Proposal from Hitchcock Design Group for \$68,700 plus reimbursables. Commissioner Fischer seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

2024 CAMP REPORT AND 2025 CAMP FEES APPROVAL

Ms. Labus presented the 2024 Camp Report providing an overview of camp registration, survey results, fee assistance and inclusion, camp financials, and the proposed 2025 camp fees and camp plans.

There were over 2,500 campers in 2024.

The format for 2025 camp registration will be the same as in 2024 as it was very successful.

The theme for 2025 is Color Camp with Kindness and staff will complete a mural project with campers.

There will be several camp name changes as well as camp location changes.

Commissioner Williams said staff did a nice job with camp. Her son has been attending summer camp and is looking forward to next year. She has seen the improvements on

the website and the camp app. She has received great reviews from parents, the prices are competitive, and there are many kids in multiple camps. Kudos to all.

Vice President Jaffe asked about the increases in camp costs and Ms. Labus explained that the higher expenses were due to the minimum wage increase and higher costs in bussing, field trips, food supplies and general expenses. There will be another minimum wage increase in January.

Ms. Tuft complimented Ms. Labus and Ms. Amato and explained how they held a recap meeting with the camp supervisors and received a lot of feedback that will be incorporated into the 2025 season.

Commissioner Fischer thanked staff for the report. She said it was awesome and was very detailed.

Vice President Jaffe said this was a good report.

President Aberman said it is fabulous that they will be adding a Learn to Skate Camp.

President Aberman said addressing communication is something that staff need to do, and Ms. Labus said they are trying to improve communication every year. Ms. Amato said an all-camp staff training was held this past year and it was very successful. They will do it again next year and plan on providing training to staff on the camp app so that it is not just the supervisors who are familiar with how to use it.

Commissioner Williams moved to approve the 2025 camp fees as proposed. Vice President Jaffe seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The next regular meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners is Tuesday, December 17, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. President Aberman will not be able to attend.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

Commissioner Williams said Scream Scene was incredible. She attended on a Saturday night and Mr. Guynn and the staff did a great job. She said it gets better every year.

DIRECTORS COMMENTS

Ms. Tuft did not have any comments.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice President Jaffe moved to adjourn the regular meeting. Commissioner Fischer seconded the motion. On a roll call vote all Commissioner voted aye. Motion carried. The regular meeting adjourned at 7:13 p.m.



Susan Aberman
President



Michelle J. Tuft
Secretary

December 17, 2024