

WESTERN SPRINGS PARK BOARD MEETING MINUTES
December 8, 2009 (BOARD APPROVED 2/9/10)

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Jim Havlat
Janet Gassmann
Wendy Bastyr
Bob Daman
Jennifer Cromheecke
Kristin Keese
M. Damian Marshall

OTHERS PRESENT

Robert Ekroth, Park District Attorney
Craig Himmelmann, Director of Parks
Maribeth Newell, Park Board Secretary
Deb Lyons, Village Trustee
Tracy Alden, Dir. Of Recreation
Amy Avakian, Safety Village

President Jim Havlat called the December 8, 2009 Western Springs Park District Board Meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Commissioner Daman motioned with a second by Commissioner Keese to approve the November 3, 2009 meeting minutes as written, which motion was carried by all on voice vote.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS AND PERSONS TO BE HEARD FROM THE FLOOR:

Amy Avakian, representative of Safety Village approached the Board regarding the possibility of building a Safety Village in Western Springs. Ms. Avakian explained that the original Safety Village was opened 28 years ago in Hinsdale. The program was started as a memorial to her sister who was killed in a traffic incident while crossing a street. Currently they enroll 200 children per year and there is a waiting list in Hinsdale. They would like to expand the program to reach more children. They instruct children in traffic, poison, water and fire safety. She will be working with her sister and a family friend. All are volunteering their time to get the new program up and running. Ms. Avakian has contacted the Recreation Center, Police and Fire Departments, and Dr. Barnhart of District 101. All are in support of the program. She distributed an informational packet to the Commissioners for their review. A general discussion ensued regarding possible locations and lot size requirements. It was agreed that the parking lot at Forest Hills School would be the best location. Director Himmelmann will measure the lot to see if it can accommodate the miniature buildings used in the course. All of the Commissioners were in favor of this program. Director Himmelmann will work with Ms. Avakian to find the most suitable accommodations. The program will probably run from June 21st through July 3rd and participants will register through the Recreation Department.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED

Director Himmelmann distributed a copy of a letter to the editor. The letter was written by a resident who is opposed to the possible field turf installation in Spring Rock Park. He also distributed a copy of an apology letter from a youth who had vandalized Ridgewood Park. The apology was appreciated by the Board as well as a check from the youth's parents to cover the cost of repairs.

TRUSTEE REPORT

Trustee Lyons reported that the Village held its 2010 Budget meeting with no public comment. It was a short meeting and she does not have a lot to report.

The Police Department is beginning Operation Candy Cane at Hillgrove and Wolf Road. It is a positive reinforcement approach to wearing seatbelts. If you are caught wearing a seatbelt, you will receive a candy cane.

Trustee Lyons asked the Commissioners to complete a downtown survey on the Village website.

RECREATION DEPARTMENT REPORT

Director Alden reported that they will hold a Recreation Department Commissioner's meeting next Monday. He also asked that a field scheduling meeting be scheduled as soon as possible. President Havlat will contact him with a date and time.

The annual Tower Trot is being rerouted due to the Village's aggressive road improvement plans. They will need Forest Hills Park to serve as the hub for the next 3 to 5 years. Tower Trot is held on the Saturday morning of Memorial Day weekend each year. Director Alden will request AYSO to hold off on games until 11:00 a.m. on that day. A general discussion ensued regarding the best relocation of the Tower Trot hub. The Commissioners agreed that Forest Hills Park would be the best solution.

Finally, Director Alden reminded the Board that the deadline for the Tower Topics is 12/18/09.

OLD BUSINESS

TIMBER TRAILS REIMBURSEMENT

Attorney Ekroth has not yet heard back from Mike Jurassic.

LYONS TOWNSHIP BOND MONEY

President Havlat attended a Township meeting. They stated that there were 22 submittals and commented on which projects seemed good, and Western Springs Park District's request for the artificial turf field was one of the favored requests. The Township also informed the attendees that they probably will not award the full amounts requested. A decision will not be made until February, 2010.

A general discussion ensued regarding possible ways to fund any shortfall in the bond money, if it is granted. President Havlat noted that the damages caused by the football league will cost approximately \$40,000.00 to \$60,000.00 to repair. He has suggested to the league that they make only the most necessary repairs and channel the rest of the funds towards the artificial turf. Director Alden noted that it will be a muddy season for Lacrosse and he will try to keep them off the field until May.

LTSC IRRIGATION GRANT

President Havlat reported that LTSC has stated that they will pay for all costs of the irrigation projection if they receive the grant. They are requesting that the Park District pay for the cost of the grading improvements required in the field. Director Himmelmann spoke to the project engineer and the Village engineer regarding crowning the field. Due to the fact that it is located in a flood plain, it could be a very large undertaking both in labor and cost. If we import any soil to crown the field, it would pull a trigger to create detention and we do not have space to create any detention. Alternatively, if we push existing soil into a crown, it creates its own problems. Crowns always settle through years of activities. This project may just be cost prohibitive.

Director Himmelmann will contact LTSC and tell them about these concerns.

USER GROUP FEES/DISTRICT 101 PARKS

Vice President Gassmann reported that she is searching the archives for land acquisition and sale records. Commissioner Cromheecke informed the Board that the park lands around the schools were acquired in 1945. We are no longer in a magnanimous position. We pay a yearly insurance premium of \$1,000.00; replacement of woodchips is approximately \$100,000.00 (on a rotating basis). Vice President Gassmann stated that it costs approximately \$27,000.00 per year to maintain the three parks that schools in the district are allowed to use. Director Himmelmann also noted that the schools have a tennis program and they use our courts. We pay approximately \$4,400.00 per court to repaint them.

The Park and School Districts have enjoyed a good relationship over the years. It is important to the Park District that we maintain this relationship. However, in fairness to all the other user groups who pay fees to the Park District, it only seems fair that the School Districts pay their fair share as well.

Commissioners Gassmann and Cromheecke will continue to write a proposal which they will present to Dr. Barnhart and the School Board.

WEBMASTER, WEB PAGE & TELEPHONE

Vice President Gassmann included an outline of services from Pat Schramm in the monthly Board packet. Director Himmelmann informed the Board that Trifecta and Comcast were decided on for phone and internet. We should see a significant savings. It should be installed and running by Christmas. President Havlat asked Vice President Gassmann to ask Mr. Schramm to provide a monthly summary of tasks that he performs for the website and computer issues.

PERSONNEL HANDBOOK

Vice President Gassmann reported that she now has the rough draft downloaded on her computer. She has edited one section and sent it on to Director Himmelmann for his review. She will continue to work through the document and forward the edited sections to Director Himmelmann.

COMMISSIONER'S HANDBOOK

President Havlat stated that the handbook is a work in progress. He asked Attorney Ekroth and Director Himmelmann to let him know where he could access files that contain the history of the parks.

SAFETY

Director Himmelmann reported that an employee had a minor accident this month. A Park District vehicle's mirror came in contact with a van. PDRMA has been notified and we are going through the proper channels. There will be no deductible. There were no injuries as a result of this incident.

NEW BUSINESS

ORDINANCE 2009-8 REDUCING THE TAX LEVY ACCORDING TO THE PROVISION OF THE TAX CAP

Treasurer Bastyr informed the Board that this is a directive to the Cook County Clerk's Office that, in the event there is a reduction on the tax levy, we are requesting that all dollars be deducted from our Corporate Fund and not across the board.

MOTION: Treasurer Bastyr motioned to pass Ordinance 2009-8 directing the Cook County Clerk's office to reduce the 2009 tax levy in a certain manner according to the provision of the tax cap, which Ordinance was passed on roll call vote: Daman, aye; Bastyr, aye; Cromheecke, aye; Gassmann, aye; Havlat, aye; Keese, aye; Marshall, absent.

ORDINANCE 2009-7 ORDINANCE APPROVING A PROPERTY TAX LEVY FOR THE YEAR 2009

MOTION: Treasurer Bastyr motioned to pass Ordinance 2009-7 approving a property tax levy for the year 2009 to be collected in 2010, which motion was passed on roll call vote: Daman, aye; Bastyr, aye; Cromheecke, aye; Gassmann, aye; Havlat, aye; Keese, aye; Marshall, absent.

RESOLUTION 2009-8 FOR APPROVAL OF 2010 MEETING SCHEDULE

MOTION: President Havlat motioned to pass Resolution 2009-8 establishing regular meeting dates for the Western Springs Park District for the year 2010, with meetings being held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month in the Board Room of the Village Hall of the Village of Western Springs, Cook County, Illinois, with the exception of November, 2010 which will be held on the 1st Tuesday to allow for tentative budget approval and the 30 days required for public review, which Resolution was passed on roll call vote: Daman, aye; Bastyr, aye; Cromheecke, aye; Gassmann, aye; Havlat, aye; Keese, aye; Marshall, absent.

ORDINANCE 2009-6 APPROVING BUDGET FOR THE YEAR 2010

Treasurer Bastyr informed the Board that the Park District is changing its accounting to a modified accrual. This will increase the yearly auditing expense by approximately \$1,200.00 per year and a one-time fee of \$1,000.00. President Havlat noted that the benefit of the accrual basis was that it is a government accounting standard. It has consistently been noted in the year-end audits that the change is recommended.

MOTION: Treasurer Bastyr motioned to pass Ordinance #2009-6, approving a budget with total budgeted expenses of \$867,622.00 for the year 2010, which Ordinance was passed on roll call vote: Daman, aye; Bastyr, aye; Cromheecke, aye; Gassmann, aye; Havlat, aye; Keese, aye; Marshall, absent.

TREASURERS REPORT

Treasurer Bastyr submitted the November 30, 2009 Financial Report as written. She also noted that we have received income from real estate taxes and we are waiting for the final payment of \$30,000.00 from the Village. There is a CD maturing this week and she will renew it. Additionally funds will be removed from the Illinois Fund because the interest is negligible. This will be moved to a CD. The total will exceed \$250,000.00 but the bank will secure the overage. President Havlat inquired if we have enough liquid assets in the event that the turf field project comes to fruition. Treasurer Bastyr stated that we will have ample liquid funds.

MOTION

Treasurer Bastyr motioned with a second by Vice President Gassmann to approve the November 30, 2009 Financial Report, with an ending balance of \$893,278.00. which motion was passed by all on voice vote.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Himmelmann submitted his report as written. He noted that the RPZ relocation is done in the Spring Rock Park drain line. The playground safety audit is complete. It is a new format. It point out that we need to continue replacing and augmenting wood chips every year. It also suggests that we are short on signage and fencing along streets. CPSC and ASTMS recommend that parks that are located a certain distance from the street have fencing. Director Himmelmann will write up a final report and the Commissioners will receive a copy. Commissioner Keese inquired about progress in reconfiguring the Spring Rock Park lower level parking lot for pick-up and drop-off of children at sporting events. Director Himmelmann stated that he discussed the idea with engineers. Handicap parking cannot be moved. They need to be located the closest to the curb cuts. We can purchase red and black rubber speed bumps with reflectors at a cost of \$25.00 each. They could not be installed until spring time.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORTS

DAMAN: asked Director Himmelmann about ground water issues in Spring Rock Park and possible impact on the installation of a turf field. Director Himmelmann informed him that he has been very vocal with WT Engineering regarding these issues and they seem confident that they will not present a problem. President Havlat asked Director Himmelmann to schedule a meeting with WT Engineering and Commissioner Daman to review all concerns. Director Himmelmann will schedule a meeting with Jason Green and Todd Abrams of WT Engineering. He will contact Commissioner Daman with date and time.

BASTYR: asked Director Himmelmann when we normally receive payment from Sprint.

Director Himmelmann stated that he will have to research it. The contracts never specified exact payment dates.

Treasurer Bastyr also inquired whether or not the cancer walk had been resolved. Director Himmelmann will contact the American Cancer Society again about the timing of their event and the LTHS cancer walk being held on the same weekend.

KEESE: nothing further to report.

GASSMANN: asked for any items that we want to include in the Tower Topics.

HAVLAT: nothing further to report.

MARSHALL: absent.

CROMHEECKE: nothing further to report.

HIMMELMANN: nothing further to report.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION TO ADJOURN: Treasurer Bastyr motioned with a second by Vice President Gassmann to adjourn the December 8, 2009 Western Springs Park Board Meeting at 9:05 p.m., which motion was carried by all on voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Maribeth Newell
Park Board Secretary