



DRAFT

MEETING MINUTES

PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

Robert Crown Center, 1801 Main St.

6:00pm on Thursday, September 21, 2023

Members Present: D. Michelin, R. Bush, M. Rosinski, J. Bryan, E. Shevick, J. Totch,
K. Machut, P. Gregory (by phone)

Members Absent:

Staff Present: A. Thompson, M. Callahan, M. Poole

Other Present: M. Simonette, J. Deeb

DECLARATION OF QUORUM

With a quorum present the meeting was called to order.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Action: Motion Passed: Approval of the August 17 meeting minutes.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

J. Deeb, is a member of the Evanston Arts Council and the Public Art Working Group. He explained that the working group handles public art, some of which is installed in the parks. The working group is in the process of finalizing the Sculpture in the Park Lease Program and if everything goes well, installation of sculptures will start in November and remain for approximately 2 years. He extended an invitation for members of the Board to join the Public Art Working Group as community members. This would be a way to open a line of communication between the Arts Council and Rec Board without forming a new committee. Members of the working group would report back to their respective Boards. The working group meets on the 1st Tuesday at 6:30pm at the Civic Center.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

Community Affiliate Program

The Parks and Recreation Department created a Community Affiliate Program. The program establishes a fair, equitable, and cost-effective system in which to manage limited facility resources and administer reservations at the Parks and Recreation Department. This program is similar to the Sports Affiliate Program. For an organization to be a part of the Community Affiliate Program they will have to meet a

minimum set of requirements laid out in the application and approved by the Parks and Recreation Board. This item will be on the October agenda to allow members enough time to review the document.

M. Rosinski requestes to receive a comprehensive list of rental space and rental fees at the centers for the affiliates.

Parks and Recreation / Arts Council Subcommittee

Instead of creating a subcommittee, the Board will assign two of its members to serve on the Public Art Working Group. This item will be on the October agenda for anyone to volunteer or be appointed.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Presentation to City Council on Top 10 Priorities for the Capital Improvement Projects

R. Bush reported on the September 18 City Council meeting where he presented the Board's recommendation on the top 10 priorities for the capital improvement projects.

Some Board members were disappointed that L. Biggs did not request a greater number of staff positions when she was asked by a council member, how many additional staff she needs. It was suggested that staff put together a list of positions we think we need to get our parks in shape and add as an addendum to L. Biggs legacy park recommendation.

There was brief discussion on the parks and recreation department becoming a park district. J. Totch said he knows of at least two councilmembers who supports the idea but the Parks and Recreation Board would need to discuss and lead the charge. It was decided to revisit this discussion in 2024.

Parks and Recreation 2024 Budget

Projected 2024 revenues are estimated at \$7,726,750 and the projected expenses are estimated at \$14,454,784. The general fund will cover the difference of \$6,728,034 which represents 46% of the overall budget. Most of the expenses come from staffing.

Monthly Parks and Recreation Department Report

Beginning in October, staff will provide a monthly report to the Board by the 5th of the month.

STAFF REPORT AND UPDATES

2023 Beach Sales and Summer Recap

Overall the summer 2023 season at the lakefront was very successful. Some highlights include.

- Improvements made to the Dempster Beach Office facility.
- A new aquatic camp boat was purchased
- Lifeguard program was managed by the Evanston Fire Department
- Life rings were installed at each beach entrance and on piers
- Two new camps: Science and Aquatics and Summer Voyagers

- Accessibility was improved with the purchase of 3 beach wheelchairs and mobi-mat at each beach
- New programs included: 4 movies at the beach, summer halloween event, sailboat regatta, expanded rentals and paddleboard yoga
- Beach pass residency was enforced this summer - resulting in \$113,146 non-resident beach pass sales, compared to \$82,817 in 2022.
- New to 2023, the Dempster St. Beach Office offered double stacking and collected cooler storage fees. This resulted in \$8,100 in additional revenue.
- 50 new lifeguards were added with a total of 127
- A public safety pier was established at Church St. Boat Launch
- Dog Beach officially opened for the first time in several years due to high lake levels
- Newly installed shade structure at Dempster St. Sailing Beach

Monthly CIP Report

The Board received a written report and had no questions.

Recreation Software Update

Staff has had several meetings with Kaizen Labs who would build a custom registration system to meet our needs. We are not comfortable moving forward with a contract without seeing the product. So Kaizen has agreed to custom build a system for fields, rentals, and park permits over the next several months, at no cost, for us to review before we sign a contract. If we choose to move forward with a contract we would bring it to the Board and City Council with plans to go live in 2025, if approved.

5th Ward School – Impacts to Programs at the Fleetwood-Jourdain Center

Demolition is scheduled begin. The city has to have everything it owns, removed from the field by October 24. There may be some impact to Fleetwood's afterschool program because the new school will also offer an afterschool program.

COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

E. Shevick reminded members of the Evanston Park Foundation's upcoming Pies for Parks fundraiser event 10am -1pm on Sat, Oct 14 at the Noyes Cultural Arts Center. J. Totch asked why the Mason park field house bathrooms are not open. M. Poole responded there had been an issue that required them to be locked but there is a portable unit on site. R. Bush read an article about the City receiving a \$802,500 grant to enhance urban forest health in channel-side parks and wanted to know why the Board was not made aware. A Thompson explained Public Works submitted the grant application and she just learned about the grant as well. R. Bush asked how are the plans coming for creating a massive pickle ball center at James Park. A Thomspson said it depends on what happens with the capital improvement vote for pickle ball. The other recommendation was Mason Park.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting ended at 7:35pm. The next scheduled meeting is 6pm, October 19, 2023 at the Fleetwood-Jourdain Center, 1655 Foster St.