

**Minutes of the Waukegan Park District
Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners
Recreation Program Advisory Committee
March 11, 2024**

The Board of Commissioners of the Waukegan Park District met in a Special Meeting of the Recreation Program Advisory Committee on March 11, 2024, at the Field House Sports, Fitness, & Aquatics Center.

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:05pm by Errick Beverly who directed a call of the roll, introductions were made, and welcomed all.

II. Roll Call

Present: Errick Beverly, Director of Recreation; Kaitlin Fischer, Superintendent of Sports, Fitness & Aquatics; Jennifer Dumas, Manager of General & Special Recreation; Javi Martinez, Manager of Fitness & Aquatics; Ty Rohrer, Manager of Cultural Arts; Brian Cowart; David Motley; Lori Nerheim; Martha Padilla-Ramos; Mercedes Rivera; Christian Torres

Absent: George Bridges, Commissioner; Jacqueline Herrera Giron, Commissioner; Jay Lerner, Executive Director; Maria Calderon; Jo Dooley; Sam Johnson; Melissa Juarez; Dulce Ortiz; Roxanne Swanson; MaryFran Troha; Jane Waller; Tina Yurik

III. Review, Discuss, Divide

A. Programming Updates

1. Waukegan Symphony Orchestra & Concert Chorus
The 2023-24 Season will be completing a full season of concerts this year. The Young People's Concert was a unique blend of music and art, the DIY Messiah was in a new space using the Trapp Auditorium to accommodate the larger orchestra and the choir from Milwaukee, and the highlight to come is the 50th Birthday Bash concert celebrating the fifty-year anniversary of the WSO with special guest conductors and soloist.
 - Committee Member comments and feedback on new location for the DIY Messiah Concert:
 - Not as handicap accessible
 - Ty Rohrer responded that better signage can be used to direct patrons to handicap parking and entrance.
 - Great space to accommodate more people, good sound, hard to see musicians on stage even when sitting close by
 - Any potential for using the Genesee Theatre?
 - Ty Rohrer responded that it is cost prohibitive without passing on the extra cost to the patrons.
2. Arts Programming & Theatre Productions
The 2023-2024 Theatre Productions include the Young Actors Theatre performance of Beauty and the Beast Jr. which had 28 student actors in October to two sold out shows, and the Teen and Adult Theatre performed Miracle of 34th Street with 35

actors in December to three sold out shows and coming up will be Matilda, Jr with 31 student actors and two shows already sold out.

- Committee member comment:
 - Are the actors in the shows only from Waukegan?
 - Ty Rohrer responded that most of the participants are from Waukegan and then we also pull from neighboring communities.

3. General and Special Recreation Programs & Events

Polar Bear Plunge was a collaborative event partnering with the City of Waukegan and had 540 Plungers, 1000 spectators and raised \$20,000 for Special Recreation programs. This was the largest plunging group and largest amount of funds raised for this event.

Eggstravaganza Trail will be on March 30 with 5 costumed bunny character stations for children to meet the characters and get plastic filled eggs. 14,000 plastic eggs are being filled for this event.

Favorite annual seasonal programs continue to be well attended. Soul Food with Sylvia England had 30 participants, Father Daughter Date Night had 80 participants, Mother Daughter Tea Party in May has maximum registration, a new program celebrating Children's Day in April has been moved to a larger space to expand registration, and the annual Plant & Flower Day sale will be in May and is a fundraiser to support new programs at the Bowen Greenhouse Urban Ag Lab.

4. Fitness & Aquatics Programs

The Women's Boot Camp program is celebrating a 5-year anniversary as an ongoing fitness program for women with 42 participants currently registered. A new program for female youth is the Girl Power program to begin in May for ages 11-14. Mother & Daughter Yoga is another fun new program to be offered in May. Our free fitness programs include once a month Zumba Fitness Nights and we will be partnering with the City of Waukegan to offer free Yoga at the Beach again this summer on Saturday mornings.

The 2nd Grade Field Trips are in full swing this school year. We offer every 2nd grade class a field trip to the Field House for a water safety and swim lesson. This includes public schools, private schools, and homeschool groups.

The pool has a busy schedule accommodating open swim, swim lessons, swim team practices and meets. Currently there are 160 swim lesson participants.

B. Facility Updates

1. Waukegan History Museum at the Carnegie is scheduled to open by the end of 2024. The addition to the original building has been completed and the windows and stonework on the outside are the current work being done. The permanent exhibit design is in the final stages of being completed which will chronicle the history of Waukegan including the natural history of the area.

- Committee member comments:
 - What is the plan for parking?

- Ty Rohrer responded that there is an agreement with the City of Waukegan and College of Lake County to use parking spaces from their lots. There is also an ADA drop off at the front of the building and there will be a few handicap spots on the side of the building.
- 2. Field House Control Desk upgrade was completed with additional workstations, permanent glass partitions, and turnstile entry.
 - Committee member comments:
 - The front desk and lobby look really nice.
 - What is happening with the SportsPark Marquee?
 - Kaitlin Fischer responded that the marquee at the SportsPark is being upgraded.
- 3. The Adaptive Recreation Center is open and is being fully used for programming. The adjacent property was acquired and will be cleared and repurposed for much needed additional parking.

C. WPD News/Updates

1. Welcomed new FT Recreation Staff
 - a. Jonathan Cochrane has been added as a FT Recreation Specialist in General Recreation focusing on nature programming.
 - b. Brooklyn Mattner has been added as a FT Recreation Specialist in Aquatics overseeing swim lessons and aquatic operations.

D. What Can We Do Better?

Committee member comments:

- It would be nice to have more active people on this committee.
 - Errick Beverly responded to let Elizabeth Fallon know if you have any suggestions for committee members.
- A cool thing possibly for the WSO would be to play the musical score for a movie. The Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra does this, and it is a lot of fun.

Errick Beverly closed the meeting by thanking the committee members for their feedback and the community for supporting all that we do.

IV. Closed Session

There was no closed session.

V. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:55pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Errick Beverly
Director of Recreation