

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
WAUKEGAN PARK DISTRICT  
August 27, 2024

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 pm.

**II. ROLL CALL OF COMMISSIONERS**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

President Anton Mathews

Treasurer Jeremiah Johnson

Commissioner Janet Kilkelly

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Vice President George Bridges

\*Commissioner Jacqueline Herrera Giron

STAFF PRESENT:

Executive Director Jay Lerner

Executive Assistant Sally Sandine, Director of Community Relations and Marketing Shelby McDonald, Director of Finance & Operations Jon Beckmann, Director of Recreation Errick Beverly, Superintendent of Sports, Fitness and Aquatics, Kaitlin Fischer, Director of Parks Quincy Bejster, and Attorney Mandi Florip.

\*Commissioner Herrera Giron entered the meeting at 4:33 pm.

**III. PUBLIC HEARING**

- A. Public Hearing concerning the intent of the Board to issue \$1,500,000 General Obligation Park Bonds for the payment of land condemned or purchased for parks, for the building, maintaining, improving and protecting of the same and the existing land and facilities of the District and for the payment of the expenses incident thereto.

The public hearing was called to order at 4:30 pm. This hearing is required in order to allow the District to issue the general obligation park bonds. Action for this ordinance will take place at the October 15th Board meeting. A timeline was included in the Board packets. Public comment was opened.

Commissioner Kilkelly asked for clarification about the location of the public posting.

There was a motion to seat Commissioner Herrera Giron by Treasurer Johnson at 4:33 pm, seconded by President Mathews. On all ayes, the motion carried.

The public hearing was closed at 4:33 pm.

#### **IV. CONSENT AGENDA**

Consent Agenda Items included the Minutes of the July 16, 2024 (Board of Commissioners Meeting), March 11, 2024 (Recreation Advisory Committee Meeting), Bills, Payroll, Financial Statements, and Travel Advance.

Motion by Commissioner Kilkelly, seconded by Treasurer Johnson to approve the Minutes of the July 16, 2024 (Board of Commissioners Meeting), March 11, 2024 (Recreation Advisory Committee Meeting), Bills, Payroll, Financial Statements, and Travel Advance, as presented.

On the roll call, the vote was as follows:

AYE: Kilkelly, Herrera Giron, Johnson and Mathews

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Bridges

Motion carried.

#### **V. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Janet Kilkelly offered public comment as a resident of Waukegan. She noted that the petition papers have been released and two Board members have announced their intent to run for reelection. She stated that it is an unfair advantage and violation of the public trust to allow a current Commissioner to be named in the event, the George Bridges 5K. Ms. Kilkelly offered a copy of the comments to be added to the record.

#### **VI. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & PRESENTATIONS**

##### **A. Introduction of new employee: Maria Contreras, Marketing and Community Relations**

Ms. McDonald introduced Maria Contreras in her new role. Ms. Contreras offered comments to the Board.

##### **B. Community Input and Presentation on Roosevelt Park Renovation**

Mr. Bejster spoke to the Board regarding the Roosevelt Park renovation. The District intends to submit for an OSLAD grant for this renovation. They held a community input meeting on August 12th and have been collecting surveys online. Trail restoration, open lawn space and an inclusive playground have all been highly requested. The focus of the grant would be on an inclusive, universal playground, as the District does not currently have one.

Commissioner Herrera Giron asked for clarification about what an inclusive, universal playground would offer. Mr. Bejster explained the key features of the design. He also stated that the closest universal playground to the District is located in Antioch.

If awarded the grant, the announcement will likely come in the spring of 2025, allowing for construction to occur in the spring of 2026.

## VI. PROGRESS REPORTS

A. Executive Director Lerner: Mr. Lerner presented his report and offered to answer any questions from the Commissioners. He also noted that he met with Alderman Martinez at the undeveloped site owned by the Park District and School District. He noted that development is on the 10-year plan. Mr. Lerner answered Board questions about this project. Commissioner Herrera Giron asked for information about Signal 88. Mr. Lerner and Mr. Bejster provided an update on the security company and the low incident rate this summer. President Mathews complimented Mr. Lerner and Ms. Sandine on completing a specific DEI training.

B. Attorney Report: Attorney Florip noted that it has been a normal summer of issues. She also stated that the Boys and Girls Club sent a mockup of a bronze plaque that they intend to put up in their building, noting the donation from the District.

C. Legislation/ IAPD Update: There are a few new pieces of legislation that were signed into law by the Governor recently, some of which that have to do with financial topics.

### D. Division Reports:

D1. Recreation: Mr. Beverly presented his report. He noted that Touch a Truck was a huge success and continues to be a great partnership with the City of Waukegan. Dandelion Wine Festival went well. Fall events are quickly approaching. They are continuing to work on the Carnegie. The school year began, and BASE had 42 kids in the first week. Mr. Beverly stated that the walking club began small and recently had 200 people at the last event.

A. Superintendent of Sports, Fitness, and Aquatics – Ms. Fischer stated that the Field House membership count is at 8,715. They are in annual cleaning days for the Field House with full day closures. The Field House will reopen on September 3rd. Yoga at the Beach will continue through September.

Commissioner Herrera Giron asked for clarification about the SplashZone attendance numbers and how it compares to before the District charged a fee. Patron numbers are higher now. The pricing is affordable and offers a family friendly atmosphere.

D2. Parks: Mr. Bejster presented his report. He noted that paving work at Bevier Park was completed earlier in the month and site restoration is complete. The Upton Park playground renovation has begun. The dredging project at Bevier Pond is going well. The kayak station has been set up and rentals are occurring. Board members asked questions about the kayaks and how they are utilized by patrons, including life vest availability.

D3. Community Relations: Ms. McDonald presented her report. She noted that she has been working on the strategic plan and OSLAD application. She provided an update to the Board regarding the community input component of the strategic plan. Berry Dunn will be at the October Board meeting to provide an overview of the input and allow the Board to provide comments. Commissioner Herrera Giron asked what languages the survey will be available in. Ms. McDonald

noted that the survey site will be translated to most languages.

D4. Finance and Administration: Mr. Beckmann presented his report. He noted that the District is making investments, as the interest rates will be dropping.

A. Budget Task Schedule FY 2025-26 – Mr. Beckmann noted the changes that the Board will see in the Budget workshops this year. He thanked staff for their feedback on this, as the process is changing to be more efficient and practical for the District.

**VIII. REVIEW, DISCUSS, DECIDE**

A. Motion to Approve Speer Financial Planning Letter and Engagement Schedule

Staff recommends approval of Speer Financial to work on facilitating the transition of the District’s annual rollover bond to pay short-term outstanding debt with a capital proceeds component. Total cost is approximately \$19,400.

Motion by Treasurer Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Herrera Giron, to approve Speer Financial Planning Letter and Engagement Schedule, as presented.

AYE: Kilkelly, Herrera Giron, Johnson and Mathews  
NAY: None  
ABSTAIN: None  
ABSENT: Bridges

Motion carried.

B. Motion to Approve Ordinance 24-07 Declaring Surplus Property

Motion by Treasurer Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Herrera Giron, to approve Ordinance 24-07 Declaring Surplus Property, as presented.

Mr. Beckmann noted that the flatbed truck is no longer needed by the District and would recommend approval to be put out for bid.

AYE: Kilkelly, Herrera Giron, Johnson and Mathews  
NAY: None  
ABSTAIN: None  
ABSENT: Bridges

Motion carried.

C. Motion to Approve Interfund Transfers

Fund	From	To
Memorial/Endow. (#51) (16-11-11-583-9999)	\$2,978.00	
	Recreation (02-13-13-473-9999)	\$2,978.00

Purpose: To provide support of the American Independence Parade.

Fund	From	To
Memorial/Endow. (#51) (16-11-11-583-9999)	\$635.76	
Recreation (02-13-13-473-9999)		\$635.76

Purpose: To provide Target Grant funds for the 2024 Kids Bike Safety Rodeo.

Motion by Treasurer Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Kilkelly, to approve interfund transfers, as presented.

AYE: Kilkelly, Herrera Giron, Johnson and Mathews

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Bridges

Motion carried.

D. Motion to Approve Updated Policies

1.11 Video Surveillance Footage Viewing

2.14 Signature Authority and Delegation

3.15 Information Technology

Motion by Commissioner Herrera Giron, seconded by Treasurer Johnson, to approve updated policies, as presented.

Treasurer Johnson asked for information regarding the addition of artificial intelligence in the policy. Mr. Beckmann noted that this will set boundaries around the usage of the AI.

On the roll call, the vote was as follows:

AYE: Kilkelly, Herrera Giron, Johnson and Mathews

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Bridges

Motion carried.

E. Discussion Regarding 2024 Levy and Direction

In the past the Board has elected to capture the maximum amount allowed under the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (PTELL) last levy cycle, referred to as the tax cap, while staying under Truth and Taxation (TNT) requirements. Mr. Beckmann is looking for Board direction for this year. He is recommending that the District have a Truth and Taxation hearing, regardless of if the cap is met or not. This will allow for full transparency and more efficiency. This will come back to the Board in November. The Board had no comments or questions.

F. Motion to Approve Updated Park Ordinances

Motion by Treasurer Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Kilkelly, to approve updated park ordinances, as presented.

Mr. Beckmann noted that he worked with the staff and attorney on the updated ordinances. He provided a brief summary of the proposed updates.

Commissioner Herrera Giron asked for clarification about the e-scooter usage.

On the roll call, the vote was as follows:

AYE: Kilkelly, Herrera Giron, Johnson and Mathews

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Bridges

Motion carried.

- G. Upcoming Meetings: Board of Commissioners Meeting, Tuesday, September 10, 2024 and October 15 or October 22, 2024 – Staff is recommending October 22, 2024 for the Board meeting. The Board decided on October 15th, 2024 for the meeting date.

**X. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM COMMISSIONERS**

Commissioner Herrera Giron thanked staff for the work done. She stated that her son loved the golf classes. She has received great feedback from residents on the program as well.

Commissioner Kilkelly stated that she has been out in the community and encountered a resident who asked about the Hinkston Park and pavilion renovations. Mr. Lerner noted that it is on the short list to complete and the Board can provide input on what should be completed first. She also asked about the crosswalk at Clearview Park. She inquired if a flashing light could be installed. Staff noted that they will look into it. She also asked for the schedule for the Fiestas Patrias parade. Ms. McDonald provided information regarding the District's involvement.

Treasurer Johnson stated that the Glow Walk was a huge success. He also noted that the soccer golf event was well attended. He thanked everyone for their work.

President Mathews thanked staff and welcomed back Maria. He congratulated Alice Swank on being the July employee of the month. He appreciated attending the NRPA urban minority leadership call. He attended the community yard sale and enjoyed the event. He thanked Partners in Parks for their golf outing and thanked Shelby for her work on the event. He attended the police outing and thanked Gabe Guzman for allowing him to say a few words. He went to the Country Lane movie in the park and it was a great event. He went to the Wake up Waukegan breakfast with staff and fellow board members. He thanked the team for all of their work on Touch a Truck. He also attended the Heart of City gala.

## **XII. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Treasurer Johnson moved, seconded by Commissioner Kilkelly to adjourn the meeting at 5:47 p.m.

On all ayes, the motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Mandi Florip  
Secretary

# Memo

To: Waukegan Park District Public Comments 8/27/2024  
From: Janet E. Kilkelly, WPD taxpayer  
CC: Mandi Florip, of Counsel and Secretary  
Date: August 27, 2024  
Re: Remarks for inclusion in public comments record

My statement is in response to the recently announced availability of Park Commissioner nomination papers. "The positions up are for the six-year positions currently held by Commissioner George Bridges, Jr. and Commissioner Jeremiah Johnson. The incumbents have announced their intention to run for re-election to the park board."

As a Waukegan Park District taxpayer, my objection is the name of our 5k Run/Walk event, the George Bridges 5k run/walk. It is an unfair advantage for a current park board commissioner as well as a violation of the public trust to promote themselves, and their branding, by means of using Park district resources, including media for their political advantage.

Let me be perfectly clear that this is not personal. These remarks would be directed to any of the commissioners including myself regarding blatant abuse of Park District resources for political gain.

