

MINUTES OF THE LINCOLNWAY SPECIAL RECREATION ASSOCIATION REGULAR BOARD MEETING HELD ON JULY 21, AT 9:30 A.M. AT THE LINCOLN WAY SPECIAL RECREATION CENTER, 1900 HEATHER GLEN DRIVE, NEW LENOX, ILLINOIS.

General Functions

Call to Order: President Chavez called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m.

Pledge of Allegiance: All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Roll was taken and those present were:
Gina Hassett, Executive Director, Frankfort Park District
Audrey Marcquenski, Director Frankfort Square Park District
Greg Vitale, Executive Director, Mokena Park District
Greg Lewis, Executive Director, New Lenox Community Park District
Renee Chavez, Executive Director, Wilmington Island Park District
Jay Kelly, Executive Director, Manhattan Park District
Barb Sim, Peotone Park District Board Commissioner
Absent: None

Others present were: LWSRA Attorney John M. O'Driscoll; Melissa Jensen, Superintendent of Recreation; Tami Pareti, Mgr. Recreation; Kristen Ehrman, Marketing, Outreach & Fundraising; Laura Capizzano, Human Resources; Marie Ventura, Accountant; Tom Kraus, Support Services Supervisor; and Mary Strand, Recording Secretary.

Guests: Belinda Olszewski, Susan Eisenbrandt, Karyn Reczek, Shannon Visser, Justin Hillman, and Lana Graser.

Treasurer's Report

- A. June 30, 2020 Treasurer's Report: Keith told the Board that the financial exhibit were using last year's budget numbers since the 2020/21 budget was not yet approved. He noted that the large payment to New Lenox is the money raised by donations for the new playground. Virtual programming brought in \$8,000. Double Good donated \$2,500 for Rec Boxes for participants. President Chavez asked for a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report for June 30, 2020.

Commissioner Chavez moved to accept the Treasurer's report as presented and Commissioner Lewis seconded the motion.

Ayes: (7) Sim, Lewis, Marcquenski, Hassett, Kelly, Vitale, Chavez
Nays: (0)
Abstain:(0)
Absent: (0)

Motion Carried

- B. June 30, 2020 Treasurer's Report: Commissioner Lewis asked about the credit card report that was part of the Board's packets. Keith went over the processes that have been in place for a while and some added improvements. President Chavez asked for a motion to approve the Payment of the Bills for June 30, 2020 in the amount of \$127,146.71 which may include lodging and travel.

Commissioner Hassett moved to approve the Payment of Bills in the amount of \$127,146.71 as presented and Commissioner Vitale seconded the motion.

Ayes: (7) Marcquenski, Hassett, Kelly, Vitale, Chavez, Sim, Lewis
Nays: (0)
Abstain:(0)
Absent: (0)

Motion Carried

- C. Special Guest: None
- D. Communications: None

Consent Agenda:

1. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes of June 16, 2020. President Chavez asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda with the correction that Greg Vitale is Secretary and Jay Kelly is Vice President.

Commissioner Lewis made a motion to approve Consent Agenda as corrected and Commissioner Kelly seconded the motion.

Ayes: (6) Hassett, Kelly, Vitale, Chavez, Lewis, Marcquenski
Nays: (0)
Present:(1) Sim
Absent: (0)

Motion Carried

Public Comments

Susan Eisenbrandt read a statement saying that LWSRA is very valuable to her family. She questioned why she has to pay extra when her son travels to a Special Olympics event. She questioned the policy of how donations/scholarships are allocated. She wants all scholarships to go to in-district participants. She said that all out-of-district participants must pay the out-of-district fees.

Justin Hillman stated that he has been a member of LWSRA since he was 5 years old. He praised Keith Wallace and his involvement in the programs. He doesn't understand why some parents are bringing up the way Adaptive Programs are funded. He noted that all trips are funded by donations and anything not covered by the donations he pays for himself. He asked for unity and offered to help to form a committee to go over the fund raisers. He expressed his frustrations on behalf of his fellow teammates and asked for all to unify.

Peggy Marks said her son participates in many programs and her family is grateful for all that the staff of LWSRA does for them. She noted the increase in fees over 14 years. She praised Keith's presence and the way he gives the participants confidence. She went on to praise the great job Karyn Reczek did with fund raising for LWSRA. She defended Karyn's actions in questioning the finances. She noted the tax amounts from the contributing Park Districts. She stated that no one is trying to cancel the Adaptive Programs, but wants fairness in the amount of money that participants, both in and out of district, have to pay. She questioned the Board about how fund raisers and donations are allocated to each program. She wants all money raised to go first and foremost to in-district participants.

Scott Lorenz sent an email that President Chavez read to the Board. He compared the revenue and expenses of the Special Olympics and Adaptive programs, noting the differences. He suggested that some of the tournaments for Adaptive be skipped and to reevaluate the costs. He asked the Board about the future plans for additions and would like them to start planning for them now.

President Chavez thanked everyone for their comments and input.

Staff & Committee Reports

1. DIRECTOR's REPORT

- a. Staffing – FOIA Requests – Keith reported that he, LWSRA attorney and his staff are spending a significant amount of time and money to produce the answers. \$8,362 for the current month. Staff is developing an out of state staff travel guidelines.
- b. Donations, Fundraising & Grants – Staff met with Operation Nehemiah to discuss a partnership on future projects. They are a faith-based organization, so are evaluating if our visions align with them. Discussion with an Eagle Scout to discuss a future outdoor projects were held.
- c. LWSRA Summer Programs – Tier A participants began programs in July. A new brochure will be developed monthly moving forward. Tier B might start in August based on State of Illinois guidelines.
- d. Fall Programming – LWSRA is working on a systematic approach to returning to programs. Staff is committed to providing a safe quality recreation experience for all.
- e. Virtual Programs – Virtual Camp and Virtual TITANS offered activity boxes in June and continued into July.
- f. Participation Report – Numbers are down due to the pandemic.
- g. LWSRA Covid-19 Timeline – Keith provided a timeline to the Board of the progress and cancellations since March 12th.

2. FUNDRAISING/PR/MARKETING

- a. Donations - \$1,815 was raised in June.
- b. Foundation – Two new members were installed on LWSRF. Dave Macek is the new president and Stevenson is the new Vice President.
- c. Events – The Golf Outing has been cancelled. The Foundation will sell gift certificates to three golf courses and ask for donations, from an anonymous donor, with a match of up to \$6,000.
- d. Upcoming Events – Plans are being made for several events and will be evaluated to make sure they comply with COVID-19 guidelines and safety concerns.

3. FACILITY FOREMAN

- a. Preventive Maintenance – LWSRC's kitchen exhaust system was cleaned July 1st. The sprinkler inspection was pushed back per a recommendation from Fox Valley Fire & Safety with the New Lenox Fire Marshall approval. It will now be conducted in warmer weather instead of January.
- b. Classrooms/Lobby/Bathroom – Cordless sprayers were purchased to aid in disinfecting the facilities and vehicle fleet in response to Covid-19.
- c. Roof – June 30th a GAF inspector took samples to be analyzed. The lab has a backlog, but Hamstra assured John that LWSRC is at the top of the list. The bid is to replace the TPO lining and capping of the parapet wall with traditional roll-on adhesive.
- d. Parking Lot & Grounds – June 10th a new gate and lock were installed on the parking lot dumpster/storage area to increase security.

4. SUPPORT SERVICES

- a. Brochure – July Virtual and in-person brochure is available on line and includes the entire month. Planning is underway for August.
- b. Rentals – Evaluation to assess if the rentals can safely be offered.
- c. Freedom Of Information Act – All requests have been answered as of June 30th.

5. SUPERINTENDENT OF RECREATION

A. Staff & Safety

- 1) Staff – July began in-person programs. Staff continue to conduct virtual programs. The office is staffed 4 hours a day. The part-time maintenance employee, Ethan, has also resumed his duties.
- 2) Safety Policy Manual – The first safety committee meeting was held on June 30th and will meet the last Tuesday of each month.
- 3) Inclusion – No new aid requests have been received. Melissa offered staff training to each District if they contact her.

6. Manager of Recreation

- 1) Special Olympics – A survey has been received by LWSRA to determine if we want to resume related activities. Staff decided to not join in other Special Olympics activities other than what has already been prepared for July.
- 2) HAWKS Flyby – Two parades were held in June. The fleet of vehicles were decorated and driven around to participant's homes in various towns.
- 3) Virtual Program – LWSRA offers between 11-16 virtual programs each week and they are well attended. Bingo, dancing and stretching are some of the programs. In-person Golf and bowling are limited to 8.
- 4) HAWKS Flyby – Two parades were held in June. The fleet of vehicles were decorated and driven around to participant's homes in various towns.
- 5) Transportation – Low mileage reported.

President Chavez thanked the staff and commended them on their creativity to keep participants engaged.

Finance/Personnel

Facilities Planning

- A. Playground – Commissioner Lewis reported that the excavation is complete. Concrete is in. Playground equipment is on site as well as the pavilion. New Lenox staff received good reports on the preparation work that they did upon being inspected. NLPD and LWSRA are working on getting payments. President Chavez thanked Commissioner Lewis and his staff for all of their hard work on this project.

Attorney

None

Old Business

- A. 2020-21 Budget – Keith recommended that the Board approve the prepared Budget (without the COVID-19 numbers). It can be adjusted as the year progresses. He also stated that he is not bringing the Manager position back into the plans and that will save \$40,000. He did not eliminate the salary increases, but they will not be given out. A notation to the auditors should be included in the Budget regarding COVID. President Chavez asked for a motion to approve the 2020/21 Budget.

Commissioner Lewis made a motion to approve 2020/21 Budget as presented and Commissioner Vitale seconded the motion.

Ayes: (7) Hassett, Kelly, Marcquenski, Sim, Vitale, Chavez, Lewis

Nays: (0)

Abstain:(0)

Absent: (0)

Motion Carried

Review Executive Meeting minutes from the December, January, February, March, April, and May and any previous withheld minutes.

New Business

- A. Review of Executive Meeting Minutes – Minutes from December 2019, January, February, March, April, May 2020 and previous withheld minutes of February 12, 2007 and April 2018 are reviewed for possible release for public viewing. Attorney O’Driscoll advised that these must be reviewed for the need of confidentiality. President Chavez asked for a motion.

Commissioner Lewis made a motion to release the Executive Minutes as presented, there was no second.

Motion Died

Commissioner Hassett made a motion to not release Executive Meeting Minutes as presented, to maintain confidentiality and Commissioner Marcquenski seconded the motion.

Ayes: (5) Vitale, Chavez, Marcquenski, Hassett, Kelly

Nays: (1) Lewis

Present:(1) Sim

Absent: (0)

Motion Carried

- B. Resolution #20-7 Disposal of Property - President Chavez asked for a motion to approve Resolution #20-7. Discussion was held.

Commissioner Hassett moved to approve Resolution 20-6 as presented and Commissioner Kelly seconded the motion.

Ayes: (7) Hassett, Kelly, Marcquenski, Sim, Vitale, Chavez, Lewis

Nays: (0)

Abstain:(0)

Absent: (0)

Motion Carried

Director/Commissioner Comments

Executive Director Wallace let staff and everyone know that his door is always open for discussion on anything at the agency. He would appreciate if an appointment is made. His staff is involved in the financial decisions with him.

Commissioner Hassett thanked the residents who attended today. She stated that there was a presence of LWSRA families at the Frankfort Park District Board Meeting. Karen Reczek asked why the LWSRA Board did not sit down with her & Lynn Annerino to discuss the issue of missing funds when it was brought to the LWSRA Board. The report that Lynn and Karyn presented was very good and the process moved very quickly to resolve the issue. She thanked them for their diligence and pointed out that the funds from the major events goes into the Foundation for distribution. She assured everyone

that while Karyn was an employee she did her job extremely well and no one on the Board has disparaged her as was expressed today. She explained how the program financing is impacted by salaries, bus upkeep, and gas. She also addressed the question of expanding the building by saying that the current building is still being paid off and opportunities for the future will be considered. She said that she is very well versed in the financials of the agency and will continue to be a good steward of the donations and budgeting. She appreciates your attendance and welcomes your questions.

Commissioner Marcquenski said thank you to the staff and everyone involved for their creativity and dedication. She offered up her support and told them to keep up the good efforts.

Commissioner Vitale expressed his thanks to the staff on the good job they did with the Budget under the pandemic chaos. He encouraged all to keep up the good work. He notified all tht Halloween Hollow 5K in Mokena will not be happening. He is happy to see all in person.

Commissioner Lewis thanked the staff for their hard work. He thinks it is premature to plan for capital improvements during the pandemic. The OSLAD Grant program has been halted by the state. He stated the policy on reading correspondence at meetings and said the Board should not be making exceptions in the future. Continue to do the hard work that you have been doing.

Commissioner Kelly said it was nice to see at least half of everyone's faces in person! He said he was very proud of the professionalism and how staff is handling the COVID situation. The lack of the ability to know what the future holds has to make us all mindful of revenues and expenses. He told all to keep up the good work.

Commissioner Chavez said that this is her first meeting as President of the Board and she will get more comfortable to run the meeting as time goes by. She stated that she knows that some residents have also attended other participating park districts board meetings. She said that the situation in Wilmington is very fragile and she said her district could leave LWSRA which would hurt their residents most of all. She said all should unite as was suggested. She noted how the complaint has Adapted competing with Special Olympics for donations. We should count our blessings. She noted how the contributions by the Districts is pretty much in line with how many participants it serves for each community with the exception of Mokena. They have more participants, but a great deal of the donations come from there so it all equals out. The Board wants every area of LWSRA programming to grow. She wants everyone to work together to make things better.

Hearing no further LWSRA business, President Chavez asked for a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting of July 21, 2020 at 10:37 a.m. *Upon a voice vote, all voted Aye.*

Respectfully submitted by
Mary T. Strand, Recording Secretary

Attachment A.

Attachment A.

Read at the June 16, 2020 Board Meeting of LWSRA

Karyn

We would like to address your concerns that you posed during the public comment section of the May 2020 board meeting.

The matter regarding Abby was a personnel matter and the Director and Board followed guidance from the attorneys at the Park District Risk Management Agency (PDRMA) as well as our then attorney, Matthew Lulich. There were discussions and decisions made that your staff position was not privy to. The Director acted accordingly when the information was presented to him by employees; including seeking out the board President and legal counsel to discuss a plan of action. The three employees were thanked for their diligence in gathering the requested documentation by the Director. However, all staff was instructed to look into any suspicious charges on their department head reports in March 2018.

As far as investigation of other charges? As previously indicated, a cost benefit analysis was done regarding recovery of monies that we could be sure of versus monies that would be harder to prove. The agency entered into a separation agreement based on the information we had at the time. The Board and agency, satisfied with that agreement, has moved forward.

No one is perfect. We have sought to learn from this unfortunate incident. We have updated policies, developed new procedures, as well as added additional accounting staff to safeguard from this happening in the future.

We would like to share some of the changes that we have implemented since May 2018:

1. We hired a part time accountant.
2. Part time accountant is directly responsible for taking deposits to the bank. This creates segregation between those accepting the funds versus reconciling the funds so that another set of eyes are involved.
3. Deposit are to be done as group deposits but rather individually so it easier to reconcile and track.
4. For any fundraiser that collects cash, two individuals must count all cash before leaving venue. They have to sign off and initial it. If there is a discrepancy, there is a recount.
5. Included additional office staff for green sheet sign offs. That way there are three sets of eyes involved in the deposit process.
6. Added approval process for all Amazon purchases- it requires a supervisor's approval (ED or Services Supervisor). This adds an extra layer.

7. Added email notifications to the Director for all credit card purchases- AMEX emails the ED any time anyone's credit card is used. It identifies the account number, amount charged and where spent.
8. Added direct supervisor sign off to the credit card approval form. At the beginning of the month, employees submit estimated credit card use to their direct supervisor and Supervisor of Recreation and ED.
9. Added more details to the department head reports for staff to review monthly. Each month we give detailed reports to staff to review expenditures so that they can read it and notify us if anything in their account is wrong.

As you see the agency has added our updated practices and we are committed to improving the quality of our accounting practices and internal controls.

Why was individual allowed to work 3 days? The day that further investigation was to occur was a scheduled day off for Abby, however she came in and submitted her resignation. Her submitting her resignation at that time accelerated the termination process and left little time for investigation before she would no longer be under our control. We were advised to draw up a few separation agreements that would ensure the recovery of funds that we knew to be true at the time. The Director organized days and times that the employee would not be left alone in the building. The Director also used this time to gather vital information from the employee: Processing background checks, staff on boarding, payroll implementation codes, , time and attendance information and Policy manual etc. We also had to obtain a variety of account information and passcodes.

Regarding these accusations:

October 2017 Japan trip

October 2018 Japan trip

LA Wheelchair basketball trip

Orlando Wheelchair basketball trip

Clarion Hotel in Joliet

The agency has reviewed your statements and paperwork and found the claims to be meritless. The documents you have does not paint the complete picture. We are willing to sit down with you to go over these in detail. We do remind you that the agency received a substantial donation from Kevin Hood that was specifically, at the donor's request, to be used for adapted sports. See letter from Kevin Hood attached. As you can see, Mr. Hood was aware and encouraged the use of the donated funds.

As far as the Adaptive program vs the Special Olympics programing you have issues with the structure of this program.

The Adapted sports program is unique and raises a great deal of funds to operate so that it is not a burden to the agency. The Participants pay for the cost of the program and are required to sell raffle tickets as well as participant in fundraiser games. These fundraisers and donations have supported the program for years. We try to have this as close to cost neutral as possible.

The Board is fully aware that we have a program that accepts out of district residents. These individuals make it possible for the program to run. These individuals pay for the service that we provide. This is not uncommon in the SRA world especially as method for getting programs started. Because it is a low incidence population, the program will continue to have to rely on non-residents to survive. Over the past 15 years we have built one of the most respected Adapted sports programs in the United States.

Our Special Olympics program has fundraised as well. We charge the State games fee at the end of the program to make it fair for all. This fee starts at \$150, our staff have been diligent in getting that fee reduced. The agency does not think it is a good practice to charge the state fees up front because the registration fee would be too high. Not all kids make it to state. We are actively looking into a system that would be fair for all. Even those parents that transport SO athletes to state games.

Our Director has always been an individual who wants to provide recreation for all. He takes pride in finding and meeting new individuals with disabilities and introducing them to Recreation. We have heard many stories of him stopping someone in a store or on the street to ask them if they are involved in an SRA or recreation program. This is one of his strengths. Because of this it has brought people into our program. It has brought in financial support as well.

We do appreciate and will accept constructive criticism. No person or organization is perfect. We all seek to learn from mistakes. We ask that you help us to continue to grow the organization and look toward a brighter future for the kids and other participants.