

**PARKS & RECREATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 26, 2024**

It was noted that Alderman Schulz has stepped down as chairman and traded committees with Alderwoman Haderlein. Alderman Lavallee will now be chairman of the Parks & Rec Board. Chairman John Lavallee called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. Board members present: Chairman John Lavallee, Alderwoman Rosa Luna, Alderwoman Lori Lancaster, Scott Logan and Pep Saucedo. Alderwoman Lisa Haderlein was absent. Also present were Mayor Kelly, City Administrator Lou Leone and Finance Director Deb Bejot.

Public Comment

None

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Alderwoman Luna, seconded by Pep Saucedo to accept the Park Board Minutes of January 15, 2024, as presented. Roll call vote: Logan, aye; Luna, aye; Lancaster, aye; Saucedo, aye and Lavallee, aye. Motion approved five to zero.

Project Update/Status

City Administrator Leone provided project updates/status report:

- The boys basketball program concluded on Saturday, February 24th. Lou reached out to the coaches and parents to have a post season discussion to make improvements for next year. A parents meeting should be held at the beginning of the program to establish expectations.
- The ESL Program was well attended with the last class on Wednesday, February 28th. Alderwoman Luna indicated she would like to participate in the next program. She said the community was expecting more like “ESL classes”. She also suggested a topic of what it entails to become a business owner; this can be tied in on the Economic Development side as well. Marketing also needs to be improved. Mayor Kelly related the desire to create a programs catalog that can be sent out to residents a full quarter before programming occurs.
- The instructors for Zumba and Limber Life decided not to continue so those classes have been cancelled.

Programs and Events

- The Men’s Soccer League is gearing up for this year. They had a lot of feedback to start a lady’s league, perhaps next year.
- Other programs discussed were the soccer tournament and a run in July, the zombie run in late September/early October and the Egg Nog Jog in December. Mayor Kelly reported the Parks Foundation is discussing holding some type of Halloween event, so there may be potential to coordinate together.
- NISRA has offered to provide Zumba and other instructors at no cost as part of our membership.

Rebuild Illinois Grant

Paperwork issues have been resolved and a notice of award letter is in que but hasn’t been sent yet.

Community Garden Project Grant

The City received a reimbursement grant in the amount of \$7,500 from the Illinois Realtors Association for the community garden. The original plan was to build planters that will be rented out; the budget has been bumped up to add an ADA walking path. Lou would like to dedicate two planters for NISRA that would be built to ADA standards; NISRA would provide an instructor to assist with all the planters. The Illinois Realtors Association is offering people to build the planters for us. Lou will make sure the water issue has been resolved and will advise the Park Board. Marketing should happen soon.

OSLAD 2024 Grant Application

City Administrator Leone reported that the City was not awarded an OSLAD grant in the 2022 grant cycle which was submitted to update the southeast side of Milky Way Park. An application was not submitted in 2023. The City’s engineer, Christopher B. Burke Engineering, has someone who specializes in writing OSLAD grants. Lou will find out the cost from the engineers and advise the Park Board; the fee would be covered through engineering fees. A motion was made by Pep Saucedo, seconded by Alderwoman Luna to direct staff

to move forward with an OSLAD grant; additional details will be forthcoming from the engineers. Roll call vote: Lavallee, aye; Logan, aye; Lancaster, aye; Luna, aye and Saucedo, aye. Motion approved five to zero.

Soccer Tournament

City Administrator Leone provided an overview of the proposed soccer tournament to be held July 27th & 28th at Milky Way Park. The tournament will be double elimination, with 21 teams and 3 Divisions. Trophies and medals will be awarded to 1st/2nd/3rd place. Deb has volunteered to spearhead the family portion of the event. This is being planned as a two-day event with various activities (bouncy houses, mechanical bull, face painting, kids crafts, cornhole, food trucks and beer tent). Estimated attendance is 1,500 - 2,500. The QR code on the flyer is live with GotSport.com; the cost per team is \$1,200. Lou has a follow-up meeting scheduled with Budweiser who is interested in participating in the beer tent. He has also reached out to Coke and Pepsi as well as sponsors. The anticipated cost for the event is about \$24,000. Donovan has reached out to Alumitank to donate/reduce cost for goal posts. The Parks Foundation is also donating to the cost of the goals.

Soccer Field Landscaping

A motion was made by Pep Saucedo, seconded by Alderwoman Lancaster to recommend to the City Council to accept the quote submitted by Summerview Landscapes, Inc. in the amount of \$6,300 to fix the three soccer fields to be paid for with the money market account. Roll call vote: Lancaster, aye; Lavallee, aye; Logan, aye; Luna, aye and Saucedo, aye. Motion approved five to zero. The quote is for one application which should last through the summer.

Mary's Park Equipment Purchase

Mayor Kelly updated the Board on the recommendation from Team Reil who indicated there was no reason to replace the whole system at Mary's Park which was estimated at \$100,000. They indicated the slide could be replaced along with the addition of an Arch Swing Set and Chin Up Bar for under \$10,000. A motion was made by Alderwoman Luna, seconded by Alderman Lavallee to recommend to the City Council to move forward with the quote from Team Reil Inc. in the amount of \$9,956 allocating said funds after May 1st. The equipment should be delivered June/July and Team Reil will provide installation rather than a community build. During the tour with the Team Reil representative, damage was noted at the playground system behind the library where a panel needs to be replaced; a quote hasn't been received yet. There are some areas that could be touched up with paint but most of the equipment is in fairly good shape. There was playground equipment at Milky Way Park that was bent but didn't pose a safety issue; a quote for replacement hasn't been received yet. Roll call vote: Lancaster, aye; Saucedo, aye; Lavallee, aye; Logan, aye and Luna, aye. Motion approved five to zero.

Harvard High School Athletic Department Field Usage Agreements

Field Usage Agreements have been received from the HHS Athletic Dept. to reserve Lion's Park on May 21st and May 24th for the IHSA Softball Regionals and use of Milky Way Park on September 10th, October 8th and October 19th for Cross Country Meets. Mayor Kelly clarified that since they are not requesting a fee waiver, their request does not need specific Park Board or City Council approval and will be included on the scheduling. Typically, the Parks & Rec Supt. does the scheduling and billing.

Harvard Jr. Hornets Soccer Fee Waiver Request

Harvard Jr. Hornets Soccer submitted a Fee Waiver Request for use of Milky Way Park for their spring/fall season. Lou will advise them that any City function would take precedent. At Pep's inquiry, Lou will find out if the organization puts any funds into fields. A motion was made by Alderman Lavallee, seconded by Alderwoman Lancaster to recommend approval to the City Council pending submission of the dates/times of usage. Roll call vote: Logan, aye; Luna, aye; Lancaster, aye; Saucedo, aye and Lavallee, aye. Motion approved five to zero.

Discussion on Reallocation of Equipment

City Administrator Leone reviewed the reallocation of equipment. The 2022 Ford F250 Truck has been reallocated from the Parks Dept. and assigned to City Hall where it can be utilized by all departments as needed. The 2017 Chevy F150 truck has been reallocated from Public Works to Darrell in Parks which is more practical for what he needs. Public Works will be getting a rotated Explorer from the Police Dept. The current Community Development truck, 2007 Dodge Dakota, will be sent to auction. The Parks 2007 Ford will be auctioned and the funds deposited in the Parks money market account.

There was considerable discussion regarding the original purchase of the 2022 Ford F250 truck which is more truck than what was really needed but was the only truck available at the time. The truck could be sold with a potential profit of \$10,000 that would go back into the Parks money market account. The Park Board recommendation was to direct staff to explore the possibility and look into the benefits of selling the truck. Lou will report back at the next meeting. There are vehicle options available in the fleet should the new Parks & Rec Supt. need a vehicle.

Vandalism Report

There was graffiti vandalism in Lion's, Northfield and Milky Way Parks which are under investigation by the Police Dept. The Public Works Dept. has responded to clean up all three parks.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Kelly gave an overview of activities since the Parks & Rec Supt.'s resignation. The City Administrator and other staff within City Hall have taken over some of the duties. The interview process will commence soon for the applicants that have applied for the position. In the interim, Darrell will assist in opening the pool. Lou will be contacting previous pool employees to ascertain if they are coming back this season. The expectation is that the pool manager will be empowered to be more than just a head life guard.

Parks & Rec Report

City Administrator Leone reviewed the Parks & Rec Supt. Report and highlighted the pool house damages and subsequent issues.

NISRA has a focus on special needs and is willing to assist in programs; they will send a representative to the next Parks & Rec Board meeting. Mayor Kelly clarified that the City levies a tax for NISRA in the amount of \$40,000, out of which the City pays membership dues. The City has opportunity to engage NISRA for activities to better partner with the program utilizing the funding in the NISRA account. The actual amount in the NISRA fund will be verified and once that is determined, the Park & Rec Board can decide how to utilize the funding earmarked for these types of programs.

New Business

Lou related that the focus point/goals as noted at the budget workshop for himself while he is serving as the interim director but more for the new Parks & Rec Supt. is to make sure we're doing cost efficient programs, trying to better allocate resources and utilize what's available. Other departments in the City want to participate to make the Parks & Rec programs highly successful.

The next regular meeting date is March 18th, 2024 @ 6 pm.

At 7:34 pm, a motion was made by Pep Saucedo, seconded by Alderwoman Luna to adjourn the meeting. All ayes. Motion carried.

Submitted by:
Chairman John Lavallee