

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE  
RIVER TRAILS PARK DISTRICT,  
COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS, HELD  
AT 401 E. CAMP MCDONALD ROAD IN SAID DISTRICT  
ON THE NINETEENTH DAY OF OCTOBER 2023 AT 7:00 P.M.**

- I. The President called the meeting to order at 7:11 p.m. and directed Crista Altergott, Administrative Assistant & Risk Management to call the roll. Upon the roll being called, the following Commissioners answered present: Leah Lussem, Nancy Parra and Melissa Ackerman. Jennifer Rezek and Robert Hoban III were absent. Also present were Director Bret Fahnstrom, Superintendent of Finance and HR David Oswald, Superintendent of Recreation Patti Mitchell, Superintendent of Communications and Marketing Christine Powles and Superintendent of Parks Mike Hanley.
- II. Visitors Present: None
- III. The Agenda for October 19, 2023 was submitted for approval. Commissioner Parra moved to approve said agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ackerman and approved by common consent.
- IV. Approval of Minutes for the Regular Meeting of October 5, 2023. Commissioner Ackerman moved to approve the Minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Parra and approved by common consent.
- V. Approval of Voucher List of Bills for September 16 – October 13, 2023. Superintendent Dave Oswald reviewed expenditures that led to discussion. Commissioner Parra inquired about the continued expenses of golf cart repairs. Director Bret Fahnstrom remarked that the golf carts are being used more than anticipated and significant repairs will factor into the decision to possibly purchase new carts in 2024. Commissioner Parra moved to approve the Voucher List of Bills for September 16 – October 13, 2023 as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ackerman. Upon the roll being called, the Commissioners voted as follows:

    AYE: Leah Lussem, Nancy Parra, Melissa Ackerman  
    NAY: None  
    ABSENT: Jennifer Rezek and Robert Hoban III

**VI. Communications**

a. Director's Report

- Director Fahnstrom highlighted the upcoming Monsters Bash event on October 27<sup>th</sup> and the NWSRA Gala on November 3<sup>rd</sup> at Chevy Chase. Other significant upcoming projects include budget meetings with departmental teams, Decennial Efficiency Report and committee meetings.
- Commissioner Parra asked if the Santa Train event will occur in 2023. Superintendent Mitchell replied yes and more details to come.

- b. Staff Report – Parks Department: Superintendent of Parks, Mike Hanley
  - Superintendent Mike Hanley noted completed Trades projects including annual inspections and deep cleaning of Parkour and Turf spaces, Zone capital repairs, Burning Bush painting and carpet updates and the successful completion of OCR.
  - Hanley also reported that the outdoor athletic lighting installation at Woodland Trails Park is now complete. This was accomplished through the ComEd Energy Efficiency Program, a \$246,000 saving to the park district.
  - The Parks department is busy undergoing general fall maintenance in addition to the updates to Willow Trails Park and custom banner posts at various locations.
  - Phase 1 of the new community garden area is underway. Commissioner Parra inquired if this is the planning phase for Spring where Hanley affirmed. Parra also asked if signage will be in English and Spanish to best serve our community. Director Fahnstrom replied that is the plan for this signage.
  - The Rob Roy Golf Course will undergo greens aeration at the end of the month and course supplies will be brought indoors as temperatures get cooler.
- c. Miscellaneous Communications
  - Director Fahnstrom presented the Monster's Bash flyer and reported that volunteers would be appreciated. Commissioner Parra showed interest.
  - Commissioner Parra requested an updated What's Happening Calendar for Q4.

**VII. Old Business**

- a. None

**VIII. New Business**

- a. 2023 Truth in Taxation Resolution and 2022 DRAFT Levy Ordinance: Superintendent of HR & Finance, Dave Oswald
  - Superintendent Oswald walked the Board through the 2023 Truth in Taxation Resolution and the 2022 Draft Levy Ordinance. Property tax dollars are an important revenue source for funding park districts. Funds are determined by optimizing annual levy requests under the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (PTELL) using the Consumer Price Index (CPI) of the previous year. PTELL limits the increase to no more than 5% over, even if CPI is found to be greater.
  - Highlights included a 6.85% proposed Corporate and Special Purpose Tax Levy increase, reduction of debt services and overall 5.1% proposed Total Property Tax Levy increase over 2022.
  - Oswald exhibited the total Levy breakout for each Park District Fund. The numbers are based on legislative suggestions with the understanding that 2024 EAV is unpredictable. The numbers determined reflect the necessity for additional funds due to unknown occurrences yet staying cognizant of funding needs and staying within the fund balance.

- Keys dates to note include;
    - Truth in Taxation Resolution No. 23-12-07 Board Review and Vote - November 2<sup>nd</sup> Board Meeting
    - Notice of Truth in Taxation Hearing on the Levy published in the newspaper – November 24, 2023
    - Truth in Taxation Hearing and 2023 Levy Ordinance – December 7<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting
    - Levy Ordinance provided to the Cook County Clerk – December 26, 2023
  - No Board action is required at this meeting. Commissioner Ackerman is interested to see additional information on how the formula is calculated. Superintendent Oswald will provide a detailed report for the next Board Meeting on November 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- b. Recreation Policy Manual Review – Section #3: Director Bret Fahnstrom
- Last reviewed in 2017. It has been edited for more modern scenarios and will be presented to the Board in parts for discussion. Presently reviewing Policies 15-18.
  - Section 03-016 American with Disabilities Act: added the note about the Decennial Assessment Plan.
  - Appendix D, Inclusion Policy & Procedure: NWSRA Professionals reviewed our Policy and Procedure and added language.
  - Appendix E, Guideline for Inclusive Services: NWSRA Professionals reviewed our Policy and Procedure and added language. Commissioner Parra found a small grammatical error to be fixed.
  - Commissioner Parra inquired about staff training, in particular Active Shooter and Suspected Child Abuse Training. Superintendent Mitchell informed the group that all staff received annual training and additional trainings as needs arise.
  - Director Fahnstrom provided an update that the Refund Policy is currently under staff review.
  - Staff recommends all changes as submitted. No official Board Action is required at this time. The entire Policy Manual will be approved at the end of the process.
- c. 2023 NRPA Board Expense Approval: Director Bret Fahnstrom
- Commissioner Parra attended the 2023 National Parks and Recreation Association Conference in Dallas October 9-13, 2023. As part of the Amended Ordinance No 17-07-20, Board Members are required to have expenses approved by the Board. Director Fahnstrom has reviewed all the submitted receipts and has approved all items listed on the expense report. Commissioner Ackerman moved to approve 2023 NRPA Board Expense Approval as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lussem. Upon the roll being called, the Commissioners voted as follows:
- AYE: Leah Lussem, Nancy Parra, Melissa Ackerman  
 NAY: None  
 ABSENT: Jennifer Rezek and Robert Hoban III

- d. IAPD Credentials Certificate; selection of delegates - Director Bret Fahnstrom
- Upon discussion, it was determined to have the following individuals serve as delegates; Director Bret Fahnstrom – Delegate, Commissioner Jennifer Rezek – 1<sup>st</sup> Alternate, Commissioner Robert Hoban III – 2<sup>nd</sup> Alternate.
  - The delegate(s) will represent the River Trails Park District at the Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD) Annual Business Meeting on Saturday, January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 3:30pm.

**IX. Commissioner Comments**

- a. Commissioner Lussem inquired about the next Decennial Committee Meeting. Director Fahnstrom outlined the current status of the Decennial Efficiency Report and plan for future engagement from the Committee. Lussem also complimented the grounds at Burning Bush Trails Park, saying the trees look beautiful in full bloom right now.
- b. Commissioner Ackerman also remarked upon the exceptional maintenance of the trees within the park and how lovely it is to walk the paths.
- c. Commissioner Parra gave a brief overview of her time at the recent NRPA Conference in Dallas, Texas. Parra also complimented Administrative Assistant & Risk Management Employee Crista Altergott on the tasteful fall decorations at the Administration Building.

**X. Executive Session.**                      None

**XI. Action as a Result of the Executive Session.**                      None

**XII. Adjournment.** There being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Parra made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:49 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lussem and approved by common consent.

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President

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Secretary