

Regular Meeting Minutes of the  
Gurnee Park District Board of Commissioners  
February 21, 2012

President Baker called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. The President asked for a roll call. Commissioners present: Libby Baker, Vicki Paddock, Jim Goshorn, Michelle Klemz, and Gerry Crews. Commissioners absent: none. Also present: Susie Kuruvilla, Executive Director; Jeff Reinhard, Supt. of Parks; Lisa Sheppard, Supt. of Recreation, Michael Szpylman, Supt. of Business; Sue McDougale, Early Childhood Division Mgr., Sabrina Hinkens, Youth Recreation Supervisor; Debbie Townsend, Preschool teacher; Linda Brogren, Volunteer Coordinator; Kristi Murray, Division Mgr. Cultural Arts, Special Events and Community Relations; Jennifer Gilbert, Marketing/PR Manager and Suzanne Gage, Administrative Assistant. Please refer to the attendance record for other visitors.

A motion to accept the regular meeting minutes of January 17, 2012 as presented was made by Vicki Paddock and seconded by Gerry Crews. Roll call vote taken. Ayes: Crews, Paddock, Goshorn, Klemz and Baker. Nays: none. Absent: none. Motion carried.

A motion to approve the vouchers list dated 2/16/12 in the amount of \$504,661.96 and the supplemental vouchers list dated 2/21/12 in the amount of \$10,103.37 was made by Jim Goshorn and seconded by Michelle Klemz. Roll call vote taken. Ayes: Crews, Paddock, Goshorn, Klemz and Baker. Nays: none. Absent: none. Motion carried.

The financial report was reviewed. The Director commented that there are no concerns; we are three months from the end of the fiscal year. Expenses and revenues are in line with the budget. The treasurer's report was reviewed. The Director reported that staff had discussed with the Illinois Liquid Asset Fund other possible avenues of investment as Commissioner Crews had inquired about municipal bonds. They looked at these different avenues and would need to tie up funds for at least eight years. The decision was that the best option is to continue to invest in CDs, as the District does not want to lose liquidity.

Visitors to the meeting introduced themselves. Nancy Carlson noted that she is the vice president of the Grandwood Park Park District and was attending to thank the District for the help received on their policies and to learn more about Gurnee Park District. Steve Carlson, Lake County Board member, stated that he is attending to support Reality Illinois and Barbara de Nekker of the Lake County Health Department. He spoke highly of the group as fine examples of our younger citizens participating in democracy and local government. Mrs. Carlson also noted that Grandwood Park had worked very closely with Reality Illinois on their tobacco free policy and was very impressed with the group.

President Baker presented Community Service Awards to those who were nominated this year by the Gurnee Park District. These awards are presented jointly with the Illinois Association of Park Districts and Illinois Park and Recreation Association. The Park District honors those employees, volunteers, elected officials and civic leaders who go above and beyond assisting the Park District.

**Debbie Kowalczyk**, Park District site director, was recognized for her outstanding efforts in morning and afternoon C.A.R.E (Children Active in Recreational Enrichment) Before and Afterschool Program and Camp Programs. **Cindy Schmidt** has been volunteering at the Park District for 14 years in many coaching and volunteering capacities. She has great leadership skills and her 'take charge' attitude helps our programs be successful. **Jessica Kuruvilla** has been volunteering at the Park District on a regular basis for the past five years at summer camps and special events and is always a positive, happy and great role model. **Marie San Pedro** received the Community Service Award for her work with the GPD Dance program. An employee since 2008, she puts her heart and soul into her classes and this is evident by the increasing number of students that request her as an instructor each session.

President Baker noted, "These individuals have embodied what it is to be a part of the Gurnee Park District by personifying the park district mission and vision in a way that truly defines serving others". Linda Brogren, Volunteer Coordinator, also expressed, "The benefits are endless when someone chooses to volunteer. Our

volunteers take away benefits like learning new skills, connecting with others, transforming the lives of those around them and feeling a sense of achievement for their efforts”. Board members congratulated these outstanding individuals and President Baker presented a plaque to each.

Lisa Sheppard introduced Jessica Hassemer, current president of the parent board of the Blue Devil Swim Club. They are asking to continue their affiliation with Gurnee Park District. Jessica summarized their activities and many successes this past year and stated that they continue to offer the program for both recreational and competitive swimmers. She said they appreciate the use of the aquatic center and gave kudos to the Park District lifeguards. They are also very happy to have Park District liaison Scott Crowe serving on their board. She asked for affiliate status to be renewed.

A motion was made by Jim Goshorn to approve the affiliate agreement with the Blue Devil Swim Club as presented. Motion seconded by Michelle Klemz. Roll call vote taken. Ayes: Crews, Paddock, Goshorn, Klemz and Baker. Nays: none. Absent: none. Motion carried.

Lisa Sheppard presented the request of the BBallin’ Hoopers Basketball Club to renew their affiliate agreement. Club President Kelly MacDonald spoke about the success of the program. The club uses Woodland Middle School in spring, summer and fall and works well with the custodial personnel there. They provide scholarships to players and the coach volunteered for the GPD feeder program. The Club has been very successful and it was noted that students who were the first members are now graduating high school. Park District liaison Matthew Vanderkamp spends about 20 hours per year working on scheduling gyms through Woodland.

A motion was made by Gerry Crews to approve the affiliate agreement with BBallin’ Hoopers Youth Basketball Club as presented. Motion seconded by Vicki Paddock. Roll call vote taken. Ayes: Crews, Paddock, Goshorn, Klemz and Baker. Nays: none. Absent: none. Motion carried.

Jeff Reinhard reviewed the Parks report. Wetland burn notices have been sent to the neighbors of the various parks where wetland or woodland burns will be conducted this spring. A good portion of Village Park will be burned. Justin DePauw is managing the burns. Jeff explained that burning is good for the environment and it is a good process for plants. Jeff also noted that the drainage work has been completed at the north end of Hunt Club Annex.

Lisa Sheppard reviewed the Recreation report. She noted that Enchanted Evening was a great event Friday night. The staff used 30 volunteers. Studio 21 prepped the princesses and Churchill Photography took photos. Amber Patton has resigned as fitness supervisor and second interviews are scheduled next week. There have been many good candidates. Commissioner Klemz asked about the memberships at the fitness center. Charter members received their first monthly increase of \$2.00, which caused some to opt out of membership. Personal training and group exercise is up. Zumba continues to be so popular that they may need to consider a room change.

Mike Szpylman reviewed the Business report. The department is preparing the new fiscal year budget and working on the RecTrac conversion currently. Mike answered questions about the conversion process. Commissioner Klemz asked how aquatic center season passes are selling. Mike stated they are slightly behind last year’s sales during the renewal period. Staff will be meeting to discuss this although this number compares to last year at this time and then we ended up selling 300 more passes in the end.

Jennifer Gilbert reviewed the Marketing report. They are working on the fitness and aquatics renewal processes as well as giving support to the business department on communications for the new registration system. The spring brochure is coming on March 3 and includes the 2011 annual report insert. Commissioner Goshorn asked about the Groupon offer. The current offer expires 3/3 and she will analyze how many took advantage of the offer and subsequently became fitness members. If it is worthwhile, we will offer something else through Groupon in the future. Commissioner Crews asked about efforts to contact new residents. Susie noted that we have done a “Welcome to Gurnee” event in the past, and staff will be looking into this further during the goal-setting process.

Director Kuruvilla reviewed the Director’s report. A discussion was held regarding tobacco-free and smoke-free parks. Susie welcomed Barbara de Nekker from the Lake County Health Department and Emily Hutter and Dalia

Anguiano from Reality Illinois Lake County Chapter. This group made a presentation to the Board last year on this topic. The Director stated that she has studied the subject at length, and suggests taking smaller steps toward smoke-free parks. She feels that a reasonable objective for the Park District would be to make the environment free of second hand smoke. She recommends concentrating on areas where people congregate and designating them smoke-free – i.e. athletic fields, playgrounds, special events, shelters and structures such as the summer kitchen. If at a later point in time the Board wanted to extend the Ordinance to all park areas, it could be re-addressed. She believes that a tobacco-free policy would be more difficult to enforce since you don't know what a person is chewing.

The need for education through additional signage was discussed. The Director consulted with many other park districts about this and recommended that the information be added to the existing rules signs at each park and marketing the information heavily as well as informing coaches, etc. of the areas that are smoke free. She felt too much signage could be confusing as well as an eyesore. Temporary signage could be placed until people become aware of the ordinance. Commissioner Crews stated that signage would remind people and keep them honest but he does not want Park District personnel to have to enforce the rule.

Commissioner Goshorn discussed his initial hesitation to step over the line of individual rights. Outdoor space is the last refuge for this activity and our parks are public land owned by all citizens, including those who participate in tobacco use. He suggested wording the ordinance as "Use of tobacco products of any type is discouraged however it is prohibited in these cases..." He also would be willing to consider removing all non-smoking products as a permitted activity. He does feel it would be even more difficult to enforce however. If we set the expectation, it may give people pause. Board members agreed that baby steps are appropriate and it is most important to keep smoking away from children and others who do not want to be subjected to it. Commissioner Klemz agreed that 100% enforcement is not possible but the majority of people will comply. The Director was instructed to come back to the Board at the March meeting with language for both a tobacco-free and a smoke-free ordinance for further discussion. Commissioner Goshorn thanked Reality Illinois for the work they did and their commitment to the process. Barbara deNekker thanked the Board and it was agreed that Reality Illinois will be informed when the next discussion takes place.

The concept of electronic board packets was discussed. The Director presented an analysis of paper used and staff time involved in preparing board packets currently. There would be considerable savings over time. Five iPads would be purchased for the use of board members, however; small laptops would be purchased for department heads. Laptops are multi-functional and staff could use them to work from home as well. After discussion of using possibly their own personal devices, it was agreed that it would be better to have board members use devices purchased solely for this purpose, so that their own personal devices would not be subject to FOIA. The Director offered to check further into FOIA ramifications. The Board agreed that the Director should set usage guidelines, include this in the budget and move in that direction in the next fiscal year.

The preliminary three-year capital projects plan was discussed. There is about \$260,000 available each year after issuing bonds for the debt on the aquatic center, Hunt Club Community Center and 2001 Viking Park Community Center addition. Funds are also available from the Capital Replacement Fund as necessary to replace capital items. Christine Thompson Park will be the next renovation. Funds are included to make ADA accessibility changes in various parks. After Christine Thompson Park is completed, the next in line will be Ravinia Park. It is a large, heavily used park and staff recommends using a consultant to provide a new master plan for the site rather than simply replacing the playground. Neighborhood residents will be involved in plans as well. The Board felt this would be money well spent. The Director stated that the plan would be brought back to the Board at the next meeting.

The Board was reminded that park dedications have been scheduled this spring. Betty Russell Park will be dedicated at 6:30 pm on April 24 and Vineyard Park on May 8. The Recreation team will be running the events.

The Director noted that the IAPD Legislative reception and conference would be held in Springfield on Tuesday, May 1 and Wednesday, May 2. Commissioner Crews plans to attend. Other board members were asked to let staff know if they can attend.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

A motion was made by Michelle Klemz to approve the Strategic Plan (2012-2015) as presented. Motion seconded by Gerry Crews. There were no comments from residents after it was placed on the Park District website last month. Roll call vote taken. Ayes: Crews, Paddock, Goshorn, Klemz and Baker. Nays: none. Absent: none. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Jim Goshorn to approve carnival rides in Viking Park north parking lot for Gurnee Days 2012 pending the details being worked out to the satisfaction of the Gurnee Days Corporation, Gurnee Park District and the Village of Gurnee. Motion seconded by Vicki Paddock. In discussion, Commissioner Crews noted that there is talk of having alcohol in the park on Friday night. It was explained that alcohol has been sold on Saturday night in previous years. This will be an addition. He asked if there was liability to the Park District with the carnival staff being on site overnight. Appendix A and B to the agreement establishes the guidelines for carnival employees and amusement company insurance covers any issue that might arise. Roll call vote taken. Ayes: Crews, Paddock, Goshorn, Klemz and Baker. Nays: none. Absent: none. Motion carried.

**In other business:**

The Director informed the Board that legislation passed the House late today in Springfield that would amend the tax cap law. That 1991 law allowed an agency to increase its levy by the CPI even if EAV is declining. If this legislation became law, it would mean that if the EAV were to decline two years in a row, a district could not capture the CPI in its levy; it would be zero. The legislation now goes to the Senate. It would have a major negative impact on schools, park districts, municipalities, etc. No opportunity for input was given to the public and this would take away stability from local governments. All local district representatives voted in favor of the bill.

A motion was made by Vicki Paddock to enter executive session at 9:00 p.m. to discuss:

- Semi Annual Review of Executive Session Minutes (5ILCS 120/2 (c)(21)
- The purchase or lease of real property for the use of the public body, including meetings held for the purpose of discussing whether a particular parcel should be acquired 5ILCS 120/2(c)(5)
- To consider information regarding appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee of the public body or against legal counsel to determine its validity. 5ILCS 120/2(c)(1)

Motion was seconded by Jim Goshorn. Roll call vote taken. Ayes: Crews, Klemz, Paddock, Goshorn and Baker. Nays: none. Absent: none. Motion carried. Susie Kuruvilla, Jeff Reinhard and Suzanne Gage were authorized to attend the closed session.

A motion was made by Jim Goshorn to return to open session at 9:35 p.m. Motion seconded by Michelle Klemz. On voice vote, all voted aye.

A motion was made by Vicki Paddock to release executive session minutes dated 8/24/11, 8/16/11, 11/18/08 session II and 2/19/08. Motion seconded by Jim Goshorn. On voice vote, all voted aye.

A motion to adjourn was made by Jim Goshorn and seconded by Michelle Klemz. On voice vote, all voted aye. The meeting adjourned at 9:36 p.m.

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Libby A. Baker, President

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James G. Goshorn, Secretary