

**DES PLAINES PARK DISTRICT  
REGULAR PARK BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
OCTOBER 15, 2024**

**I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

President Eli Williams called the Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Des Plaines Park District to order at 5:59 p.m. Commissioners present to the roll call in person were Commissioner Erin Doerr, Commissioner Jana Haas, Commissioner Don Rosedale, Commissioner James Grady, and President Eli Williams.

In attendance were the Executive Director, Donald Miletic; Director of Business, Annette Curtis; Deputy Director, Paul Cathey; Superintendent of Human Resources, Nicole Dale; Superintendent of Revenue Facilities, Brian Panek; Superintendent of Recreation, Joseph Weber; Superintendent of Administration, April Lohr, Aquatics Manager, Gosia Zalewska, Recreation Supervisor-Camps & Preschool, Candice Morden and Recreation Assistant, Jenny Fairman.

**II. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:**

None

**III. PRESENTATIONS:**

Camp & Aquatics 2024:

Gosia Zalewska, Aquatics Manager, and Candice Morden, Recreation Supervisor-Camps & Preschool, presented the end-of-season reports for their respective areas.

The presentation covered the financial performance of neighborhood pools, which performed very well. This was the first year of Arndt Pool, and it was very popular with residents. For 2025, goals include transitioning to Stargard for lifeguard certification, fostering a positive workplace culture, and increasing aquatic events.

Camp Opeka saw a significant increase in participation. However, all camps, including West Park, Discovery, Creative Corners, Dance, Art, and Sports Camps, saw significant enrollment. A new software, EPACT, was implemented for summer camp, improving check-in, check-out, and emergency procedures. Goals for 2025 include expanding leadership training across all camps, adding more field trips for Camp Opeka, and continuing the field day tournament.

**IV. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMUNITY**

None

**V. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA**

The following items are listed for the consent agenda:

- A. MINUTES – September 24, 2024
- B. EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTE - None
  - B.1 SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES - None
- C. VOUCHER BILLS:

September 13, 2024	\$188,462.82
September 27, 2024	\$1,338,480.69

- D. PAYROLL:

September 06, 2024	\$244,337.54
September 20, 2024	\$242,042.47

**Commissioner Haas moved to accept the Consent Agenda.**

Seconded by Commissioner Grady

**Roll call: Commissioner; Doerr, Aye; Haas, Aye; Rosedale, Aye; Grady, Aye; President Williams, Aye.**

**Ayes: 5, Nays: 0, Absent:0**

**Motion carried 5-0-0**

**VI. M-NASR REPORT:**

Superintendent of Recreation Joseph Weber reviewed items contained in the written report 6-A in addition to the following:

- Board meeting 10/22
- Member Distribution Increases are being proposed
  - Held since 2022
  - Cap on Liponi vehicle contributions
  - Effect of Minimum Wage, inflation, and FLSA non-exempt status

**Discussion:** Commissioner Grady asked about M-NASR using Ambassadors for the sensory room. Superintendent Weber identified that the group uses room 112 extensively during summer camps and other programs, as it's a space they're very familiar with for classes and activities. In fact, they were just at Prairie Lakes for a Columbus / Indigenous Peoples' Day camp. Commissioner Doerr asked about the district's contribution level and if it is the same for all the participant agencies or is based on how many participants. Superintendent Weber said it's based on the EAV, which has varied slightly in the last couple of years.

**VII. MONTHLY REPORTS**

**A. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:**

**Executive Director Don Miletic reviewed items contained in the written report A in addition to:**

- Mentioned Staff doing a great job
- Commented on the calendar of events for the Fall/Winter season, including the Park It for the grand opening of the ALC Playground and Nature Lab on October 30, 2024, 12:00 - 1:30 pm
- The Chamber Holiday Lunch is coming up. He told the board that he and Commissioner Williams would be there if they were interested in attending.
- Paycom continues to be a primary focus for the Director of Business and the Superintendent of Human Resources.
- The indoor aquatic tank for the turtles during the winter months was assembled in preparation for the turtle's arrival.
- We have started the permit process for the Dog Park project and are starting to examine some conceptual designs.
- IMRF Meeting happened earlier this month. Executive Director Miletic identified that 70% of the current IMRF staff has been here less than 5 years and 40% less than 1 year.

**Discussion:** President Williams asked if the ALC Park was for the preschool or for the community. Executive Director Miletic said it is for everyone and is being utilized by mom groups and families at levels he has never seen before.

**A.1 ADMINISTRATION:**

**Superintendent April Lohr reviewed items contained in the written report A.1 in addition to:**

- Finished a revamp of program worksheets to streamline the program entry process. This will minimize the inefficiencies between recreation, marketing, and the business office.
- Winter spectrum and playbook design were finalized and will go to the printer this week.
- Grant reimbursement submitted for approx. \$1.5M. Closed out ALC and Arndt projects.

**Discussion:** None

**A.2 REVENUE FACILITIES:**

**Superintendent Brian Panek reviewed items contained in the written report A.2, in addition to:**

- Shoreline Room progress is nearly complete, with the state and local liquor licenses secured. A bar area is being built, and a vendor agreement is almost finalized with five preferred vendors. There are three in-house events booked for the remainder of the year.
- The new netting project is about 95% complete. The team did the work in-house, saving \$30K. The netting will be finished by tomorrow, with work continuing at Lake Park in the next few weeks.
- The new irrigation system is set to be installed by the end of October. Electrical work is in progress, with preparations underway. In the meantime, recent improvements have been made to the grass tees, including fertilizing, aerating, and seeding, resulting in noticeable improvement. The temporary irrigation system used at Grant Park is still in place for now.

**Discussion:** President Williams asked about the Teeup system. Superintendent Panek said progress had been made this week and that the team actually saw the app. Our IT team identified a firewall issue, which they fixed.

**A.3 RECREATION:**

**Superintendent Joseph Weber reviewed items contained in the written report A.3, in addition to:** Prairie Lakes flooring is complete, and attention is now shifting to expanding the Fitness Center. Landmark Design is currently scanning the building to assess utilities and gather data for development plans, to present schematics to the board in the coming months.

Upcoming programs include:

- Pumpkin Patch on October 19th
- Trunk or Treat on October 26th
- Winter Wonderland on December 7th.

The staff has successfully wrapped up summer activities, and attention is now on preparing the 2025 budgets. Memberships will be reviewed next month, followed by the budget process. The department is also working on a strategic plan, including conducting an internal SWOT analysis and planning for a district-wide SWOT analysis to guide future direction.

**Discussion:** None

**B. DEPUTY DIRECTOR:**

**Deputy Director Paul Cathey reviewed items contained in the written report B in addition to:**

- The steps for the fishing station are being installed on the east side of the shoreline. This is the last major installation on the east side. Following this, we will work with Semper Fi on the removal of the wood chips, and they will also move onto the golf course side to complete the restoration.
- The final portion of punch list work was completed at Arndt Park. The waterproofing was done for the locker room walls and the surge tank.
- The synthetic turf project for Craig Manor playground will begin in October.

**Discussion:** Commissioner Haas asked if the sidewalk in front of PLAC has always been there or if it was new. Deputy Director Cathey said the sidewalk on the south end of the Prairie Lakes pool has always been there, but the latest addition is the concrete added from the parking lot. This was done because vehicles, tractors, and other traffic were wearing down the grass, so concrete was installed to prevent further damage. Commissioner Haas asked how many positions were still open in Parks. Deputy Director Cathey stated two full-time positions are open, but interviews are underway.

**C. BUSINESS DEPARTMENT:**

**Director of Business Annette Curtis reviewed items contained in the written report C in addition to:**

- Paycom: with the switch in GL specialist, building the JE entry import is back underway. The JE import will be posted after each payroll, updating the expenses accordingly
- NRPA: Thank you for the opportunity to attend NRPA. It is a fantastic event with many opportunities for learning and networking. We came back with a few new ideas.
- Winter Programming: Staff has been working on the winter brochure, which is the largest as it includes camp and 2025 preschool registration information. Also, invoices for the AIM Dance program have been distributed. Patrons can choose to pay in full or installment billing.
- History Center was awarded a grant for a CAP analysis. The collection and how it is stored will be evaluated and reported on.
- Staff will implement online pavilion rents, potentially moving all rentals online.

**Discussion:** Commissioner Williams said that online rentals would be nice.

**C.1 HUMAN RESOURCES & RISK MANAGEMENT:**

**Superintendent Nicole Dale reviewed items contained in her written report C.1, in addition to:**

- Paycom – continuing to finalize position management and onboarding checklists/documentation. Working with advanced reports to create, save, and share information.
- Recruitment – Hired Mario Schittino as Special Projects I, still hiring Mechanic I & Mechanical Maintenance II
- Training - Attended HR Symposium – Workplace Trends & The Future of HR, FLSA 101: What You Need To Know to Stay Compliant, Which Generation Experiences the Most Job Satisfaction, and Legal Updates. Attended NRPA Annual Conference in Atlanta, GA, 10/7-10/10. PDRMA’s Risk Management Institute, 11/22, signed up those attending.

**Discussion:** President Williams asked if Paycom was the app where you could identify compliance. Superintendent Dale and Director of Business Curtis said yes and that it has gone up to 98% with Ellie's help, who cleaned up some of our seasonal staff.

**C.2 FINANCIAL REPORTS: None**

**VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**A: Algonquin Road Bridge – Discussion Only**

The city did not provide any new information. Executive Director Miletic discussed the Algonquin Bridge project with the city manager, Dorothy Weinoski, and Senator Murphy.

Dorothy asked for an update, and he shared that:

- The district is not interested in an overpass or underpass on Algonquin; no easement agreements are currently needed.
- The city was asked to provide agreements between them and the affected businesses, but nothing has been received yet.
- A new feasibility study for the bridge crossing was requested, but no update has occurred.

The district suggested an underpass at Oakton instead, believing it would be more efficient. This would allow for work on two lanes without completely closing Oakton.

Senator Murphy also showed interest in discussing the project and proposed a meeting with the mayor, Commissioner Williams, and the Executive Director Miletic. However, Executive Director Miletic suggested holding the discussions with the full board to keep everyone informed and involved. Executive Director Miletic also mentioned that Barrington is moving forward with a similar underpass project, largely

dependent on funding and a lift station installation. It can be done here, too. Oakton already has four east-west lanes and is the best location for an underpass.

**Discussion:** None

**IX. NEW BUSINESS:**

**A. Action Item 9 - Lake Park Patio Addition.**

**Commissioner Grady moved to approve the Lake Park Patio Addition.**

Second by Commissioner Doerr

**Discussion:** Commissioner Grady asked how many people could occupy the patio at one time, what we would serve, and whether it would need to have a ramp. Executive Director Miletic said 40-50 people, coffee, drinks, and pastries, and no ramp was necessary because we have the patio right off the clubhouse. President Williams asked if anybody could use the patio. Director Miletic said yes, anyone, not just golfers or clubhouse patrons.

**Roll call: Commissioner; Doerr, Aye; Haas, Aye; Rosedale, Aye; Grady, Aye; President Williams, Aye.**

**Ayes: 5, Nays: 0, Absent:0**

**Motion carried 5-0-0**

**X. CCORRESPONDENCE:**

A. Thank you: Movies in the Park - Optimist Club

**Discussion:** None

**XI. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMUNITY:**

None

**XII. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:**

**Commissioner Doerr:** Commissioner Doerr expressed excitement for the upcoming park ribbon cutting and the opportunity to see children enjoying the new space. She acknowledged the unique nature of the park's design and the importance of officially opening it. While the end of summer is bittersweet, Doerr looks forward to the fall and winter activities planned. She concluded by praising the quality of the presentation and the overall meeting.

**Commissioner Haas:** Commissioner Haas and Jennifer Boys attended an Optimist installation dinner and received a plaque for their partnership with the park district on events like Movies in the Park. Jennifer Boys was also recognized for her work as a liaison. Commissioner Haas expressed concerns about the shower curtain situation in the locker room at Prairie Lakes Aquatic Center. She noted that the shower curtains are torn or missing, leading to a lack of privacy for users. She suggested that this issue should be addressed.

**Commissioner Rosedale:** Commented on the work being done along Thacker by Prarie Lakes.

**Commissioner Grady:** Commissioner Grady expressed satisfaction with the new flooring at Prairie Lakes Community Center and acknowledged the urgent need for the flooring replacement. He praised the improved appearance and functionality of the space, which has been well-received by visitors. Grady also expressed hope for a successful fall and winter season.

**President Williams:** President Williams expressed enjoyment of the fall season and anticipation of upcoming activities. He inquired about the upcoming fall time change and expressed excitement for the return of winter. He concluded by echoing the positive sentiments of others and wishing everyone a great fall.

**XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION**  
None

**XV. ADJOURNMENT**

**Commissioner Haas motioned to adjourn the Park Board Meeting at 7:32 p.m.**

Seconded by Commissioner Grady

**All in Favor, Opposed**

**Ayes: 5, Nays: 0, Absent: 0**

**Motion Carried: 5-0-0**

APPROVED 4-0-1  
Eli Williams  
President

Randy McEl  
Secretary