



**PARK DISTRICT  
of OAK PARK**

**Park District of Oak Park  
Committee of the Whole Meeting  
Hedges Administrative Center  
218 Madison Street, Oak Park, IL 60302**

**Thursday, June 3, 2021 at 7:30pm**

**Minutes**

The meeting was called to order at 7:32pm.

**I. ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Commissioners Lentz, Wick, Wollmuth, Worley-Hood, and President Porreca.

**Park District Staff present:** Jan Arnold, Executive Director; Chris Lindgren, Superintendent of Parks and Planning; Mitch Bowlin, Director of Finance; Illiana De La Rose, Finance Manager; and Karen Gruszka, Executive Assistant.

**Others Present:** Brad Porter, Lauterbach and Amen.

**II. VISITOR/PUBLIC COMMENTS** – Executive Director Arnold reminded the Board that due to the meeting being held electronically, they posted on the website and social media that public comments could be submitted electronically. Following are the public comments read during the meeting:

Jean Magee – The Park District works hard to make their parks multi-use however, there are currently nine dedicated tennis courts in Oak Park. The only dedicated pickleball courts are at Barrie and those courts started to deteriorate immediately after they were installed. At times, they are unplayable. People have slipped and fallen because of the surface. As the fastest growing sport in America, pickleball deserves to have equity with tennis and we would like to have six dedicated courts at Longfellow Park; we deserve to have a decent playing surface such as the courts currently enjoyed by tennis players at Scoville and Rehm.

Richard Schumacher – I am 68 and love playing pickleball as do dozens and dozens in our area. It is a fabulous way to keep moving, using the mind, and gabbing with others just like baseball and softball for our kids but it takes up a lot less park space. Dedicated courts like Elmhurst's Crestview Park are best. Barrie was a good try but the inability to use a softer surface like Rehm and Euclid Square deters play particularly by seniors. Although I don't mind Barrie, I need to play with others. I get together with other seniors, the group of up to 20 or so, who regularly meet every morning at Euclid from March to January. While we could play in groups of two all over town, ours is a social game, easily learned and played by us senior who no longer play soccer, softball, volleyball, or tennis. Please dedicate courts (or at least set time) for pickleball.

Sarah McDonald – Please prioritize the creation of dedicated pickleball courts in Oak Park. The Barrie Park courts while appreciated, were and are of poor quality and a poor bandage for a growing demand for places to play pickleball. It is one of the fastest growing sports and can be played by people of all ages, competitively, recreationally, and by families including children. It is a sport enjoyed by older adults and helps keep them active and healthy. Other Chicagoland communities have dedicated resources to improve their pickleball facilities and Oak Park should do the same and should develop options for dedicated outdoor courts as well as dedicated indoor courts or perhaps a retractable roof or an open air dome that could be used to allow pickleball during inclement weather. The demand is there and growing, please spend the taxpayer funded park funds to support pickleball.

Zarco Stambolic – Please create dedicated pickleball courts in Oak Park. This would help both pickleball players and the tennis players who all want to enjoy their sport.

Joan Slanina – As a pickleball player, I would like to request that the tennis courts at Longfellow be redone as pickleball courts only. I'm tired of finding straps taken off the nets by tennis players at courts that are multi-use. I don't mind measuring and adjusting the nets every time I play but straps are frequently taken off completely. Also I have checked all the courts in Oak Park and there are nine tennis only courts in the village; for it to be equitable, there should be pickleball only courts also. Please don't consider the six at Barrie, as they are poorly surfaced and deteriorating.

Anastasia Obrien – Please create dedicated pickleball courts in Oak Park. Outdoor and indoor for winter and bad weather would be great. So many people play pickleball and more are joining every day, we need court space of our own that is appropriately surfaced.

### **III. Recreation and Facility Program Committee – None**

### **IV. Parks and Planning Committee - None**

### **V. Administration and Finance Committee – Commissioner Wick**

**A. 2020 Audit Report** – Brad Porter, Lauterbach & Amen, presented to the Board the 2020 Audit Report and stated that it went very well. Mr. Porter reviewed the layout of the report with the Board pointing out the Government Finance Officers Association Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting. He briefly ran through the different sections of the report and finally, he went over the Management Letter with the Board. Illiana gave a financial overview to the Board of revenue/expenses. The Board discussed where the District was at and how long it could possibly take to get back to where the District was pre-pandemic. The Board thanked all for their work on the audit. **This will come before the Board at the June Regular Board Meeting under the consent agenda.**

#### **B. Austin Gardens Trust Update**

Executive Director Arnold reminded the Board of the two Austin Gardens funds with Oak Park River Forest Community Foundation and explained that the one was strictly for the upkeep of the park and arts that was set up by the family and the other account has been setup with the disbursements taken for upkeep of the park and to repair damage from the Albion building. Festival Theater will not receive their annual \$6,000 as it was distributed to them last year and it was not used due to the pandemic. The Board discussed the disbursements into the fund for maintenance and if there was staff monitoring damage to the park from the Albion building. **No action is needed by the Board on this item.**

#### **C. Semi-Annual Closed Session Minutes Review and Release**

Executive Director Arnold reminded the Board of the requirement to review the Closed Session Minutes semi-annually to see if confidentiality was still needed or if they could be released to the public. The Board was informed that the consensus for the minutes from March 4, 2021, March 18, 2021, and the minutes previously held from August 21, 2014, and September 25, 2014, were not to be released. These will all come before the Board at the December meetings for review. **This item will be brought before the Board on the consent agenda at the June Regular Board Meeting.**

#### **D. 2021 Budget Timeline/Guidelines**

The Board was given information for the budget that will be brought to them for further discussion at the Board Retreat including: the financial loss the District incurred last year, the CPI for the upcoming tax levy being 1.4% with the current 12 month CPI being 5.0%, the possibility to take the full CPI plus growth 1.5%, minimization of full-time staff positions by not filling open positions/using current staff to cover multiple areas, the freezing of program fees for the past two years, not raising pool passes in over ten years, the difficulty in filling seasonal and part-time positions, the increase in costs, and the Board's goals. The Board discussed the 12 month CPI which is lagging, how the Board's goals must align with the Strategic Plan, and how they appreciated the District's actions taken during the last year to keep the Park District in the best

position possible. **This will come before the Board on the regular agenda at the June Regular Board Meeting.**

**E. Board Retreat – July 15, 2021 Update**

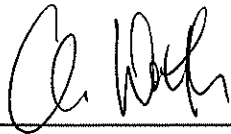
The Board was reminded of the upcoming Board Retreat on July 15, 2021, from 2:00-5:00pm at Pleasant Home. A discussion took place of items that should be discussed. **No action is needed by the Board on this item.**

**VI. NEW BUSINESS**

**VII. CLOSED SESSION**

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING**

At 8:25pm Commissioner Wollmuth moved and Commissioner Lentz seconded to adjourn the Committee of the Whole Meeting. **The motion passed with a voice vote 5:0.**



\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary  
Board of Park Commissioners

\_\_\_\_\_  
July 29, 2021  
Date



\_\_\_\_\_  
President  
Board of Park Commissioners

\_\_\_\_\_  
July 29, 2021  
Date

