

**MINUTES**  
**St. Charles Park District Board Meeting**  
**March 12, 2019**

**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

The St. Charles Park District Board held a regular meeting at Pottawatomie Community Center on March 12, 2019. At 6:31 P.M., President Brian Charles called the meeting to order. Administrative Assistant Natalie Nelson called the roll.

**Commissioners present:** Trish Beckjord, Bob Carne, Brian Charles Jim Cooke, Karrsten Goettel, Mike Hoscheit, and Bob Thomson. No commissioners were absent.

**Administrative staff present:** Director of Parks and Recreation Holly Cabel, Superintendent of Parks and Planning, Deputy Director Laura Rudow, Superintendent of Recreation Mike Kies, Superintendent of Finance and Administration Cathy Camm, Pottawatomie Golf Course Manager Ron Skubisz, Public Relations & Marketing Manager Erika Young, Administrative Assistant Natalie Nelson

**Other staff present:** Community Center Day Supervisor & Volunteer Coordinator Lara Piner, Community Center Evening Supervisor Sabrina Killeen, Assistant Superintendent of Recreation Jennifer Bruggeman, Aquatics & Youth Programs Supervisor Steve Gard, Assistant Superintendent of Recreation Katie Miller.

**Guests present:** Fox Valley Special Recreation Association Executive Director Carolyn Nagle, Pauly D Foundation representatives Giana Dell Grazie and Theresa Softcheck, Karen Konopka and Bob Harmon, Carol Glemza

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Mr. Cooke motioned and Mr. Carne seconded that the St. Charles Park District Board approve the Consent Agenda items, including the Board Meeting Minutes from February 26, 2019. A roll call vote was taken. Aye: Beckjord, Carne, Cooke, Goettel, Hoscheit, Thomson, Charles. Nay: none. The motion carried.

**PUBLIC APPEARANCES**

**2018 Volunteer of the Year**

Lara Piner introduced Karen Konopka, who during the past 2-1/2 years has volunteered with preschool-age classrooms and camps. Ms. Konopka was presented with the Volunteer of the Year award and “Day in the Park” gift certificates in recognition of her valuable contributions.

**Pauly D Foundation**

Jennifer Bruggeman introduced Gianna Delle Grazie and Theresa Softcheck of the Pauly D Foundation, which advocates for water safety and drowning prevention. For the third year, the Foundation donated \$12,000 to the Park District to offer free swim lessons to 3- and 4-year-olds. Ms. Softcheck thanked Ms. Bruggeman for coordinating the free swim lessons program. Board President Brian Charles thanked Ms. Delle Grazie and her family for establishing the Pauly D Foundation, in memory of their son who was lost in a drowning accident in 2014, and for the

Foundation's generous donations. He presented a statuette to Ms. Delle Grazie in recognition of and appreciation for the Foundation's continuing support of the Park District's learn-to-swim programming.

#### Fox Valley Special Recreation Association

Mr. Charles presented to Carolyn Nagle, Executive Director of the Fox Valley Special Recreation Association, an engraved crystal vase as a token of appreciation from the Park District for her 25+ years of service to FVSRA. Ms. Nagle Carolyn thanked the Park District Board and staff for their support of the FVSRA.

#### Other public appearances

None.

*At 6:39 P.M., Karen Konopka, Bob Harmon, Gianna Delle Grazie, Theresa Softcheck, and Carolyn Nagle left the meeting.*

### **ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE**

#### Mobile Marketing Update

Erika Young presented statistics and analytics from 2018 mobile marketing strategies. She reported upon the District's partnership with Fox Valley Deals and other services used for marketing, including Constant Contact for email campaigns, the District's 13 websites, and various social media platforms. She provided reach data from Fox Valley Deals and Google.

Ms. Young said future mobile marketing campaigns will be developed to encourage recipients to take action. She reported the email open rate and click rates exceed national averages, especially when newsletters and event reminders are sent to groups, such as parents of preschoolers or dancers and AAC members, who have become accustomed to receiving this type of information electronically. She explained that email addresses are provided by users at registration and also through online requests for information.

Mr. Carne suggested further analytics of past and current registration data to target marketing to reach demographic groups that have aged out of one area of programming into another. He stated a college intern could perform this task. He requested additional data collection of campaigns that include calls to action.

Mr. Charles recommended developing a data analysis strategy with a defined purpose. He offered to share a framework for data collection with staff. Ms. Young will work with staff to find out what data they would find most useful in promoting their programs and facilities.

Mr. Charles also asked if a "chatbot" feature could be added to the website to provide real-time assistance. Ms. Young will explore the chatbot plug-in in WordPress.

Ms. Young reported a new community forum under development will be a venue to share information among families with children in camps, preschool, and other programs.

2018 Year-End Report – Preliminary and Unaudited

Cathy Camm presented upon the 2018 year-end report. She displayed the report on the large monitor and discussed the highlights in the charts and graphs for each fund and facility. The report presented actual financial figures from 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2018 budget figures, as well as participation figures. Most revenues and expenses were consistent year-to-year. Athletics participation decreased as the District no longer handled lacrosse registrations. Total financial assistance increased because the annual limit set allowed qualifying families to obtain pool passes, rather than using it for program registrations. Expenses at Norris Recreation Center were higher than expected as some fire related expenses occurred in this fiscal year.

Ms. Beckjord inquired whether District-wide budget goals are developed prior to budget planning. Ms. Cabel explained that budget goals are set at the supervisory level at the beginning of the budgeting process. Ms. Beckjord request the future year-end reports compare budget goals and actuals.

Mr. Carne recommended reducing costs and increasing revenue in preparation for anticipated reduced property tax revenue. Ms. Cabel reminded the Board the District's natural areas and parks incur expenses but generate no revenue. She also stated that reliance upon property tax revenues has decreased recently from 68% to 62%. Mr. Kies added quarterly recreation programming planning always considers the return-on-investment, to ensure the District sees some profit.

Ms. Beckjord requested a quarterly report on sponsorship and advertising from the Marketing Department, so the Board is apprised of the efforts to increase revenue from new sources.

**RECREATION**

Sculpture in the Park Sculpture Approval

Sabrina Killeen presented the Sculpture in the Park committee's recommendations for the 2019 Sculpture in the Park exhibit. She reported upon the number of submissions and new and returning artists, as well as where the artists are located, both local and out-of-state. She displayed images of the selected sculptures, which the Board agreed were the best group of works they have seen.

Ms. Beckjord proposed a future bench sculpture project. Ms. Killeen will share this idea with the Sculpture in the Park committee.

Mr. Cooke motioned and Mr. Goettel seconded to approve the selected sculptures for Mt. St. Mary Park and Baker Community Center. A voice vote was taken, unanimous affirmative votes were cast, and the motion carried.

**PARKS, PLANNING, AND FACILITIES**

Primrose Farm Stand Operator

Ms. Rudow discussed the terms of a one-year operations agreement with FulBushel Farm and Produce, LLC for the both the farm stand on Crane Road and the four acres of agricultural land set aside for this purpose. FulBushel Farm agrees to pay \$250 per acre for the season and operate the farm stand for public sales of produce on Wednesday evenings and Saturdays. Ms. Rudow

stated that the land was not used by the past farm stand operators. FulBushel Farm will grow produce, not animals, on the land. The farm is not currently USDA certified organic.

Mr. Carne motioned and Mr. Thomson seconded to approve the terms of the agreement. A voice vote was taken, unanimous affirmative votes were cast, and the motion carried.

*At 7:43 P.M., Katie Miller left the meeting.*

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

Ms. Cabel reported receiving electronic communication from a non-resident who was unable to register for programming, as residents filled all spaces before the one-week non-resident waiting period. According to historical registration data only about 8.9% of programs fill with waitlists. Ms. Cabel's response email included background for the current registration policies and an invitation to discuss the writer's concerns further.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Ms. Cabel asked the Board to consider whether the March 26 Board meeting should be conducted, as Mr. Goettel, Mr. Charles, and Mr. Carne cannot attend, nor can she. The Board reached a consensus to cancel the March 26 Board meeting.

The Staff Recognition Dinner will be April 5 at 6:00 P.M. Board members who wish to attend may RSVP with Ms. Nelson.

IAPD Annual Legislative Conference and Reception will be April 30-May 1. Board members who wish to attend may RSVP with Ms. Nelson.

Administrative staff attended the IAPD Legislative Breakfast last week. Two legislators were present. The minimum wage increase was discussed.

The Paddlewheel Riverboat ribbon cutting will be May 28 at 6:00 P.M., before the scheduled Board meeting. Community leaders will be invited. Three boat captains have been hired, two of which worked for the Rockford Park District, which ceased its riverboat operation. Charter tours may be booked on The Queen only until the new flushable toilet is ready on The Belle. Plans are ready, and installation will begin soon. Inspections of the toilet by multiple agencies are required before the boat may be launched.

The next Intergovernmental Meeting is March 14. Mr. Charles and Mr. Thomson will attend.

### **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

**Trish Beckjord** – No comments.

**Bob Carne** – He thanked staff for the successful Daddy-Daughter Dance. He recommended a different DJ be sought. He reported reading an article about successful restaurants near dog parks. He suggested partnering with homeowners' associations to install permanent bags games at neighborhood parks. Ms. Rudow reported two games were recently installed at Fairview Park, and Pottawatomie Park improvements this fall include permanent games, too. Mr. Carne requested an updated graph to better reflect the AAC figures in the year-end report. He said he

was happy to have three recognitions at the beginning of the meeting. He asked the Board to consider expressing gratitude to living people with naming opportunities.

**Jim Cooke** – He wished everyone a happy St. Patrick’s Day.

**Karrsten Goettel** – He thanked staff making the Daddy-Daughter Dance nights such popular and successful events

**Mike Hoscheit** – No comments.

**Bob Thomson** – No comments.

**Brian Charles** – He enjoyed participating in the Paddlewheel Riverboat closing. He had questions regarding the recently closed Rockford Riverboats. Mr. Kies stated the boats cannot pass inspections without significant costly repairs, which likely led to the decision to cease operation.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. Carne motioned and Mr. Cooke seconded to move to Executive Session. A roll call vote was taken. Aye: Beckjord, Carne, Cooke, Goettel, Hoscheit, Thomson, Charles. Nay: none. The motion carried.

The Board took a short recess before proceeding to Executive Session.

*At 8:01 P.M., Lara Piner, Jen Bruggeman, Sabrina Killeen, Steve Gard, Ron Skubisz, and Erika Young left the meeting.*

At 9:22 P.M, the Board returned to open session.

### **Personnel**

Mr. Cooke motioned and Mr. Hoscheit seconded to approve the employee merit adjustments and the employee evaluation for 2019 as presented and recommended. A roll call vote was taken. Aye: Beckjord, Carne, Cooke, Goettel, Hoscheit, Thomson, Charles. Nay: none. The motion carried.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further or other business, so, upon motion duly made, seconded, and carried, the meeting adjourned at 9:23 P.M.

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Secretary