



ST. CHARLES PARK DISTRICT BOARD MEETING

Pottawatomie Community Center

November 28, 2023 – 6:30 P.M.

MINUTES

Call to Order

The St. Charles Park District Board met for a Regular Meeting at Pottawatomie Community Center on November 28, 2023. At 6:33 p.m., Vice-President Bob Thomson called the meeting to order.

Roll Call

Administrative Assistant Jenny Santos called the roll.

Commissioners present: Bob Carne, Jim Cooke, Peggy McCarthy, Bob Thomson and Steve Ward

Commissioners absent: Brian Charles and Karrsten Goettel

Administrative staff present: Director of Parks & Recreation Holly Cabel, Superintendent of Parks and Planning, Deputy Director Laura Rudow, Superintendent of Finance & Administration Ashlee Wallace, Public Relations & Marketing Manager Erika Young, Information Technology Manager Jeff Essig, Golf Course Manager & PGA Golf Pro Ron Skubisz and Administrative Assistant Jenny Santos

Other staff present: Assistant Superintendent of Recreation Katie Miller, Assistant Superintendent of Outdoor Education Chris Gingrich, Nature Programs Supervisor Emily Shanahan, Manager of Farm Programs & Interpretive Services Alison Jones, Assistant Superintendent of Recreation Melissa Caine and Golf Course Superintendent Denise Gillett-Parchert

Guests present: Jacob Bryla, Elizabeth Bryla, David Childers

Consent Agenda

Mr. Cooke moved and Mr. Ward seconded that the St. Charles Park District Board of Commissioners approve the Consent Agenda items, including the following:

- Approval of Minutes from Regular Meeting on November 14, 2023
- Approval of Bills as of October 31, 2023

Account	Amount
CORPORATE FUND	\$ 350,845.29
RECREATION FUND	\$ 29,975.20
DEBT SERVICE FUND	\$ 98.95
REVENUE FACILITIES	\$ 61,086.37
NORRIS REC CENTER	\$ 154,125.39
SPORTSPLEX	\$ 6,609.68
CAPITAL	\$ 148,371.78
Total	\$ 751,112.66

- Approval of Cash and Investment Report as of October 31, 2023
- Approval of Revenue Expense Reports as of October 31, 2023

A roll call vote was taken. Aye: Carne, Cooke, McCarthy, Ward and Thomson. Nay: none. The motion carried.

Public Appearances

Assistant Superintendent of Parks Chris Gingrich welcomed Jacob Bryla, Eagle Scout Candidate, and spoke about the stands he built for the animal exhibits at Hickory Knolls Discovery Center. In consultation with Mr. Gingrich, Jacob designed and built ten wooden stands on casters for the animals that are homed in aquarium tanks. Jacob was inspired to give back to HKDC in this manner because of his positive experiences coming to HKDC and seeing the snakes and other animals. The Commissioners thanked him for his contributions and presented him with a certificate of recognition.

Jacob Bryla, Elizabeth Bryla and David Childers left the meeting at 6:40 p.m.

Administration and Finance

Primrose Farm & Hickory Knolls Update

Superintendent of Parks & Planning Laura Rudow introduced part of the Outdoor Education team: Assistant Superintendent of Outdoor Education Chris Gingrich, Nature Programs Supervisor Emily Shanahan and Manager of Farm Programs & Interpretive Services Alison Jones. Mr. Gingrich reminded the Board that the Outdoor Education department was formed in 2018 and consists of Primrose Farm, Hickory Knolls Discovery Center and the Natural Areas. Over the past 5 years, he has focused on restructuring as staff changed, strategic planning and program & audience growth through innovative programming.

Ms. Jones presented the many facets of farm operations in 2023. Primrose Farm offered 32 programs in 2023 that included 10 new ones. The Farm Supervisor has developed new programs and revamped old ones for the most successful programming year so far. Animal Adventures are still the most popular programs at the farm that allow patrons to sign up for individual times to feed and care for the animals. School field-trip programs are up 200 participants in 2023, with several field trips custom-designed to meet the curriculum needs of the requesting schools. Girl Scouts continue to come to the farm for social outings and badge programs. The farm summer camps had an incredible year with every session having a long waiting list, even after doubling the number of offerings. Mr. Thomson asked what the plans are for the new ag building. Ms. Jones said she is excited to offer winter programming including winter break camps, play groups and farm-to-table cooking classes. Mr. Carne asked about the egg production at the farm. Ms. Jones responded 40 hens produce 2-3 dozen eggs per day during their season. He suggested that the farm return to offering special events like movie nights to bring in sports teams and youth groups. Ms. McCarthy praised Ms. Jones for her detailed presentation and said she wants to take classes at the farm now. Mr. Carne asked about how to cross-sell the farm programs and Ms. Jones said she works closely with the Park District preschools to promote the programs. Mr. Cooke asked Ms. Jones what her wish list is for the farm and she said she would love a team of horses to work the farm. She'd also like a playground that would extend patron's visits, noting the tire swing is the most popular part of the farm next to the animals!

Ms. Shanahan was proud to share that all the 2022 summer nature camp staff returned in 2023 and provided programs for 66 more campers this year. Next year, HKDC will offer programs for the fifth and sixth graders who have aged out of the current programs, as they are eager to return.

School programs are back in full swing and 2,356 students took a field trip to HKDC in 2023, which is 90% more students than in 2022. The staff created a 10-day STEM program for West Aurora kindergarteners that was very successful. Public programs include Nature Playschool, No School Nature Days, Wee Wonders, Twinleaf Tales, Art of Nature, hikes and campfires. Special events include Maple Magic, Flashlight Hunts, Caravan to Candyland and Woodland Santa. Scout programs and birthday parties continue to be popular as are the collaborative programs and partnerships with the recreation department, local breweries and the library. Mr. Cooke asked what's on Ms. Shanahan's wish list and she said that she would like an updated outdoor nature play space and one more full-time person. The Commissioners thanked her for her presentation.

Chris Gingrich, Alison Jones and Emily Shanahan left the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Adoption of 2023 Tax Levy Ordinance 2023-11-01

Superintendent of Finance & Administration Ashlee Wallace asked the Board to adopt Ordinance 2023-11-01 Annual Tax Levy Ordinance for the Fiscal Year Commencing January 1, 2024 and ending December 31, 2024 for the St. Charles Park District, Kane and DuPage Counties, in the amount of \$12,977,112. Ms. Wallace said the tax levy amount has not changed since it was presented to the Board in tentative form except for minor changes in the allocations.

Ms. McCarthy moved and Mr. Cooke seconded that the St. Charles Park District Board of Commissioners adopt Ordinance 2023-11-01 Annual Tax Levy for FY2024. A roll call vote was taken. Aye: Carne, Cooke, McCarthy, Ward and Thomson. Nay: none. The motion carried.

Abatement of Tax Levy Ordinance 2023-11-02

Mr. Cooke moved and Ms. McCarthy seconded that the St. Charles Park District Board of Commissioners adopt Ordinance 2023-11-02 Annual Abatement Ordinance abating the 2023 tax levy for debt service on GO Bonds Park Bonds (Alternate Revenue Source), Series 2018. A roll call vote was taken. Aye: Carne, Cooke, McCarthy, Ward and Thomson. Nay: none. The motion carried.

Naming of Property Leased from State of Illinois on Route 38

Public Relations and Marketing Manager Erika Young presented different options for naming the leased land on Route 38. She described the process the administrative team went through to generate ideas for names, considering location, purpose and use of the property. The Commissioners came to a consensus on Prairieview Pointe Park as the property's new name. Ms. Cabel added she will bring a formal resolution naming the property at the next Board meeting.

Access Control System Additions

Mr. Carne moved and Ms. McCarthy seconded that the St. Charles Park District Board of Commissioners approve additions to the current Access Control System at Otter Cove and Denny Ryan Service Center from NextGen Electric & Communications for \$41,750. A roll call vote was taken. Aye: Carne, Cooke, McCarthy, Ward and Thomson. Nay: none. The motion carried.

Ordinance 2023-11-03 Authorizing Disposal of Personal Property Owned by the St. Charles Park District

Mr. Cooke moved and Ms. McCarthy seconded that the St. Charles Park District Board of Commissioners approve Ordinance 2023-11-03 authorizing the disposal of personal property

owned by the St. Charles Park District, specifically inflatables from Sportsplex. A voice vote was taken, unanimous affirmative votes were cast and the motion carried.

Conference Attendance Request

Mr. Cooke moved and Mr. Carne seconded that the St. Charles Park District Board of Commissioners approve Melissa Caine, Assistant Superintendent of Recreation, to attend the Revenue Development and Management School in Wheeling, WV, March 10-15, 2024. A voice vote was taken, unanimous affirmative votes were cast and the motion carried.

Recreation

Associated Group Agreements

Mr. Carne moved and Mr. Cooke seconded that the St. Charles Park District Board of Commissioners approve the following organizations as Associate Groups for FY 2024, pending receipt of the required documentation as set forth within each agreement: Bachelors 'n' Bachelorettes, Fox Valley Mixers, St. Charles Canoe Club, St. Charles Chess Club and St. Charles Storm Basketball. A voice vote was taken, unanimous affirmative votes were cast and the motion carried.

Conference Attendance Request

Mr. Cooke moved and Mr. Carne seconded that the St. Charles Park District Board of Commissioners approve Melissa Caine, Assistant Superintendent of Recreation, to attend the Revenue Development and Management School in Wheeling, WV, March 10-15, 2024. A voice vote was taken, unanimous affirmative votes were cast and the motion carried.

Parks, Planning, and Facilities

Primrose Farm Fence Project Bid

Ms. Rudow told the Commissioners this project is on the 2023 capital project list and was bid earlier in the year and opened on March 9, 2023. She delayed bringing the bid to the Board for approval out of concern for the cost being over budget. However, the recent roof project came in under budget, so the added expenditure on the fence is still within the total capital budget and thus she would like to move forward with the project.

Mr. Cooke moved and Mr. Carne seconded that the St. Charles Park District Board of Commissioners approve the fencing bid from Proline Fence, Rockdale, IL for \$105,124.20. A roll call vote was taken. Aye: Carne, Cooke, McCarthy, Ward and Thomson. Nay: none. The motion carried.

Golf Course Audubon Society

Golf Course Manager & PGA Golf Pro Ron Skubisz spoke to the Board about the reasons why he recommends that Pottawatomie Golf Course keep its membership in the Audubon Society, but move away from being a certified member. He reminded the Commissioners that in 1997, PGC was the first 9-hole golf course in Illinois to become a certified member of the Audubon Society. At the time and for two decades, the Audubon Society was the sole source for information on how courses can be good stewards of the environment. However, now the Golf Course Superintendent Association's best management practices is a stewardship program that assists course superintendents more significantly. Golf Course Superintendent Denise Gillett-Parchert spoke of

the GCSA's positive working relationship with the EPA at both the federal and state level. The "BPM" label on the safest chemicals used on courses will soon only be available to courses with certification through the GCSA, so it is important that we make the move to GCSA. Mr. Ward asked if there are significant cost savings. Ms. Cabel stated there is a reduction in expense with this change. Mr. Carne asked if there will be a negative response from the community and Mr. Skubisz responded that we will still be a member of the Audubon Society, we will just use the GCSA best practices management program to guide course management. The Commissioners agreed this was an appropriate change to make in course operations.

Associated Group Agreements

Mr. Carne moved and Mr. Cooke seconded that the St. Charles Park District Board of Commissioners approve the following organizations as Associate Groups for FY 2024, pending receipt of the required documentation as set forth within each agreement: Campton United Soccer, Chicago Soccer Academy, Fox Valley Maoris Rugby Club, Lightning STC, St. Charles Celtics, St. Charles Girls Softball Association, St. Charles Baseball Association, Strikers Fox Valley Soccer Club, Tri Cities Soccer Association and Tri City Youth Football. A voice vote was taken, unanimous affirmative votes were cast and the motion carried.

Primrose Farm Agricultural Land Lease

Ms. Rudow asked the Board to renew the lease with Joe White for 2024. She said his almost 20-year tenure leasing the land has benefited the District and would like to continue the relationship.

Ms. McCarthy moved and Mr. Cooke seconded that the St. Charles Park District Board of Commissioners approve leasing 83 acres of tillable land at Primrose Farm to JW Farms for two hundred thirty dollars and twelve cents (\$230.12) per acre for annual rent payment of \$19,100 due in two equal installments on March 10 and August 10 of 2024. A voice vote was taken, unanimous affirmative votes were cast and the motion carried.

Requests for Use of Facilities

Mr. Carne moved and Mr. Ward seconded that the St. Charles Park District Board of Commissioners approve the following requests for use of facilities *en gros*:

- Hardy Strong Foundation requests the use of Mt. St. Mary Park for the purpose of hosting their annual Amazing Race fundraising event on Saturday, August 3, 2024
- Alzheimer's Association requests the use of Pottawatomie Park for the purpose of hosting their annual Walk to End Alzheimer's fundraiser event on Saturday, September 28, 2024

A voice vote was taken, and the unanimous affirmative votes were cast and the motion carried.

Special Reports

Fox Valley Special Recreation Association

Mr. Skubisz attended the FVSRA Board meeting earlier that day and said the audit was presented with the highest rating and no major managerial issues. The FVSRA has had 30% increase in program registrations which has presented staffing challenges. Most programs are in person now after COVID.

St. Charles History Museum

Mr. Carne said that the History Museum staff were the Grand Marshalls of the Holiday Homecoming Parade. The Board meetings will resume now that a new director has been hired. And the Holiday Gala is on Friday, December 8th.

St. Charles Park Foundation

No report

St. Charles Arts Council

Ms. Cabel reported that last week's "Art of the Dessert" fundraiser at The Graceful Ordinary raised \$13,500 and had over 120 attendees.

St. Charles Business Alliance

Ms. Cabel said that the SCBA said the Holiday Homecoming and Electric Parade was a great event this year. The next event is Restaurant Week in February.

St. Charles Housing Commission

No report

St. Charles River Corridor Foundation

Ms. McCarthy said the upcoming lecture series, "A River Flows Through It," will begin after the new year and will feature Scott Shipley, an architect that designs recreational water courses, and Pam Otto, the District's Outreach Ambassador.

Baker Community Center

No report

Correspondence

None

Director's Report

Ms. Cabel encouraged Commissioners to register for the upcoming IAPD/IPRA conference in January. She shared that she reached out to local veterans to understand their position or desire for a Veteran's Memorial. She also reminded the Board that the Holiday Luncheon is at noon on Friday, December 15th at Pottawatomie Community Center and hoped they could attend.

Commissioner Comments

Bob Carne: Mr. Carne asked whether the holiday cards could be sent digitally to customers. Ms. Young responded that each department sends different cards to vendors and partners to thank them for their relationships. He suggested that the District rent a snow making machine for one of the long weekends this winter for Timber Trails. He said he went for a walk through Delnor Woods this weekend and was struck by its beauty. He told Ms. Rudow that he would like to see a marketing plan for the new agricultural building at Primrose Farm. He also complimented the staff for tonight's presentations.

Jim Cooke: Mr. Cooke asked about a recent plan that was discussed for a parking lot along the river on the east side just south of the Illinois Street Bridge. Ms. Cabel clarified that the proposed

Eastbank Enhancement plan from the RCF was for a drop off lane for kayaks to enter the water on the east side of the river and the property is owned by the City of St. Charles and was not part of the original scope of project. She stated that River corridor committee will be meeting again to review plan based on the citizen comments they received. Mr. Cooke also broached the subject of the proposed 18-hole disc golf course planned for the newly named Prairieview Pointe Park. He said that although some of the land incorporated into the design is farmland that was covered in scrub, some of it provides a natural habitat for ground-nesting birds. He believes it is important that the staff understand the impact of the course on these birds. Ms. Rudow said that she has had a discussion with Pam Otto regarding the course plans and Ms. Otto does have concerns about the impact on the birds, a salamander pond just north of the proposed course and the overall restoration that has taken place on the property. Ms. Rudow added she is planning on bringing three course designs for the Board's consideration at a future board meeting.

Peggy McCarthy: Ms. McCarthy congratulated staff on the great presentations this evening. She mentioned that some of the pickleball players who have recently started playing at Norris Recreation Center don't like the court reservation system and she would like to see NRC shine in their eyes. Ms. Cabel shared the efforts that are being made to improve the reservation system, but it is going to take time to implement new system.

Bob Thomson: Mr. Thomson asked if it was true that the District won first prize for its float in the parade and Ms. Cabel said yes, in the non-profit category.

Steve Ward: Mr. Ward said the staff did a great job on the presentations this evening. He also complimented the District on the new playground at Timber Trails and has heard a lot of positive feedback from neighbors, especially that is appeals to older kids, too. The only concern is that the turf seems lumpy; Ms. Rudow said it will settle over time.

Executive Session

No business

Other Business

No business

Adjournment of Meeting

Having no further business to conduct, Vice-President Thomson adjourned the meeting at 8:19 p.m.


Secretary

Date Approved: December 12, 2023

