



## ST. CHARLES PARK DISTRICT BOARD MEETING

Pottawatomie Community Center

September 9, 2025 – 6:30 P.M.

MINUTES

### Call to Order

The St. Charles Park District Board met for a Regular Meeting at Pottawatomie Community Center on September 9, 2025. At 6:32p.m., President Bob Thomson called the meeting to order.

### Roll Call

Administrative Assistant Jenny Santos called the roll.

**Commissioners present:** Bob Carne, Jim Cooke, Karrsten Goettel, Peggy McCarthy, Craig Newman, Bob Thomson and Steve Ward

**Commissioners absent:**

**Administrative staff present:** Director of Parks & Recreation Holly Cabel, Superintendent of Parks & Planning Laura Rudow, Superintendent of Finance & Administration Ashlee Wallace, Superintendent of Recreation Mike Kies and Administrative Assistant Jenny Santos

**Other staff present:**

**Guests present:** Alex Engelhardt, Steve Leffler

### Consent Agenda

Mr. Cooke moved and Ms. McCarthy 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 August 26, 2025

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

### Public Appearances

Mr. Leffler addressed the Commissioners to share his suggestions for improvements the District could make based on his extensive walks throughout the parks, including increasing the diversity of the native plants in Mt. St. Mary Park, replacing faded signage, and labeling trees in Pottawatomie Park.

*Steve Leffler left the meeting at 6:39 p.m.*

### Administration and Finance

#### FVSRA Presentation and Member Contribution Review

Fox Valley Special Recreation Executive Director Alex Englehardt presented an overview of the FVSRA in-house programs and inclusion services provided to its members, highlighting participation of St. Charles Park District residents. She shared the member contribution and rate history from 2010 to present to help the Commissioners understand the current 16% increase in the District's contribution. Commissioners asked questions about the ages of the patrons and

thanked Ms. Englehardt and her staff for the important work they do.

*Alex Engelhardt left the meeting at 7:04 p.m.*

#### 2026 Health Insurance Renewal Update

Superintendent of Finance & Administration Ashlee Wallace presented information about the health insurance claims from the past year that were used to determine the increase in premiums beginning January 1, 2026. IPBC, the District's health insurance broker, gave the District several options for plans to help offset the 15.3% rate increase. The health insurance committee recommends Blue Choice, the option with the least amount of disruption for District employees and brings the rate increase down to 9.06%. IPBC now offers a third-party administration program for District retirees called Benestar that offers 3 customized HMO and PPO plans. Ms. Wallace also reminded commissioners that open enrollment will be held in November. Commissioners Carne and Ward, members of the health insurance committee, voiced their praise and thanks to the staff for doing a great job balancing the needs of the employees with fiscal responsibility for the taxpayers. Mr. Carne reiterated his desire to see the District cut out the middleman to cut down on healthcare costs.

#### Recreation

No business.

#### Parks, Planning, and Facilities

##### Swim Center Initiative

Superintendent of Parks & Planning Laura Rudow shared an update on the St. Charles Aquatics Initiative whose goal is to build a natatorium through a public/private partnership. A concept plan of the 84,000 square foot proposed facility and two possible locations for construction was discussed.

##### Otter Creek Bend Wetlands Boardwalk Project Bid Opening

Ms. Rudow shared that per the 2025 Capital Plan, bids were solicited and opened on September 3, 2025 to build a new boardwalk and repair existing at Otter Creek. She asked the Commissioners to consider the lowest responsible bidder, E. Hoffman, Lombard, IL, in the amount of \$208,000. To accommodate the low bid being over budget, funds will be reallocated from the Ferson Creek Fen Overlook project which has come in under budget.

Mr. Carne moved and Mr. Goettel seconded that the St. Charles Park District Board of Commissioners approve the Otter Creek Bend Wetlands Boardwalk Project contract with E. Hoffman in the amount of \$208,000. A roll call vote was taken. Aye: Carne, Cooke, Goettel, McCarthy, Newman, Ward and Thomson. Nay: none. The motion carried.

##### Primrose House License Agreement

Mr. Cooke moved and Ms. McCarthy seconded that the St. Charles Park District Board of Commissioners renew the license agreement with Will Blankenship for the lease of Primrose House, 5N520 Crane Road, St. Charles, IL, for \$418 per month for a term of one year. A voice vote was taken. Unanimous aye votes were cast and the motion carried.

**Correspondence**

Ms. Cabel shared a copy of the Kane County Magazine that included various articles about the St. Charles Park District.

**Director's Report**

Ms. Cabel shared that she is hoping to introduce the new St. Charles Chief of Police at a meeting in October. The Sip 'N Stroll is this weekend in Mt. St. Mary Park. Mike Kies and Laura Rudow will attend the NRPA conference in Orlando next week.

**Commissioner Comments**

**Bob Carne:** Mr. Carnes is excited that the Light Up the Sky kite flying event is returning this year. He attended the Big Truck event this past weekend and was happy to see how well attended it was. He suggested pickleball vending machines at courts to monetize pickleball.

**Jim Cooke:** No comments.

**Karrsten Goettel:** No comments.

**Peggy McCarthy:** Ms. McCarthy suggested that Mr. Leffler send his ideas and suggestions to the Commissioners via email to save him the time of attending meetings.

**Craig Newman:** Mr. Newman attended the Jim Gill concert and was duly impressed with the timing, location and attendance at the event. He suggested that the District sponsor more concerts like this one. He also played all 18 holes at River View Miniature Golf and had a lot of fun. He said it was packed and the staff were fantastic. Mr. Newman wondered about the upkeep of the course and staff responded that it is on the capital project list for 2026.

**Bob Thomson:** Mr. Thomson suggested that because of the expected crowd at the upcoming Light Up the Sky event that the District arrange for more than two food trucks. He also asked about lighting the parking lot after the event. He enjoyed attending Bill Thomas's retirement party.

**Steve Ward:** Mr. Ward said he has seen the social media posts regarding the Light Up the Sky event and believes the District should be prepared for an even bigger crowd this year.

**Executive Session**

Ms. McCarthy moved and Mr. Newman seconded that the meeting temporarily adjourn into a closed meeting for the purpose of considering the following subjects, per the Open Meetings Act, 5 ILCS 120/2: 2(c)(8) security procedures and the use of personnel and equipment to respond to an actual, a threatened, or a reasonably potential danger to the safety of employees, students, staff, the public, or public property; and Section 2(c)(11) litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular public body has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the public body finds that an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the minutes of the closed meeting.

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

At 7:43 p.m., the Board temporarily adjourned to proceed to the Executive Session.

The Board came out of the Executive Session at 7:58 p.m.

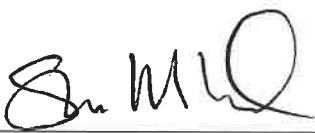
**Other Business**

Ms. McCarthy moved and Mr. Carne seconded that the St. Charles Park District Board of Commissioners approve the Reunification Plan. Mr. Cooke asked if the name "reunification" is standard for the industry to which Mr. Kies confirmed it is. A voice vote was taken. Unanimous aye votes were cast and the motion carried.

**Adjournment of Meeting**

Mr. Cooke moved and Ms. McCarthy seconded that the meeting adjourn. A voice vote was taken. Unanimous aye votes were cast and the motion carried.

President Thomson adjourned the meeting at 8:01 p.m.



9-23-25

Secretary

Date Approved: September 23, 2025