



**Westmont Park District Board of Commissioners
Minutes of the Regular Meeting
By Remote Attendance
January 13, 2021 6:00 pm**

Agenda Item #1 Call to Order

Commissioner Karesh called the Meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

Agenda Item #2 Roll Call

Comm. Conneely, Comm. Karesh, Comm. Moffett, Comm. Zapinski
Staff Present: Bob Fleck, Executive Director, Sharon Macak, Supt. of Finance, Joel Hymen, Supt. of Revenue Facilities & IT, Dustin Kleefisch, Supt. of Recreation, Lenore Farmer, Finance Assistant & HR, Craig Grember, TLGC Manager

Guest: Kevin O'Kelly, Vice-President Raymond James Public Finance

Agenda Item #3 Pledge of Allegiance

Those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Karesh requested a moment of silence in observance of the passing of Commissioner James M. Long on January 9, 2021.

Agenda Item #4 Consent Agenda

- a. Regular Board Meeting Minutes – December 3, 2020
- b. Closed Session Meeting Minutes – December 3, 2020
- c. Claims Ordinance – January 13, 2021

Motion was made by Comm. Zapinski and seconded by Comm. Conneely to approve the Consent Agenda.

Ayes: Comm. Zapinski, Comm. Conneely, Comm. Moffett, Comm. Karesh
Nays: None
Absent: None
Motion Carried.

Agenda Item #5 Open Forum and Correspondence

a. General Public
There was no one present from the general public

b. Written
Bob referenced articles in the recent IPARKS and IPRF newsletters, both featuring Westmont Park District.

c. Other
There were no additional comments or correspondence.

Agenda Item #6 Unfinished Business

a. Board to Consider DCEO HR 210045/HB 64 Land Acquisition Grant

Bob stated that this will be discussed in Closed Session. He explained that this is a \$300,000 land acquisition grant administered by the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity. According to Bob, there is no deadline, however, the process could take longer than a year. He said a specific parcel of land needs to be identified in order to apply for the grant, and if the parcel gets sold during the process, a new parcel can be presented without having to start at the beginning.

b. Programming Updates during COVID

Dustin reported that different options have been discussed by staff, and the plan is to offer as many different programs as possible. He added that planning has begun on the spring dance recital, which may be virtual or outdoors. Bob expressed hope that the State will change the metrics, and plans will not be finalized until we receive official direction from the Governor. He stated that we will have more information on January 15th, and hopefully we can return to fitness classes, no more reservation system, basketball clinics, and dance classes. Dustin concluded that we are being proactive with our approach.

c. Other

There was no additional unfinished business.

Agenda Item #7 New Business

e. Board to Consider Annual Refinancing Options

The Board was in agreement to move ahead on the Agenda.

Comm. Karesh introduced Kevin O'Kelly from Raymond James and Bob explained that Joel will put the exhibits on the screen for the Board's review. Mr. O'Kelly began the discussion by reviewing interest rates, followed by an explanation of the District's refunding analysis, including a comparison from last summer. It was stated that the bonds will mature starting in 2028. Discussion continued about how the District's rating was impacted, since revenues come from both programming and real estate taxes. The general feeling of the Board was to continue to wait for a good interest rate, however, have the ordinance prepared and ready. The Board was appreciative of the information presented.

Motion was made by Comm. Conneely and seconded by Comm. Moffett to authorize the Executive Director and Superintendent of Finance to proceed with reissuing the Bond.

Ayes: Comm. Conneely, Comm. Moffett, Comm. Zapinski, Comm. Karesh

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

a. Board to Declare a Commissioner Vacancy after the Death of Commissioner Long

Bob stated it is necessary to publicly note that there is now a vacancy on the Board. He explained that the certification of ballot for the April 6, 2021 Consolidated Election was submitted to the County last week, prior to Commissioner Long's passing, however the deadline for submittal is January 28, 2021. We are waiting for the County to advise if we can submit a re-certification. Bob informed the Board that they can appoint a new commissioner, however, the election is April 6th. Also, the only way someone else can get on the ballot is to be a write-in candidate. The Board began discussion, and

Commissioner Karesh explained that he also spoke to the election commission, and we may be able to amend the previously submitted certification of ballot, however the election commission is waiting to hear back from legal counsel. Bob reported that in addition to Commissioner Long, Commissioner Moffett and two other Westmont residents, Bill Belmonte and Jason Pecard, are currently on the ballot to fill two positions. According to Bob, we will rely on legal direction from the County.

b. Board to Consider Nominations and Approval for the Positions of President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer

Commissioner Karesh explained the importance of assigning officers before the election, until a new Board member is elected. He requested Board consideration of the following: John Karesh, President; Sue Zapinski, Vice-President; Karen Moffett, Treasurer; Mike Conneely, Secretary. The Board discussed, and Commissioner Moffett offered to become Secretary and suggested that Commissioner Conneely be named Treasurer.

Motion was made by Comm. Zapinski and seconded by Comm. Moffett to approve the following Board positions:

John Karesh	President
Sue Zapinski	Vice-President
Mike Conneely	Treasurer
Karen Moffett	Secretary

Ayes: Comm. Zapinski, Comm. Moffett, Comm. Conneely, Comm. Karesh

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

c. Staff Anniversaries

The Board recognized the following staff service anniversaries for 2020:

Joel Hymen	10 years
Craig Grember	10 years
Ben Grimme	5 years
Pete Wittman	5 years

d. Board to Consider Continuation of Emergency COVID Sick Leave Through March 31, 2021

Commissioner Karesh explained that we have the option to continue at our discretion. Bob agreed that this is not a State mandate and employers can extend on their own, explaining that the purpose is to allow staff to continue to get paid while quarantining. Commissioner Karesh explained that we will not be reimbursed from the State, while Bob acknowledged the Board's generosity to staff throughout the pandemic. Bob reported that there has only been a small amount of staff who used this benefit due to exposure to COVID and it has not been abused. The Board discussed, and in general was in favor of extending this policy.

Motion was made by Comm. Moffett and seconded by Comm. Conneely to approve continuation of paid emergency COVID sick leave for Westmont Park District staff through March 31, 2021.

Ayes: Comm. Moffett, Comm. Conneely, Comm. Zapinski, Comm. Karesh
Nays: None
Absent: None
Motion Carried.

f. Board to Consider Renaming of Blackhawk Park in Honor of Past Commissioner
James M. (Jim) Long

A proposed sign for James M. Long Park was presented. Commissioner Karesh began the discussion, wondering if there were thoughts for other names, and inviting the Long family to provide their input. Jim Long Park was also suggested. The Board was in agreement to consider, and approve the name of the park on a later date.

Motion was made by Comm. Zapinski and seconded by Comm. Moffett to rename Blackhawk Park at a later date, in honor of past Commissioner James M. Long.

Ayes: Comm. Zapinski, Comm. Moffett, Comm. Conneely, Comm. Karesh
Nays: None
Absent: None
Motion Carried.

g. Treasurer's Report

Sharon reported that the checking accounts total is \$3,678,528.97 and the accounts payable total is \$96,392.16. She added that the current interest rate is .14%, with \$387.32 interest earned in December.

h. Revenue Facility Report

Joel reported that the cameras have been installed at Ty Warner Park, covering the entire east parking lot. He said there is no construction date yet for the cable to be brought into Ty Warner Park for the free WiFi, however, he will provide an update when there is more information. Joel said the ADA automatic doors for the WCC gym and the Fitness Club gym, which have been on backorder, are scheduled to be installed the first week of February. Additionally, Joel has conducted training with the maintenance staff and there is now a computer work station at the Quincy Garage. Joel has also been working with Dustin on the technical side of the Winter Beer Fest.

Joel reported that the Golf Course, which just had a very successful year, is closed for the season, with the exception of the upcoming Winter Open, scheduled for Saturday, January 23rd. Joel began the discussion regarding rates, which are usually reviewed in January, and he said the recommendation is to not raise the rates for 2021. Bob was in agreement, adding that our rates are comparable to other courses. Current rates were reviewed, and after discussion, the Board was in agreement to stay the course and not change the rates for 2021.

According to Joel, we continue to follow State regulations at the Fitness Club, and the reservation system is working well. Also, the lounge now has four machines, since tables and chairs had to be removed, which has opened up more workout time slots. He said staff is prepared to make adjustments if State guidelines change after January 15th. Finally, there have been a total of 206 memberships lost since March; currently, there are 606 memberships with 1,210 members.

i. Parks/Maintenance Report

John reported that maintenance staff has been working very well together and has been completing projects inside the buildings, such as the recent dance studio improvements.

j. Recreation Report

Dustin reported that we are currently in the winter/spring program guide and planning has begun for summer. According to Dustin, E-Learning remains successful, staff continues to adjust to the changing school schedules, and the hope is for participation to increase. Also, staff is working on virtual dance classes and planning for a virtual or outdoor dance recital this spring. He informed the Board that he is researching publication rates for the program guide, should the decision be made to return to a printed publication. He explained that both Travel and Bidy Basketball were cancelled due to current State mitigation, however, plans are in place for clinics and skills training. Also, planning is underway for Wolverines Softball. Additionally, staff is working on field rental scheduling.

Dustin reviewed the success of Santa's Sleigh Visit and future programming possibilities with the sleigh for Holly Days 2021. He discussed the successful Holly Days Food Drive and announced that 73 children received gifts from the Giving Tree. Additionally, he explained that the Holly Days timeline may change in 2021.

Finally, he reported on sales for the Historical Society's Book & A Brew package, and informed the Board that 80 tickets have been sold so far for Winter Beer Fest To-Go.

k. Other

There was no additional new business

Agenda Item #8 Closed Session

President Karesh stated that the Board will convene to Closed Session pursuant to Section 2 (c) (5) of the Open Meetings Act to consider the purchase or lease of real property for the use of the public body.

All were in favor.

The Board convened to Closed Session at 7:41 pm.

President Karesh called the Open Session back to order at 8:05 pm.

Agenda Item #9 Adjournment

Seeing no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Comm. Zapinski and seconded by Comm. Conneely to adjourn the Regular Meeting.

Ayes: Comm. Zapinski, Comm. Conneely, Comm. Moffett, Comm. Karesh

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

The Regular Session was adjourned at 8:08 pm.

Westmont Park District Board of Commissioners
Minutes of the Closed Session
By Remote Attendance
January 13, 2021

President Karesh called the Closed Session to order at 7:47 pm.

Present: Commissioners Conneely, Karesh, Moffett, Zapinski
Executive Director Bob Fleck, Supt. of Revenue Facilities & IT Joel Hymen

Director Fleck began the discussion by updating the Board on the status of our Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity HR 2100045 \$300,000 land acquisition grant. We have been assigned a grant manager at DCEO and were provided all the documentation to submit the grant application. DCEO has confirmed we need to identify a specific parcel of interest when we submit the grant application. For this reason, staff has been looking for parcels of interest that would be of reasonable size, in a neighborhood lacking a neighborhood park, and have a value that matches our grant award. The process has been atypical because funding through HB 64 was approved by the legislature before we identified a parcel and applied for the grant. The “cart was put before the horse” on this one. Now, we need to apply for this grant, have it approved plus purchase the land before the funds can be reimbursed. Due to DCEO’s obligation to administer CARES Act funding along with the fact they are understaffed, DCEO has not placed a deadline on the grant submittal. Regardless, we do not want to delay.

After reviewing the District’s boundary map and the neighborhoods throughout the community our best option for land acquisition is 314 N. Grant St. This happens to be a parcel that the District had interest in this past summer. 314 N. Grant, and the property to the north, had been on the market for 8 and 12 years respectively. As soon as we began to look at them with serious interest they both sold to individual builders. We recently learned 314 N. Grant is back on the market. It is .9 acres in size, having sold last summer for \$275,000. It meets all our criteria. The Board agreed that this is the parcel we are to identify and pursue in our grant application. Director Fleck will ask the DCEO if we will be allowed to make contact with the property owner in advance of an approved grant application.

Seeing no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Comm. Moffett and seconded by Comm. Zapinski to return to Open Session.

The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

The Board reconvened to Open Session at 8:05 pm.