



**Westmont Park District Board of Commissioners  
Minutes of the Special Meeting  
Ronald J. Gunter Administrative Center  
55 E. Richmond St., Westmont, IL 60559  
January 4, 2024 6:00 pm**

**Agenda Item #1 Call to Order**

President Karesh called the Meeting to order at 6:04 pm.

**Agenda Item #2 Roll Call**

Commissioners: Bill Belmonte, Mike Conneely, John Karesh, Karen Moffett, Sue Zapinski  
Staff Present: Bob Fleck, Executive Director, Joel Hymen, Supt. of Revenue Facilities & IT/Asst. Director, Lenore Farmer, Finance Assistant & HR, Alice Krampits, Senior & Special Events Coordinator, John Chorney, Parks & Facilities Foreman

Guests: Adam Eichorn, Spohn Ranch; Kerry O'Connor, Pickleball Ambassador  
Wendy Habel, Don & Daina Goliszewski, Mary Onarad, Matt Laugh, Jimmy Koudelik,  
Eric Schue

**Agenda Item #3 Presentation and Discussion of Proposed Pickleball and Skate/Bike Park  
Improvements at Bellerive and Diane Main Parks**

President Karesh stated the purpose of the Special Meeting is to ensure that all concerned understand the proposed park improvements, which the Board has been discussing for approximately a year. He invited those in attendance to comment, however, he explained that no decisions would be made tonight. Executive Director Bob Fleck stressed that we are fortunate to be able to provide these positive improvements for the community.

**b. USA Pickleball Representative Presentation**

As Adam Eichorn from Spohn Ranch was not yet in attendance, President Karesh invited Pickleball Ambassador Kerry O'Connor to begin his presentation. Mr. O'Connor discussed the new pickleball courts recently built at McCollum Park in Downers Grove, stating that these are not enough for the community and there remains a need for more outdoor pickleball courts. He explained that six courts would be very valuable and Bellerive Park is an ideal location. According to Mr. O'Connor, the traffic noise on 63<sup>rd</sup> Street is not an issue, and north-south orientation for the courts is preferred. In addition, he stated that if the decision is made to instead build three courts at Diane Main Park that would also be appreciated. Bob added that USA Pickleball and USA Tennis presented together at last fall's NRPA conference. He learned that there are currently 3 million pickleball participants, which will grow to 5 million, and pickleball may become a high school sanctioned sport in Illinois.

**a. Spohn Ranch Presentation**

Bob introduced Adam Eichorn from Spohn Ranch, explaining that True Ride, who built the District's Skate Park, is no longer in existence, and the wood structures are no longer built. Mr. Eichorn began by first responding to questions from the residents in attendance. He confirmed that the current skate park at Bellerive Park is past its prime, and the new structure will be concrete. He does not recommend the old wood structure as maintenance can be costly, and

newer concrete structures look nicer and are less noisy. In addition, the new structures are built both below and above grade and can include plantings and grass in the design.

Mr. Eichorn then began his formal presentation, which included his background, a brief history of Spohn Ranch, design approach, project analysis, and design precedents. He explained that the design approach will start with a community engagement survey, and design will include bright colors, textures and will relate to local culture and history. Mr. Eichorn feels that Diane Main Park is a good location due to the park's location, current amenities, and parking. He also provided photos of skate parks in other parts of the country.

Following the presentation, there were questions and discussion, covering topics such as life expectancy of the concrete and equipment, drainage, safety, design, ADA access, and park hours. Those in attendance residing near the park expressed concern about wet pathways. Both President Karesh and Director Fleck provided assurance that any drainage issues would be addressed during construction. There was discussion about use by skateboards, bikes and scooters. Concern was expressed that there may be too much pedestrian traffic at Diane Main Park, as there is already a great deal of activity there, including tennis, soccer and softball. Additionally, there were three gentlemen who have been using the District's current skate park since it was built, who shared their positive experiences. The Board expressed their appreciation to Mr. Eichorn for his presentation.

#### c. Park District Concept Plans and Budget Discussion

Bob then presented several pictures, including: overhead view of Diane Main Park; overhead view of Bellerive Park skate park; skate park ramps; concept drawing of the proposed skate park; site plan of six pickleball courts at Bellerive Park; and site plan of three pickleball courts at Diane Main Park.

Bob then began budget review. Cost for six pickleball courts at Bellerive Park would be approximately \$73,000. The new skate park at Diane Main Park may cost over \$400,000, however, lighting cost is unknown. If it's decided to build three pickleball courts at Diane Main Park, that may cost at least \$200,000. In addition, demo of the old preschool building needs to be addressed, as well as the three-phase electric in that building from the old tennis bubble. It was noted that if the District is awarded the IDNR grant for the Grant Street Park development, this will offset costs.

According to President Karesh, improvements are the ultimate goal, while accommodating both pickleball and skate park participants in the community. He added that there would be no voting tonight. Finally, both President Karesh and director Fleck confirmed that there will always be a skate park in Westmont.

#### d. Public Comment

The residents again expressed concern about the continued wet pathways at Diane Main Park, along with standing water in the playground. Bob acknowledged that ground conditions have never been good there, ever since the District acquired this land in the 1970's. He stated that we will definitely take a much closer look at this and engineering will be needed. The need for security cameras at the new skate park was addressed. It was also confirmed that pickleball will continue to grow and remain popular. There was additional discussion about fundraising for the skate park, such as hosting an event with music and trick contests. Regarding the time frame for these projects, there are no final decisions yet, no money has been spent and the old skate park will not be removed before the new one is built, according to Bob. After reviewing design development, construction documents and building, Mr. Eichorn suggested that the new skate park would take over a year to complete. Bob then reiterated that the existing preschool and electric needs to be addressed and we have to go through the permit process with the Village.

Additionally, we will not start construction during peak athletic activity. He confirmed that it would most likely be a full year for this process.

e. Park Board Comment

The Board expressed their appreciation for the presentations and discussion, and agreed that this meeting was very helpful.

Agenda Item #4 Adjournment

Seeing no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn the Special Meeting was made by Commissioner Conneely and seconded by Commissioner Belmonte.

Roll Call Vote:

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

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried.

The Special Meeting was adjourned at 7:48 pm.