



REGULAR BOARD MEETING
 BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS OF PALATINE PARK DISTRICT
 Village of Palatine, 200 East Wood Street in Palatine
 First Floor - Community Room A
 May 13, 2024, at 5:00 p.m.



The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by President Sammons

Commissioners Present

Greg Sammons, President
 Joe Petricca, Vice President
 Terry Ruff, Treasurer
 Jennifer Rogers
 Susan Gould

Commissioners Absent

Staff Present

Benjamin Rea, Executive Director
 Lisa Allie, Park Board Secretary/Executive Assistant
 Michelle Eckelberry, Supt. of Dist. Services & Projects
 Dayell Houzenga, Asst. Supt. of Dist. Services & Projects
 Andrea Fisher, Director of Finance
 Sonia Austin, Superintendent of Finance

Colleen Palmer, Director of Recreation & Facilities
 Katie Waszak, Supt. of Recreation Programming
 Josh Ludolph, Supt. of Recreation Facilities
 Jim Holder, Director of Parks & Planning
 Amy Vito, Superintendent of Parks & Planning

Visitors and Citizens Present/Comments

None

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Rogers moved, and Commissioner Petricca seconded that the agenda be approved. By a voice vote, the agenda for the regular meeting of May 13, 2024, was approved. The result of the voice vote follows:

AYE: Susan Gould, Terry Ruff, Jennifer Rogers, Greg Sammons, Joe Petricca
 NAY: None
 ABSENT: None
 Motion carried.

Approval of Consent Agenda

The Board reviewed the previously distributed items posted on the consent agenda. Commissioner Gould moved and Commissioner Rogers seconded that the consent agenda be approved as presented. By a roll call vote, the following items on the consent agenda were approved: Regular Meeting Minutes of April 22, 2024, Closed Session Minutes of April 22, 2024, and Warrant #9. The result of the roll call vote follows:

AYE: Joe Petricca, Terry Ruff, Jennifer Rogers, Susan Gould, Greg Sammons
 NAY: None
 ABSENT: None
 Motion carried.

New Business

The Park Board began the annual officer election process, and nominations for the position of President for the 2024-2025 year were offered. Commissioner Rogers nominated Commissioner Ruff for the position of Board President. From consensus of the Park Board, and with no further nominations offered, the Board of

Park Commissioners agree that the nomination for Park Board President be closed; therefore, Commissioner Ruff will be nominated for the position of Board President. Commissioner Petricca moved, and Commissioner Rogers seconded to elect Commissioner Ruff for the office of Park Board President. Upon the requested roll call vote approving Commissioner Ruff for the office of Park Board President for the 2024-2025 year, the result follows:

AYE: Terry Ruff, Jennifer Rogers, Susan Gould, Joe Petricca, Greg Sammons,
NAY: None
ABSENT: None

Motion passed. Commissioner Sammons handed the meeting over to newly elected President Ruff.

President Ruff asked to receive nominations for the position of Vice-President for the 2024-2025 year. Commissioner Petricca nominated Commissioner Rogers for the position of Board Vice-President and Commissioner Sammons nominated himself. From consensus of the Park Board, and with no further nominations offered, the Board of Park Commissioners agree that the nomination for Park Board Vice-President be closed. Commissioner Petricca moved that Commissioner Rogers serve as Park Board Vice-President, and Commissioner Ruff seconded the motion; therefore, Commissioner Rogers will be nominated for the position of Board Vice-President. Upon the requested roll call vote approving Commissioner Rogers for the office of Park Board Vice-President for the 2024-2025 year, the result follows:

AYE: Susan Gould, Joe Petricca, Greg Sammons, Jennifer Rogers, Terry Ruff
NAY: None
ABSENT: None

Motion passed.

Commissioner Rogers nominated Andrea Fisher for the position of Board Treasurer. Commissioner Rogers moved that the appointment of Andrea Fisher for Park Board Treasurer for the 2024-2025 year be approved. Commissioner Petricca seconded the motion. By a voice vote, the motion was approved as follows:

AYE: Joe Petricca, Greg Sammons, Susan Gould, Jennifer Rogers, Terry Ruff
NAY: None
ABSENT: None

Motion passed.

Commissioner Rogers nominated Lisa Allie for the position of Board Secretary. Commissioner Gould moved that the appointment of Lisa Allie for Board Secretary for the 2024-2025 year be approved. Commissioner Rogers seconded the motion. By a voice vote, the motion was approved as follows:

AYE: Joe Petricca, Greg Sammons, Susan Gould, Jennifer Rogers, Terry Ruff
NAY: None
ABSENT: None

Motion passed.

President Ruff submitted for Board approval the following appointments for the period of May 14, 2024 through May 11, 2025: Benjamin Rea: Executive Director, Secretary Pro Tem, Representative to the Northwest Special Recreation Association, Representative to Park District Risk Management Agency and alternate Representative to the Metro Risk Management Agency, and; Jennifer Garcia: Secretary Pro Tem,

Michelle Eckelberry: Representative to the Metro Risk Management Agency, and; Andrea Fisher: Compliance Office of drafting and updating of disclosures as they relate to bond issuance, and; Cheryl Lufitz: Liaison to the Greater Palatine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and; Cheryl Lufitz: Park Foundation Liaison, and; Commissioner Ruff: Liaison to PALS (Palatine Affiliate Leader Society), and; Commissioner Sammons: Liaison to Employee Health Insurance Committee, and; Benjamin Rea, Lisa Allie, and Jennifer Garcia appointments as Open Meetings Act (OMA) officers, and; Benjamin Rea, Lisa Allie, and Jennifer Garcia appointments as Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) officers, and; Michelle Eckelberry appointment of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) officer, and; Colleen Palmer and Jim Holder appointments as ADA Representatives. Commissioner Rogers moved to approve President Ruff's appointments; Commissioner Sammons seconded. The motion was unanimously approved by a voice vote as follows:

AYE: Joe Petricca, Greg Sammons, Susan Gould, Jennifer Rogers, Terry Ruff

NAY: None

ABSENT: None

Motion passed.

President Ruff said that with the agreement of the Park Board to approve the proposed meetings of the Board of Park Commissioners of the Palatine Park District for 2024-2025, announcing that regular meetings of the Board will be conducted at the Village of Palatine Community Center Building in Community Room B at 200 East Wood Street in Palatine, Illinois on the second and fourth Mondays of each month, beginning at 5:00 p.m., excluding the months of October and December which will have one meeting. Commissioner Rogers moved and Commissioner Sammons seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by a roll call vote as follows:

AYE: Joe Petricca, Greg Sammons, Susan Gould, Jennifer Rogers, Terry Ruff

NAY: None

ABSENT: None

Motion passed.

The Board reviewed a previously distributed board summary pertaining to the Approval of Purchase for Rotary Mower through Omnia. Superintendent Holder shared that this is a replacement for the primary mower which is a 2015 with over 5,000 hours on it. The old mower is becoming unreliable, and the district cannot afford to be without this mower. Commissioner Rogers moved, and Commissioner Sammons seconded that the Board of Park Commissioners approve the lowest responsible bidder, Turf Werks of Johnston, IA, in an amount not to exceed, \$108,758.25 for the acquisition of one Jacobsen HR700 rotary mower through the National Omnia Partners Cooperative. The motion was approved by a roll call; the result follows:

AYE: Joe Petricca, Greg Sammons, Jennifer Rogers, Susan Gould, Terry Ruff,

NAY: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried.

The Board reviewed a previously distributed board summary pertaining to the consideration of Palatine Stable's Hay Bid. Director Rea confirmed that the current vendor, J & M Farms, has agreed to extend the current contract in response to Commissioner Gould's question. Commissioner Gould moved and Commissioner Sammons seconded that the Board of Park Commissioners reject the single bid of \$7.75 per bale with an estimated annual cost of \$116,250 received from J&M Farm Services LLC of Palatine, IL for the

Palatine Stable's Hay Purchase, and direct staff to continue sourcing hay from the current and other providers until this purchase can be rebid. The motion was approved by a roll call; the result follows:

AYE: Greg Sammons, Jennifer Rogers, Susan Gould, Joe Petricca, Terry Ruff

NAY: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried.

The Board reviewed a previously distributed board summary pertaining to the consideration of Local Government Efficiency Report and approval to dissolve the Decennial Committee on Local Government Efficiency Act. Commissioner Gould moved and Commissioner Petricca seconded that the Board of Park Commissioners move to approve the final DRAFT of the Decennial Local Government Efficiency Report, direct staff to submit the report to the Cook County Administrative Offices, and move to dissolve the Decennial Local Government Efficiency Committee until 2034. The motion was approved by a roll call; the result follows:

AYE: Jennifer Rogers, Susan Gould, Joe Petricca, Greg Sammons, Terry Ruff

NAY: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried.

The Board reviewed a previously distributed board summary pertaining to the review of the Stables condition. President Ruff asked for a motion to close the stables and utilize the upcoming community needs assessment and master planning process to determine the future development of the property. Commissioner Petricca moved and Commissioner Sammons seconded that the Board of Park Commissioners move to close the stables and utilize the upcoming community needs assessment and master planning process to determine future development of the property.

Commissioner Gould stated that she feels this needs to be discussed further with other options to consider and that we also need to do a better job promoting the stables. It's a worthwhile facility and is not being used to its full potential. Commissioner Gould acknowledged that it needs a lot of work and has done some investigating. She shared information from a company that provided a rough cost, including concrete piers and all materials, of \$860,000 to \$1,000,000 which is a lot less than the figures provided by Lamp Construction.

Commissioner Gould mentioned the large number of non-residents usage at the Stables. She feels that we need to do a better job of making the Stables more appealing to our residents and that we also need to look at every facility with the same criteria. She gave the example of the Palatine Picklers who have 3000 people on their mailing list and less than 1000 are Palatine residents, but we continue to build pickleball courts. If we are concerned with non-residential use then we need to start applying the same criteria across the board to all facilities, programs, and amenities, including the playgrounds and bike paths.

Commissioner Gould also feels that this motion is premature, and more research is needed. She doesn't want anyone in an unsafe facility but thinks this is the perfect time to do something with the arena as the horses can live outside in the summer.

Commissioner Gould stated the importance of reaching out to the Northwest Special Recreation Association (NWSRA), as it was a very popular program for the kids before the pandemic and is essential for them to have that outlet. She shared the story of a boy who could only straighten his legs when he was on a horse. She also stated there are some benefits to the stables that outweigh the negatives which we need to look at and not just have a motion to say let's close the barn without giving the people who patronize it the opportunity to be here; it's not fair and it stinks.

Commissioner Gould said that 90% of patrons at the Stables are women or girls as there are not too many boys who ride horses and if you look at the Olympic riders the equestrian events are the only events in which males compete against females on an equal basis. She feels it's important in a lot of ways that we continue with the Stables and look at alternatives rather than just closing it because of some rotten wood. She realizes the importance of safety and agrees that it needs work but doesn't think we need to close it without further promoting it, examining it, and looking at the total picture.

President Ruff thanked Sue and asked if anyone else had any comments. Commissioner Gould stated that she would like to table the motion.

President Ruff told Commissioner Gould that the discussion wasn't over yet; he understands where she's coming from and her emotional attachment to the stables that she's been going to for 50 years. He said that he is not knocking her idea but thinks if someone gives a price for \$850,000 over the phone it's probably \$1,000,000 or \$2,000,000 and even if it's \$850,000 there are additional costs to consider.

Commissioner Gould acknowledged that there would be additional costs, shared information on another system for an inflatable dome, and confirmed the cost of \$860,000 is for the kit alone so we would need a contractor to put in the concrete piers. She agreed that the total cost is not \$860,000, but that it would not be \$3,000,000 either.

Director Rea mentioned that this would have to be approved by the village as a permanent structure as well as the zoning requirements of the local jurisdiction.

Commissioner Gould said she discussed that with them and they are fully aware towns have commercial codes, but they have not had a problem and they've built hundreds of these. In addition, Commissioner Gould reached out to a couple of other barn owners who use similar types of facilities. This is not new and has been around for at least 20 years so they know what they are doing, and she would like to present this as another possibility before we move to close the stables.

President Ruff said that he understands where Commissioner Gould is coming from, but the dollar amounts and the fact that it's now a life safety issue is of concern; especially since there are horses there that are not ours.

Commissioner Gould does not want to postpone safety issues but would like to give it 30 days to get some actual bids from a contractor.

President Ruff replied to Commissioner Gould's comments; he doesn't see us closing this down at the end of the month, we don't have to worry about snow loads so we can get through the summer with everything being outdoors. However, ever since seeing the reports all he can think about is the weather and the stables falling over on those horses. The life safety issue is the biggest concern because if something happens, we could end up in court; knowing that there are problems we did nothing about doesn't leave us a leg to stand on. That is an issue as well as the cost; the stable is breaking even at best maybe a small profit.

Commissioner Gould pointed out that we are spending over \$1,000,000 to put artificial turf on one soccer field and added that she's not opposed to putting artificial turf in but that we are spending \$1,000,000 just for the field. She also mentioned that we just approved a soccer tournament that's going to have 300 teams with 290 or more of them being non-residents.

Discussion ensued about Celtic soccer expenses and the money that the tournament brings into Palatine. Commissioner Gould stated that she just wanted to point out we spend a lot of money on some other issues, and she feels like the Stables is viewed as unimportant.

President Ruff doesn't believe the stables is unimportant but that fiscally we don't have the money right now and even if we we're to build a dome stable it would be at least 2 years before we have the money. At some point, we'd have to close in the foreseeable future until we have a plan. We have 75% of borders that are non-residents; how do we justify the additional expense to spend \$2MIL on a facility that's breaking even? How do we pass that 75% on to the 40 boarders?

Commissioner Gould said that there is a cooperation agreement for park districts, you can't be everything to everybody, so if you have a unique facility like the stables then you will get a lot of non-residents just like the ice areas in Rolling Meadows for their ice arenas probably gets a lot of people that don't live in Rolling Meadows.

Discussion about the Rolling Meadows Ice Arena profits, expenses, the Palatine Park District's mission and cooperation of shared facility usage with other park districts ensued.

Commissioner Rogers said that the idea of closing the stables makes her very sad, but that she thinks now is the time to move forward. She recalled a board meeting from approximately 8-10 years ago where the future of the stables was discussed, and the decision was made not to spend large amounts of money on it. She agreed with Commissioner Gould that the decision at that time may have been a mistake, but now we are at this point. Commissioner Rogers stated that the severity of the conditions and resident vs non-resident usage are factors, but the deciding factor for her is the funding. Because \$1,000,000, \$2,000,000, or \$3,000,000, whatever the cost is affects the long-term planning. Whether it's Birchwood, other buildings, something with gymnastics, or the maintenance department and a service center. She continued to explain it was always her understanding that we did not plan to be in the stables business forever and at some point, we were going to do something else with that property so maybe now is the time to move forward from the stables. Commissioner Rogers would like to amend the motion to have Director Rea provide the board with a practical plan to dissolve everything. Taking into consideration the severity of the structure, the past conversations the board has had over the years about long-term planning for the stables, and what we wanted to commit to makes her feel like now is the time to move on and do something different. Commissioner Rogers shared that she has always enjoyed the fact that the Stables is unique to our park district and hopes we come up with something else unique to take its place or in honor of it. She also added that she doesn't want to kick the can down the road too long; when we do that it turns into bigger problems and headaches.

Director Rea advised that we need to take Park District Risk Management Agency (PDRMA) into consideration. He has not spoken with them yet so depending on the decision made tonight we may have to have people sign waivers acknowledging the potential concern with the structure.

Commissioner Sammons agreed with Commissioner Rogers and added that in his short tenure here he feels like we have been kicking the can this whole time on the stables and we are now at a crossroads. He said that the resident vs. non-resident numbers are not the end-all-be-all metric but feels that it's an important one. However, it's easier to measure in some places than others such as the bike path or the Palatine Pickler which is erroneous since they travel to neighboring cities with a clipboard so no matter where you are you become a Palatine Pickler which makes that metric invalid. Commissioner Sammons feels that the 2023 programming of 963 people enrolled is a little low for the volume of residents in Palatine and the area; he's not as concerned about the resident and non-resident numbers but those are a little bit lopsided as well. He agreed with an amended motion and would like to hear what PDRMA has to say.

In response to Commissioner Petricca's question about a transition plan, Director Rea said that there are many things to consider before coming up with a transition plan. We want to find a good home for all our horses or ponies, we would want to see this programming season through fall, and we also have staff that we will have to figure out. There are several things to consider if we move forward with this so it's going to take some time.

Commissioner Rogers proposed an amendment to the motion to move to close the stables with input from PDRMA, a tentative closing date of November 30, 2024, and for Director Rea to create an exit strategy plan to present to the board.

Commissioner Gould asked why we don't just table the motion now. Commissioner Rogers stated that she did not want to kick the can down the road. Even with the options shared by Commissioner Gould it still comes down to funding and long-term plans.

Discussion of the amended motion and plans for an exit strategy including staff compensation continued.

President Ruff asked for a motion to close the stables with a tentative date of November 30, 2024, and instructed Director Rea to create an exit strategy plan with input from PDRMA. Commissioner Rogers moved and Commissioner Sammons seconded that the Board of Park Commissioners close the stables with a tentative date of November 30, 2024, and instructed Director Rea to create an exit strategy plan with input from PDRMA. The motion was approved as amended by a roll call; the result follows:

AYE: Joe Petricca, Greg Sammons, Jennifer Rogers, Terry Ruff

NAY: Susan Gould

ABSENT: None

Motion carried.

Commissioner Gould exited the meeting at 5:48 p.m.

President Ruff moved to take a 5-minute recess and Commissioner Rogers seconded that the board take a 5-minute recess.

The meeting resumed at 5:54 p.m.

The Board reviewed a previously distributed board summary pertaining to the approval of Resolution #24-07. Commissioner Sammons moved and Commissioner Rogers seconded that the Board of Park Commissioners approve Resolution No. 24-07, a Resolution Authorizing the Purchase of Certain Real Estate Commonly Known as 1 N. Oak St., Palatine, Illinois and Approving the Terms of a Purchase Agreement in Connection Therewith. The motion was approved by a roll call; the result follows:

AYE: Joe Petricca, Greg Sammons, Jennifer Rogers, Terry Ruff,

NAY: None

ABSENT: Susan Gould

Motion carried.

Departmental Reports

The Park Board reviewed the previously distributed written Facilities Department report. Superintendent Ludolph shared the following highlights from April: all the sprinkler systems and fire alarms in the district were inspected, all the seasonal items were taken care of for the opening of the concession stand at the Family Aquatic Center, the lift at the Community Center is finished and the body mic project at Cutting Hall was completed last week.

The Park Board reviewed the previously distributed written District Service Department report. Superintendent Eckelberry shared news of the relationship that we are building with Harper College in the career and technical programs; we are trying to cultivate cooperative relationships so we can take some students when they graduate from the trades programs as a pipeline for our Parks Department. We had over 229 applications and hired 71 people in April. We also had a lot of volunteer events; one of them was the new plantings on the side of our building. IT is working on the fiber from Harper to the Combined Services Facility and Birchwood. The summer program guide has gone out and the Sounds of Summer advertising is going out.

President Ruff mentioned that the neighborhood behind Popeyes down Wilson is still not getting their catalogs and would like to have another phone call made. He also asked about the cameras at Birchwood; Director Rea said that he spoke to IT Manager Magnum and he is still working on that.

The Park Board reviewed the previously distributed written Parks and Planning Department report. Superintendent Holder shared that the contractor touched up some patchwork and put down resurfacing coats at Sycamore; dependent on the weather we are hoping to get that done next week. The other lingering project from last year was the Hamilton North parking lot ADA issues have been completed. The Meadowlark project is still waiting for permits from MWRD and the Village; the Village won't approve our permit until MWRD approves their section of it. HR Stewart completed the televising of the storm structures and mapped out where the existing storm sewer lines were so hopefully within the next few weeks, he'll have an answer from MWRD and can complete the Village permitting. The Cedar Park pre-construction meeting was on May 6th; the fencing is scheduled to go up on September 10th for Kids Around the World to remove the playground with the project scheduled to start on September 16th. Superintendent Holder also shared that the golf revenues for April are up from last year.

The Park Board reviewed the previously distributed written Recreation Department report. Superintendent Palmer highlighted the following events: Youth and Adult theater programs; this was the first time that we have had an adult acting program in a long time. They did skits from Monty Python and Carol Burnett, there were about 12 adults in the show, and they did a nice job. We also had a Palatine Concert Band towards the end of the month. There was a combination of about 1000 tickets sold across those shows. Hiring for summer is looking good as staff begins to prepare for the opening of pools, camps and all the other summer programs. Summer registration took place on April 29th; it was up 3% from last year with 95% of the registration done online. Superintendent Plamer also shared the exciting news about the swim teams Vera Conic. Her name has come up the last couple of years and this year she is an Olympic qualifier ranked top 25 in the nation. She will be attending the Olympic trials next month in Indianapolis, so we are working with marketing on a send-off event or maybe a watch party. It's very exciting especially since she's only 16 and could be going to the Olympics from our program. Colleen Palmer answered questions for Commissioner Petricca about the extended camp, programs, registration and staffing for the long summer break this year.

Executive Director Report

Director Rea will be meeting with a representative about a Tesla battery option for facilities moving forward. You set the battery up behind the facility to help regulate the frequency of power coming into the building to clean it up. He is looking to explore the option of earning \$20,000 a year that will not impact the district. Director Rea mentioned that the next board meeting is scheduled for May 27th and recommends canceling instead of rescheduling the meeting as we do not have any items for the agenda right now.

Commissioner Reports/Future Agenda Items

Commissioner Rogers thanked Greg for being President this past year. She also stated that while closing the stables is not an easy decision sometimes hard decisions are necessary to move forward. She also shared the experience of closing Willow Pool which was not a fun experience but the right thing to do and this is along those same lines.

Commissioner Sammons attended the IAPD conference in Springfield last week which was nice; he met some people and learned a few things. He also shared a sidewalk art event he found on vacation in Georgia and it reminded him of when we did the Turkey Trot chalk advertising; he thought that maybe we could use the idea for some sort of community art event. Superintendent Palmer said that we do have a sidewalk chalk art event planned at the Family Aquatic Center where people can sign up to decorate a square.

Commissioner Ruff welcomed Andrea and Katie. He also thanked Ben, Josh, and Cheryl for taking time away from their families on the Holiday to monitor the protesters and ensure that our facility was safe.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Park Board on this date Commissioner Rogers moved that the regular meeting be adjourned. Commissioner Sammons seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by a voice vote as follows:

AYE: Jennifer Rogers, Terry Ruff, Joe Petricca, Greg Sammons

NAY: None

ABSENT: Susan Gould

Motion carried at 6:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Allie
Park Board Secretary

Attest:

Approved:

Lisa Allie
Secretary

Terry Ruff
President

| 2024 Park Board Meetings | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| June 10, 2024 | August 16, 2024 | October 28, 2024 |
| June 24, 2024 | August 26, 2024 | November 11, 2024 |
| July 8, 2024 | September 9, 2024 | November 25, 2024 |
| July 22, 2024 | September 23, 2024 | December 9, 2024 |