

**Minutes of the Waukegan Park District  
Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners  
Special Recreation Program Advisory Committee  
November 12, 2012**

The Board of Commissioners of the Waukegan Park District met in a special meeting of the Special Recreation Program Advisory Committee on November 12, 2012 at the Douglas House, 732 North Genesee Street, Waukegan, Illinois.

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:02pm by Bill Sarocka who directed a call of the roll.

**II. Roll Call**

Present: Commissioner Bill Sarocka.

Also Present: Julie Schneider, Manager of Special Recreation, Alicia Mentell, Superintendent of Recreation, Melissa Juarez-Ehlers, Christopher Pace, Mercedes Rivera, Janalle Roth, and Tina Yurik

Absent: Dave Cruz, Deanna Guidry Susan Johnson, Sharon Lambert, Christian Torres, Maria Owens, and Kari Robinson.

Mr. Petry noted that since there was not a quorum, this was not an official meeting.

**III. Review, Discuss, Decide**

**A. Healthy Minds- Healthy Bodies Veterans Initiative**

- Schneider reported that there are currently fifteen members, with interest from a sixteenth veteran in the program. She had received four new inquiries into participation within the past two weeks. The program is being evaluated in regards to establishing revised or stricter guidelines to participation as it moves into its second year. When the program was designed by Waukegan, it was based on a maximum of ten participants. The program has surpassed that number by five and interest continues to come in on a fairly regular basis. Schneider will be touching base with the founding staff of the Healthy Minds/Healthy Bodies (HMHB) program to receive guidance on participation criteria. The HMHB logo is being trademarked and a foundation is being established to seek funding to the program state and nationwide. As guidelines are established and brought to Schneider's attention, changes to the district's implementation will be adjusted accordingly. Mentell had suggested that if necessary, the district would break off of the HMHB program and offer something to the veterans but under our own guidelines.

## **B. Results of Reporting Abuse and Neglect –OIG**

- Schneider reported that final revisions were being put into the SRSNLC policy and procedure for reporting abuse and neglect of developmentally disabled adults until an email was received from the Park District Risk Management Agency (PDRMA) legal counsel that day. Schneider and the Waukegan Park District Risk Manger will continue working with PDRMA legal counsel to determine if; the policy will be finalized as is, if the policy will be replaced by procedures for reporting or lastly, if the current guidelines are sufficient and will remain as is.

## **C. SRSNLC Resource Fair – Summary of event**

- Schneider reported that attendance of actual individuals seeking information was only fifteen. This number was better than 2011 but still very low. The exact reason for the low attendance is not known, however, a few suggestions were discussed. It is possible that the location from the 2011 event turned people away, or that participants don't return year to year because they received the information they were looking for in the previous years. All attendees evaluated the event as beneficial and vendors reported it as beneficial but would like to see greater attendance. Vendors also appreciate the location as they are able to meet one-on-one with patrons in a quieter environment. Special Recreation has booked the 2013 event for Wednesday, September 25, and will change the time to 5:00-7:00pm. This is a day change and an earlier time frame to host the event. Member, Roth, suggested we start the event earlier than 5:00pm to capture those who get off of work by 4:00pm. Consideration will be given to how much earlier than 5:00pm the event could or should be held.

## **D. Fundraising Effort- Polar Bear Plunge:**

- Schneider presented the list of local taverns and businesses that members of the Polar Bear Plunge Committee are in contact with to solicit sponsorship support. Schneider asked if anyone had a relationship with a business owner to approach with the various methods to become a sponsor. History has shown that it takes a point person that has a solid relationship with the business owner to secure sponsorship support. Schneider presented the event flyer, plunge pledge and registration information, and E-Z Steps to secure sponsorship money. Commissioner Sarocka had two businesses he is going to approach and Juarez-Ehlers has one business she is going to approach. Member, Pace, is going to research the option of sitting outside of Jewel or another business to sell donation cards. All members took several copies of the promotional items to help distribute appropriately.

## **E. Committee Member Updates**

- Schneider announced that the five new member applicants to the Special Recreation Program Advisory Committee were approved at the Waukegan Park District Board meeting in October. Three of the new members were

in attendance and the two absent had attended the August meeting as guests.

#### **F. New Programs**

- Member, Roth, presented her personal challenge in securing local day services/programming for her son with a disability. He graduated from the education system in May and she has been juggling day care/programming for him since camp ended in August. She personally would like to see an affordable option outside of the vocational settings in the area. Juarez-Ehlers had suggested staff of Special Recreation investigate the different day program options being offered by neighboring Special Recreation Associations for the feasibility of developing a program in-house. It was also suggested staff of Special Recreation may want to survey attendees of the Options Fair in April 2013 for interest and contact information in participating in a day program.

#### **G. Strategic Plan Goals related to Special Recreation**

- Schneider presented the goal, "To develop a program assessment process that identifies Special Recreation's success in offering programs according to community needs." Committee members thought it was a good goal but felt they needed until the next scheduled meeting to ponder the goal and how best it could be addressed. Members Roth and Yurik shared that their experiences working with families that have a member with a disability face a few big issues. Financial hardship is prevalent, and to add to that hardship, the State of Illinois has cut funding to help assist families with services for individuals with a disability. Waukegan is a transient community and residents are moving often times three or more times within a year. They also know that many families have only one family vehicle and face transportation challenges. All members present were going to take time to brainstorm possible program assessment processes by the next meeting.

#### **H. Priorities for Next Meeting**

- **Date:** TBD – Schneider surveyed members on an alternate day of the week besides Monday that would work to set a 2013 schedule if needed. The first or second Thursday of a month was determined a feasible alternate meeting day for all members present.
- **Priorities:** Summary of the Polar Bear Plunge event; Healthy Minds/Healthy Bodies program updates, final results of established procedures of OIG, Strategic Plan goal related to Special Recreation-Program Assessment Process to determine success in offering programs that meet community needs.

#### **IV. Closed Session**

There was no closed session

**V. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 7:05pm

**Respectfully submitted,**

Julie Schneider

Manager of Special Recreation