

**Minutes of the Waukegan Park District  
Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners  
Recreation Advisory Committee  
December 5, 2016  
7:00pm**

The Board of Commissioners of the Waukegan Park District met in a special meeting on December 5, 2016 at the Field House Sports, Fitness & Aquatics Center, 800 Baldwin Ave, Waukegan, Illinois

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:03pm by Jay Lerner, Superintendent of Recreation who directed a call of the roll.

**II. Roll Call**

Present: Greg Petry, Executive Director; Jay Lerner, Superintendent of Recreation; Errick Beverly, Recreation Manager; Julie Schneider, Recreation Manager; Quincy Bejster, Recreation Manager; Jen Dumas, Recreation Supervisor; Sam Stevens, Recreation Supervisor; Mercedes Rivera; Peggi Braden; Elizabeth Fallon, Department Support Aide

Absent: Caryn Clothier; Sara Griffin; Jerry Holisky; Sharon Hoyle-Yap; Diane Kajfez; Desiree Martinez; Jesus Martinez; David Motley; Dulce Ortiz; Martha Padilla-Ramos; Odie Pahl; Doris Richter; Della Steele; George Bridges, Commissioner

Due to lack of a quorum, no official board business was conducted.

**III. Review, Discuss, Decide**

**A. New Indoor Pool Update - Sam Stevens**

- The Pool Grand Opening was Friday, December 2, 2016 with free swimming throughout the weekend. All went well and many families came for swimming.
- The first full day of normal pool operations is today, December 5, with the Dolphin Swim Team practice, and open swim. This week will include swim lessons and mock swim meet with the Dolphin's on December 11.
- The school district swim meets will start in January 2017.
- Swim Lessons Initiatives
  - Plans are being put in place to get as many Waukegan children and residents access to swimming lessons as possible and change the statistic of swimmers in Waukegan.
  - NSG grant for free swim lessons for 6-7 year olds is going well with 9 classes per session and 4 sessions within the season/brochure. Each class offers 6 lessons formatted to fit in a two week period.
  - Waukegan Parks Foundation is raising funds to give all 2<sup>nd</sup> graders an opportunity for a field trip to the Field House including a swim smart lesson.

**B. Family Programs Update**

- Jen Dumas – variety of new family programs have been implemented and more are being planned
  - Summer: Splashmania, Fiesta Friday, free family nature and science programs sponsored by NSG
  - Fall: Family Friday Bingo Nights, Campfire Nights, Nature Education Workshops in the schools
  - Winter: Returning programs-Christmas with the Clauses, annual Food for Paws pet food drive, Family Ice Skating, Hockey nights; New programs- Mariachi Christmas, Princess Tea Party, Super Hero for a Day
  - Spring: Returning programs-Mother Daughter Tea Party; New Programs- Family Aerobics, charity hockey game between WFD & GFD at Rinkside
- Quincy Bejster – the Field House has started offering family programming once per month on Friday evenings alternating with Parents’ Night Out and Family Night Out giving kids and families an opportunity to take advantage of all the activities offered in the Field House in a fun and structured setting.
- Sam Stevens – the Pool will begin offering family programming on the third Saturdays of the month starting in January with Flick N Float, February is Game Night in the Pool and March is Splashing to Sounds with a DJ.

**C. Community Outreach/Engagement (Nature Education Workshops in Schools/School Open Houses/Community Events) – Jen Dumas**

- With the continued support of NSG, Jamie Teichmann has been able to take Nature Education Workshops into the schools as well as to the BASE program.
- Jamie has also been working with the PLACCE students from Waukegan High School on a variety of volunteer projects in the park district.
- The staff attended many school open houses and events during the fall.

**D. Health and Wellness Initiatives**

- Errick Beverly
  - The athletic department has coordinated with elementary schools to host Healthy Family Nights at the Field House which include structured activities in the gym and wall climbing.
  - There are many scholarships available for all the youth athletic programs so that all children can participate.
  - The SportsPark provides a space for the middle schools in Waukegan to have their championship games.
- Julie Schneider –
  - The Health & Wellness Family Challenge begins in December coordinating with the park district’s 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Families that participate in 100 hours of recreation programming with the park district can be eligible for a grand prize along with quarterly prize drawings for every 25 hours that a family participates in programs.

- Rosalind Franklin University students will begin a health and fitness program with the BASE students.
- Through the food service program grant healthy snacks have also been provided to the Jr Bulldogs Basketball program.
- Quincy Bejster
  - The Running Club at the Field House now has 15 active members who meet on Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings. The group has been running 5K races in the area.
  - Currently working with the Lake County Health Department to develop a health and wellness program around walking/running for their employees.
  - In February we will implement a Field House Punch Card to encourage members and patrons to use all aspects of the Field House. There will be several areas to obtain a punch and after you have completed your punch card there is a prize and drawing.
- Jay Lerner
  - We will continue with the popular Free For All program for youth to use the Field House for free during their winter break.
  - Along with the Lake County Health Department there will be a Go Waukegan healthy lifestyle initiative which is planned to kick off in April 2017.

**E. George Bridges 5K Recap – Sam Stevens**

There were 125 runners with about 200 spectators for the inaugural George Bridges 5K. The course ran through the neighborhood north of Hinkston Park and ended in the Field House gymnasium. A special area was set up for distribution of the awards. After the race the runners and others could enjoy the Fitness Expo and World Wide Day of Play. All the city services worked well together to provide a fun and safe event. \$2000 was raised for Special Recreation. The second annual George Bridges 5K is being planned for September 16, 2017.

**F. Centennial Celebration – Julie Schneider**

- The Waukegan Park District celebrates 100 years on December 26, 2016. There will be a kick off celebration planned for that day at the Belvidere Park and Rec Center with cake, hot chocolate, ice skating, bonfire and fireworks.
- All year long the Centennial will be celebrated in many ways and at all events starting with the first event of the year on January 1, 2017, the Polar Bear Plunge.

**G. Belvidere Aquatics – Greg Petry**

The next big project will be the Belvidere Park complex which includes the outdoor Ganster Pool, the Belvidere Recreation Center, and the Rose Administration Center. These facilities are over 50 years old and in need of updates. The project will be based on needs and affordability. As with other projects staff are involved in the planning process and this provides a learning experience for them.

- Committee member asked how does the arrangement with the township work in sharing the building? Greg responded that the facility use is based on the intergovernmental agreement between the township and the park district which leases the facility to the township.

**H. New Program/Event Ideas – Jay Lerner**

Programs in the works are an Indoor Triathlon, Lacrosse, STEM program utilizing drones.

We welcome other ideas and suggestions.

**I. What Can We Do Better? – Jay Lerner**

Committee member, Peggi Braden

- Invited Jay Lerner to be a part of the Waukegan Public School District Wellness Committee.
- Inquired about the new trail connection with Lyons Woods
  - Greg Petry explained the current plan connecting Lyons Woods with the Savannah with plans for further connection with the Lake Front and Des Plaines River Trail.
- Complimented the park district on the direction and emphasis on health and wellness in current and future programming.

**Closed Session**

There was no closed session

**IV. Adjournment**

Lerner thanked the committee members and the meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm. The next meeting is scheduled for May 1, 2017.