

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF
THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
RIVER TRAILS PARK DISTRICT,
COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS, HELD
AT 401 E. CAMP MCDONALD ROAD IN SAID DISTRICT
ON THE SEVENTH DAY OF DECEMBER 2023 AT 7:00 P.M.**

- I. The President called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and directed Crista Altergott, Administrative Assistant & Risk Management to call the roll. Upon roll being called, the following Commissioners answered present: Jennifer Rezek, Leah Lussem, Nancy Parra and Robert Hoban III. Melissa Ackerman was absent. Also present were Executive Director Bret Fahnstrom, Superintendent of Parks Mike Hanley, Superintendent of HR and Finance David Oswald, Superintendent of Communications and Marketing Christine Powles, Superintendent of Recreation Patti Mitchell, Manager of Programs and Aquatics Katelynn Putkonen and Recreation Supervisor of Youth Programs and Camps Andy Sirakides.
- II. Visitors Present: None
- III. The Agenda for December 7, 2023 was submitted for approval. Commissioner Lussem moved to approve said agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Parra and approved by common consent.
- IV. Approval of Minutes for the Regular Meeting of November 2, 2023. Commissioner Hoban asked for an amendment in Commissioners comments. Commissioner Hoban moved to approve the Minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lussem and approved by common consent.
- V. Approval of Voucher List of Bills for October 14 – November 10, 2023. Superintendent of HR and Finance David Oswald reviewed the highlights and Commissioner Lussem moved to approve the Voucher List of Bills for October 14 – November 10, 2023 as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Parra. Upon the roll being called, the Commissioners voted as follows:
- AYE: Nancy Parra, Jennifer Rezek, Leah Lussem, Robert Hoban III
NAY: None
ABSENT: Melissa Ackerman
- VI. Approval of the Treasurer's Report for October 2023: Superintendent of HR and Finance David Oswald proceeded to go over key points including; remaining 2022 property taxes expected to be received at the end of December, fund 40 Capital Improvements and Year to Date Target Expense Percentage is currently at 83.3%. Commissioner Parra asked for a clarification on bullet #4 of the Revenues paragraph. Superintendent Oswald replied that when we have a surplus of funds, we have the possibility to transfer to Capital Funds but it requires Board approval first. Commissioner Rezek inquired if RTPD expects to overspend its' capital improvement fund. Director Fahnstrom replied in the affirmative. Superintendent Oswald reminded the group that some spending in Capital Funds will go towards ADA and therefore the deficient will be significantly less. Commissioner Hoban inquired about the 2023 OSLAD grant where Director Fahnstrom responded. Commissioner Hoban moved to approve the Treasurer's Report for October 2023 as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lussem. Upon the roll being called, the Commissioners voted as follows:
- AYE: Nancy Parra, Jennifer Rezek, Leah Lussem, Robert Hoban III
NAY: None
ABSENT: Melissa Ackerman

VII. Communications

- a. Staff Report – Recreation: Superintendent of Recreation Patti Mitchell
 - Parkour class registration is down slightly for Fall 2023 while Parkour Open Gym participation, Parkour Birthday Parties and Turf Birthday Parties have increased. We expect record numbers for Winter/Spring.
 - Rentals have stayed consistent throughout fall with an expected increases going into colder months.
 - Despite the less than favorable weather, Halloween's Monster Bash was the busiest to date! 665 Trick 'o Treat bags were distributed and the event featured a scavenger hunt, character trail, hayride, inflatables, crafts and other fun activities for the entire family.
 - The 9th annual OCR was a success with 394 runners, 40% of those coming from the family run. The team bonding run showed promise and we hope to continue that category in future years.
 - Staff is busy getting ready for Winter events including: Stocking Deliveries, 2 Breakfast with Santa events at Rob Roy and 3 Polar Express events which are completely sold out. Commissioner Parra is scheduled to play Mrs. Claus at a few upcoming events.

- b. Annual Summer Camp Report: Manager of Programs and Aquatics Katelynn Putkonen and Recreation Supervisor of Youth Programs and Camps Andy Sirakides.
 - Katelynn introduced Andy to the Board of Commissioners. Andy has been working with the River Trails Park District since 2021. He has worn many hats over the years as a Camp Supervisor, Recreation Coordinator, Kid Squad Leader and Indian Grove Site Supervisor. Andy was hired as the Recreation Supervisor of Youth Programs and Camps in June and jumped right in mid-season.
 - Higher enrollment in full day camps led to the highest total revenue to date, in part due to the success of Camp Fun, Camp Champs and one of our new specialty camps, Thrive Girls Camp. Thrive Girls Camp is a new program geared towards girls grades 3-6 with the intention to bring young girls together to discover new passions and learn valuable life skills in an encouraging and supportive environment.
 - Increased program revenues are particularly impressive given the higher than anticipated supply costs, busing fees and staffing salaries seen in 2023. To offset these higher costs, summer camp registration fees will be increasing by 10% in 2024. Superintendent Mitchell reported cost comparisons with neighboring districts, noting that our fees will still be lower.
 - Based on salary structure, district culture, and employment incentives, we expect to see an increase in camp staff for the 2024 season which will allow us to offer more camp opportunities and minimize the waitlist.

- c. Director's Report: Executive Director Bret Fahnstrom
 - Director Fahnstrom reviewed upcoming events including the Illinois Parkour Championship on February 3rd, 2024. Commissioner Hoban asked for further details as the event is newer to the district.
 - Willow Trails Park renewal project is wrapping up for the season with color coding of the futsal and Bankshot area expected to be completed in April 2024. Commissioner Rezek inquired about communication to the community about the delay. Signs have been posted in both English and Spanish.

- d. Holiday Hours at Weiss: Executive Director Bret Fahnstrom
 - Weiss Community Center Holiday Hours have been posted.

- e. Miscellaneous Communications: Executive Director Bret Fahnstrom
 - The Aquatics Team has received the Gold International Aquatic Safety Award for 2023 from Ellis and Associates, Inc. which is only for those scoring in the top 23% of audit criteria.
 - The Village of Mount Prospect continues to support River Trails Park District through cross promotional materials. Our Outdoor Holiday Tree Decorating Contest, Stocking Deliveries and Breakfasts with Santa were all featured in their November/December Village Newsletter.

VIII. Old Business

- a. DRAFT 2024 Budget Funds 10, 21-26 Second Viewing
 - Superintendent of HR and Finance David Oswald proceeded to go over key points including; the expected timeline for each section of the budget to be presented to the Board with a tentative Final Overall Budget completed February 1st, 2024.
 - Changes to documents for Fund 10 since the first viewing and changes to documents for Funds 21-26 since the first viewing were highlighted and discussed at length.
 - Commissioner Hoban asked for further details regarding the increase costs to the Sycamore Park Master Plan. Director Fahnstrom replied that Sycamore Park is in need of improvements and a Master Plan is needed in order to proceed. The benefits of completing a Master Plan include community input and park designs in place ready for potential OSLAD grants.
- b. 2024 Board Meeting Schedule: Executive Director Bret Fahnstrom
 - As no concerns were raised since the last meeting, Commissioner Parra moved to approve the 2024 Board Meeting Schedule as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lussem. Upon the roll being called, the Commissioners voted as follows:

AYE: Nancy Parra, Jennifer Rezek, Leah Lussem, Robert Hoban III
 NAY: None
 ABSENT: Melissa Ackerman

IX. New Business

- a. Ordinance 23-12-07 A 2023 Tax Levy Ordinance
 - Superintendent of HR and Finance David Oswald presented the third viewing of Ordinance 23-12-07A. Superintendent Oswald proceeded to go through the highlights including; an increase of the total levy, \$88,384 more than in 2022, an increase in the Corporate Fund, a decreased Recreation Fund, as well as modification to six other Funds.
 - Commissioner Lussem asked for clarification on the Funds Balance process. Director Bret Fahnstrom walked the Commissioners through the process of creating projections, surplus options, carryover procedures, allowable transfers, bond usage and ideal ranges for each Fund.
 - Commissioner Hoban compared the October Treasurer’s Report to the 2023 Levy Ordinance and asked for clarification of reserves. Upon discussion, comparing to prior years’ expenditures and planned projects for 2024, there is seemingly 7-8 months of operating costs in reserves. Commissioner Hoban inquired if we can address lowering our reserves.
 - Director Fahnstrom discussed the policy and process in which surplus revenues are used to support the Capital Improvement project list which is well over \$7M while not including service support items such as vehicles, mowers, etc. Additionally, a major remodel of Weiss CC is not calculated into this number. The 2017 comprehensive Master Plan priced it at \$10M. Also, the memo supplied included additional projects

not listed which included a Dog Park (\$TBD), the community asked for recently, Rob Roy GC improvements (\$700,000) and possible land purchases (Sycamore @ \$2M). The annual bond rollover of approximate \$240,000 would require 28 years to complete the initial list of \$7M of projects. Moving fund surplus into the Capital Fund is critical.

- Upon further discussion, Commissioner Lussem suggested taking the next year to reduce the current reserves by spending what we have on planned projects. Keeping in mind that we have two years to re-bond. The Commissioners in attendance agreed on this course of action and Commissioner Parra motioned to adopt Ordinance 23-12-07A, 2023 Tax Levy Ordinance as presented. It was seconded by Commissioner Lussem. Upon roll being called, the Commissioners voted as follows:

AYE: Nancy Parra, Jennifer Rezek, Leah Lussem
NAY: None
PRESENT: Robert Hoban III
ABSENT: Melissa Ackerman

b. Resolution 23-12-07 Instructions to Cook County reducing Tax Levy

- Superintendent of HR and Finance David Oswald presented the first viewing of Resolution 23-12-07, Instructions to Cook County reducing Tax Levy. After distributing Capital Expense Projections, Superintendent Oswald walked the Commissioners through the lines items as requested.
- Commissioner Parra advocated for spending funds as required to enhance the district, draw patrons to our services and make the community favorable. With the general consensus and no further discussion needed, Commissioner Hoban motioned to adopt Resolution 23-12-07, Instructions to Cook County reducing Tax Levy as presented. It was seconded by Commissioner Lussem. Upon roll being called, the Commissioners voted as follows:

AYE: Nancy Parra, Jennifer Rezek, Leah Lussem, Robert Hoban III
NAY: None
ABSENT: Melissa Ackerman

c. Ordinance 23-12-07 B Ordinance abating the tax heretofore levied for the year 2023

- Superintendent of HR and Finance David Oswald presented the details of General Obligation Park Bonds Series 2018C and General Obligation Park Bonds Series 2021B. Oswald noted an error on the Memorandum where it states RE: Ordinance 22-12-07 B and should state RE: Ordinance 23-12-07 B.
- After brief discussion, Commissioner Lussem motioned to adopt Ordinance 23-12-07 B, Ordinance abating the tax heretofore levied for the year 2023 as amended. It was seconded by Commissioner Parra. Upon roll being called, the Commissioners voted as follows:

AYE: Nancy Parra, Jennifer Rezek, Leah Lussem, Robert Hoban III
NAY: None
ABSENT: Melissa Ackerman

d. DRAFT 2024 Budget Fund 20 First Viewing

- Superintendent of HR and Finance David Oswald presented details of DRAFT 2024 Budget, Funds 20 and noted an error on the Memorandum in the second bullet point of Discussion. Amendment required for Funds 40 to Funds 20.
- Oswald highlighted significant changes from the prior year 2023 budget which included Recreation Program Expenses, Salaries and Wages, and Contractual Services.
- A final budget will be passed before March 31, 2024.

- e. Recreation Policy Manual Review – Refund Policy: Executive Director Bret Fahnstrom
 - Director Fahnstrom presented the current Refund Policy to the Board. It has been six years since the last review and to better serve the community our refund process requires modifications.
 - Language and timelines were added to the current policy including a Refund Service Fee with the intention that fees go towards the Foundation and/or Scholarship Fund.
 - Commissioner Parra inquired to the communication of this change to participates. Superintendent Patti Mitchell responded that this change will not take effect until Spring 2024 and details will be included in brochures and on our website.
 - Commissioner Parra also voiced questions about punch cards for Pickleball and Yoga. Superintendent Mitchell replied that yoga punch cards have the flexibility to be used during sessions and the expiration can be extended since they are tied to staffing. Mitchell will look into potential options regarding Pickleball punch card expirations.
 - Commissioner Hoban asked for clarification on bullet number 3 and Commissioner Rezek asks for additional language to differentiate cancel vs. reschedule.
 - Recreation Policy Manual Review – Refund Policy will be tabled at this time.

- f. Amended Teleworking Policy: Executive Director Bret Fahnstrom
 - Director Fahnstrom presented the Amended Teleworking Policy as the old policy had limited flexibility, particularly regarding weeks with holidays.
 - Commissioner Rezek asked for additional details for the structure of the policy. Director Fahnstrom assured the Commissioners that the document was reviewed by our legal team and assumes communication from the Supervisor and Employee on the details of the agreement. The agreement is also dependent on the individual job requirements of each position, employee suitability and maintaining district operations.
 - After brief discussion, Commissioner Lussem motioned to adopt the Amended Teleworking Policy as presented. It was seconded by Commissioner Hoban. Upon roll being called, the Commissioners voted as follows:

AYE: Nancy Parra, Jennifer Rezek, Leah Lussem, Robert Hoban III
 NAY: None
 ABSENT: Melissa Ackerman

- g. Resident Partnership Agreement IGA: Executive Director Bret Fahnstrom
 - Director Fahnstrom discussed the Partner Resident Agreement which highlights the ability for residents to utilize services at River Trails Park District, Prospect Heights Park District and Mount Prospect Park District.
 - Previous years fees were removed and language added to eliminate Partner resident IGA's on Saturdays and Sundays.
 - After brief discussion, Commissioner Parra motioned to adopt the Resident Partnership Agreement IGA as presented. It was seconded by Commissioner Lussem. Upon roll being called, the Commissioners voted as follows:

AYE: Nancy Parra, Jennifer Rezek, Leah Lussem, Robert Hoban III
 NAY: None
 ABSENT: Melissa Ackerman

X. Commissioner Comments

- a. Commissioner Lussem thanked Superintendent of Parks Mike Hanley and Superintendent of Communications and Marketing Christine Powles, for putting up signs and social media posts regarding the buckthorn removal at Woodland Trails.

- b. Commissioner Parra congratulated Executive Director Bret Fahnstrom on his leadership and happy staff. Parra noted that a happy staff makes all the difference in programing.

XI. Executive Session

- a. Commissioner Lussem made a motion at 9:10p.m. that the Board go into closed Executive Session to consider information regarding appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of an officer, an employee or employee pursuant to Sections 2(c)(1) and 2(c)(2) of the Open Meetings Act. Commissioner Parra seconded the motion.

XII. Action as a Result of the Executive Session

- a. Approval of end of the year compensations. As per the discussion, Commissioner Parra motioned to approve the end of the year compensations as amended. It was seconded by Commissioner Lussem. Upon roll being called, the Commissioners voted as follows:

AYE: Nancy Parra, Jennifer Rezek, Leah Lussem, Robert Hoban III
NAY: None
ABSENT: Melissa Ackerman

- XIII. Adjournment.** There being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Hoban made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:18p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lussem and approved by common consent.

President

Secretary