

FRANKFORT SQUARE PARK DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
June 17, 2021

The following are Minutes of a meeting of the Frankfort Square Park District Board of Commissioners held at the Park District Administration Building, 7540 W. Braemar Lane, Frankfort, Illinois.

I. Call to Order

The Meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Roll Call

Present were: Ken Blackburn, Frank Florentine, Dave Macek, Craig Maksymiak, Denis Moore, Brian Mulheran, and Joe Vlosak.

Also present: Audrey Marcquenski, FSPD Director, and Jarrod and Jessie Scheunemann, Campfire Concepts.

IV. Public Input

No members of the public were present for input.

V. Presentation of Community-Wide Survey Results

Jim Randall introduced Jarrod Scheunemann and his wife Jessie, of Campfire Consultants. Jarrod first began working with the Park District in the late 2000's and completed six different studies. Mr. Randall noted the Park District has been appreciative of Jarrod's professionalism and diligence throughout the process.

Jarrold appreciated the opportunity to provide an in-person review of the survey results, and commended the efforts of the Park District staff. Jarrod has completed 215 similar surveys over the past 3 years, and very much appreciates the opportunity to work collaboratively with the FSPD, stating its staff are second to none.

Objective

The goal of the survey was to gather residents' opinions on equity, conservation, and health & wellness, the future needs of the community, and to determine the demographics of the District.

Study Procedures

The census was mailed to each household within the District and four hundred eighty-one responses were received. Most agencies conduct random samples and consequently receive lower returns. The FSPD survey was again effective, and included additional qualitative pages. The positive rate of response reflects that the community members are aware of the process and are willing to respond.

Use Patterns

On average, usage rates increased, as the previous survey reflected a 70% use of facilities and park areas, and the current survey reflects a 75% rate of usage by those utilizing these services from 1-5 times to 25+ times per year. This indicates a large core user base, and the numbers are very positive despite COVID.

A big change is that 32.9% find out about the District through its website. Facebook use also increased from the previous 2.9% to 24%. Learning through newspapers dropped from 24% to 10%, showing similar shifts with national trends.

Attitudes with Existing Parks, Programs, and Facilities

The FSPD received an overall satisfaction rate that is unprecedented as it relates to other park districts. The NRPA completes national performance studies on satisfaction rates, roughly reflected at 70%. It is rare for the FSPD to receive below 90% in satisfaction rates, a number that is very high compared to the NRPA and other studies.

Satisfaction with District staff remains high, with a slight decrease regarding Administrative staff, which is very common, as people are generally upset about COVID-related restrictions.

Households were satisfied with facilities and park areas.

Commissioner, Denis Moore asked what the concerns were with the walking paths. Jarrod responded that per the qualitative responses, residents want to see improvements made with the Dog Park, community gardens, and walking paths. Some expressed the need for path surface repairs and to keep them clean. Geese were also a concern, and there were some perceptions about people using motorized vehicles on the paths.

Recreation Program Participation

A total of 37.8% stated they participated in recreation programs, a high figure, considering the pandemic.

Jarrod noted participation numbers may be lower due to COVID, and the percentage provided is a good watermark for what happened in this area.

Equity, Conservation, and Health & Wellness

The overall consensus was to continue the upcharge at the golf course that financially supports local youth groups.

Some qualitative responses thought the upcharge could be used to reduce fees and support youth and family programs. Jim Randall noted that this response identifies the need to market better, as the District does have a scholarship program for those on public aid, with 100% coverage for the first year and availability of funds for a four year period.

There was support for the continuation of the college scholarship program.

Some respondents expressed an interested in formalized food drive program.

An undercurrent of helping the girls softball program was evidenced.

Jarrold noted that overall, opinions about equity were typical.

Conservation Efforts & Initiatives

The majority see the FSPD as a leader in the area of conservation efforts, and many were slightly less supportive of an asset inventory and interpretive signage in natural areas.

Care and maintenance of natural areas, ponds, and parking lots were areas of interest, which, per Jarrold, were somewhat obvious responses, due to the pandemic.

There were concerns expressed about cleaning up planted areas and recycling plants.

Commissioner, Frank Florentine found these comments interesting, given the fact that the District has won awards for its environmental mission. Mr. Randall stated we need to find ways to tell our story better. Currently, we are renovating park sign areas to make them more aesthetically pleasing, and are planting trees. If residents do not get to every park, they may not be aware of these efforts.

Commissioner, Joe Vlosak noted it was a perfect example of things we do well, of which many residents are unaware.

Health & Wellness Services & Initiatives

Jarrold believes that the definition of terminology makes it hard to gauge these responses. Some said the District needs to stick to its mission and shouldn't be concerned with health and wellness, however, these are core principles of what park districts do for their communities.

One area that received no interest was the formulation of a virtual health and wellness library, indicating people are ready to participate in person.

There was a strong interest in youth programs, and Ninja Warrior classes and park.

Community-type fitness facilities, both indoor and outdoor, are important to residents.

Overall, respondents feel the Park District should allocate resources to develop health and wellness services, and also feel the District is doing a good job.

The majority of respondents feel the Park District works cooperatively with organizations and that its partnerships are strong, inclusive, and provide suitable practices.

Household's Opinion Concerning District Services & Initiatives

A great percentage feel the District should pursue acquisition of another facility space, if current space is no longer available.

Many that utilize the opportunities and services at Lincoln-Way North feel these offerings are a good value for the money. A smaller group disagreed, because of the past year's pandemic closure. Jarrod reported that there are not glaring areas of issues.

Household's Need for Additional Amenities

The majority of respondents expressed interest in additional walking paths.

An awareness is needed for community gardens and the Dog Park, as many respondents do not know where they are located. Those that use these two amenities are very satisfied with what is offered.

No changes to pickleball facilities were indicated, however a small number responded that more pickleball programming should be offered.

The majority of Dog Park users do not feel changes are needed, however, 11 out of 481 respondents want a bigger facility, and the third most popular needs for this facility were additional benches, obstacles, and shelters.

A total of 42 respondents were unaware that we had community gardens, those that use these amenities are passionate about them, but would like the spaces be increased and requested more plots.

A total of 175, or 25% of the respondents took time to write responses related to general maintenance and upkeep of paths, but noted cleanliness of these paths is good. Resident are interested in water fountains, mile markers, maps, garbage cans and lighting. Twenty-four people said they love the current paths, and appreciate having a path system within the community.

Many qualitative responses noted people love the golf course and its personnel.

Future Facility Needs

The top four facility needs were as follows:

- #1 – Walking/biking trails
- #2 – Nature center and trails
- #3 – Natural Areas
- #4 – Indoor fitness and exercise facilities

A minor few always express an interest in an outdoor swimming pool.

Debt Retirement

After debt retirement, 11.3% would be willing to support their first priority future facility need with a \$71.00-\$100.00 payment. 21.5% cannot support any project, and 26% don't know if they could support their first priority project. The District may consider moving forward with a plan to add facilities, as typically, in other surveys, 50% say they "do not know".

Future Recreation Programming Needs

The top four program needs were adult fitness/wellness, summer concerts, senior programs, and adventure/travel.

Respondent Characteristics

In terms of general demographics, all were fairly close, and a good response was received across the board, with a slightly higher response rate from the older demographic.

The average time living within the service area of the Park District is 18-19 years.

The response rate was fairly even across all quadrants of the District.

Vice President, Dave Macek asked if the response rate of 481 responses out of 7,800 surveys was low and asked if returns would improve if made available on the internet. Jarrod noted that when agencies send 8,000 surveys, they are generally satisfied to receive 200 responses. He also noted that a recent Pew research showed that 80% of the population does not have daily access to the internet. Jim Randall also feels the older population may not respond to an online survey.

The Board further discussed various ways to provide incentives for survey participation, however, certain incentives, such as program discounts, may unfairly result in targeting users that would not be reflective of the community at large. It would also affect the anonymous nature of the survey and may discourage residents from participating if they needed to be identified to qualify for a program discount.

Jim Randall reported that District staff will review the survey responses and will develop a capital project list over the next four months reflective of residents' needs and interests, and the Board will have the opportunity to prioritize the list. Some will be easy to address, some a bit more challenging.

Mr. Randall further noted that we do what residents want us to do, and all capital improvements can be tied back to previous master plans. The 2002 referendum resulted in numerous facilities, such as the ball diamonds, park paths, Dog Park, and Splash Park, however, these are now 20 year old facilities, and keeping them at a level residents come to expect may be challenging.

If Board Members have questions after fully reviewing the survey results, they are welcome to contact Jarrod Scheunemann via email or phone.

Jim Randall and Audrey Marcquenski had the opportunity to meet with Jessie Scheunemann, a marketing professional, and she will develop a marketing proposal for the golf course, to get the word out about Toptracer and the new tee configurations.

VI. Correspondence

Thank you note received from Robert Kennedy, of the Lincoln-Way High School Foundation for Educational Excellence, for the Park District's auction item donation of Square Links Golf Course passes in support of their annual Dinner Gala fundraiser.

Thank you notes received from the recipients of the 2021 College Scholarship Program awards.

VII. Presentation of the May 19, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes.

Denis Moore made Motion 21-1651 to accept the May 19, 2021, Board Meeting Minutes as presented. Dave Macek seconded.

Vote on Motion: Ayes: Frank Florentine, Craig Maksymiak, Denis Moore, Brian Mulheran, Dave Macek, and Ken Blackburn. Abstained: Joe Vlosak. Nays: None. Motion passed.

VIII. Legal Report

No report

IX. Treasurer's Report

On behalf of the Board of Commissioners, President Ken Blackburn accepted the May Treasurer's Report, pending audit.

Jim Randall reported that the District received \$1.3 million in tax distributions the morning of June 17. The TAW closed on June 14, and would not have been necessary, however, with tax dollars coming in slower this year due to the change in tax payment schedule, the potential of a shortfall existed. Prior to this week's payroll, the District had \$150,000, but \$180,000 in combined expenses went out today, June 17. Another distribution will be received on June 29, which may bring us current. Mr. Randall does not foresee any problems for the remainder of the year, but if the revised Will County distribution schedule continues in the next fiscal year, it would be necessary to generate an end of year fund balance to \$800,000, with a goal to eventually build a million dollar end of year balance.

Historically, upon receipt of normal tax distributions in June, the District transfers funds back to Corporate that had been lent to other line items within the budget to address negative balances. This action may be considered at the July meeting, if deemed necessary.

Craig Maksymiak made Motion 21-1652 to accept the Accounts Payable Listing. Dave Macek seconded.

Vote on Motion: Ayes: Frank Florentine, Craig Maksymiak, Denis Moore, Brian Mulheran, Joe Vlosak, Dave Macek, and Ken Blackburn. Nays: None. Motion passed.

X. Executive Director's Report

The Tax Anticipation Warrant was completed on Monday, June 14, and will be paid off on August 30, 2021.

The new registration software is in place, staff have been trained on all aspects, and minor issues are being addressed. Staff will meet remotely with the VSI representative to revise the registration splash page, a necessary component of the software migration.

The District will move to a cloud-based email server in the coming months.

The FYE 4/30/21 audit is nearing completion and a report will be forthcoming.

Brian Murray, the District's health insurance agent, encouraged us to become members of the Illinois Restaurant Association, as doing so will provide an automatic 5% discount for health insurance. The cost of annual membership is \$450, and will save the District \$6,000 in annual health insurance costs.

The muralist did not have a rendering ready for today's meeting, but it is hoped it will be ready for Board review at the July meeting.

The Park District has been receiving communication about moving forward following the State's change to Phase 5 in the COVID recovery plan. Mr. Randall understands that fully vaccinated individuals are no longer required to wear masks indoors, however, participants under the age of 12 that are not yet eligible for the vaccine, will need to wear masks and adhere to social distancing. In order to set a good example, instructors working with this age group will continue to wear masks, and parents that enter these program areas will be asked to do the same.

Signage will be posted at all District facilities that states those who are fully vaccinated will not be required to wear masks.

Mr. Randall hopes to return to the Board table at the August meeting, but expressed concerns that we cannot ask if Board Members and/or staff are vaccinated, due to HIPAA laws. Commissioner, Craig Maksymiak reported that it is permissible to ask if individuals are fully vaccinated, not vaccinated, or do not wish to tell. A policy will be developed and presented to the community, and the Board will be given final authority prior to presenting it publicly.

Vice President, Dave Macek asked if the District has gotten feedback over its current mask policy. Jim Randall noted no one has questioned the guidelines that have been put in place, and we are following the recommendations of our risk management provider, as they write our liability policy, and we also base actions on guidance provided by the CDC and IDPH.

The Board fully discussed how best to move forward and discussed the issues of mask guidelines and whether participants have expressed any concerns. Jim Randall reiterated that the Park District will follow advice from its risk management association, and the participants have expressed appreciation regarding how the Park District has managed exposures.

Jim Randall previously informed the Board that Lincoln-Way North has been in high use, with the Lincoln-Way band camp, lacrosse, baseball games, and softball games.

The Frankfort Square Wildcats will begin their summer football camp the week of June 21.

XI. Committee Reports

A. Maintenance

Jim Randall requested consideration to award the Asphalt Installation bid that includes paving at Square Links Golf Course, the parking lot at Union Creek Park, and paths at Lake of the Glens Park in Brookside Glen, to the lowest responsible bidder, Oak Lawn Blacktop Co., at a cost not to exceed the bid price of \$68,700, a copy of which was provide to each Board Member prior to said meeting.

Craig Maksymiak made Motion 21-1653 to authorize the awarding the Asphalt Installation bid to the lowest responsible bidder, Oak Lawn Blacktop Co., at a cost not to exceed \$68,700, as presented. Joe Vlosak seconded.

Craig Maksymiak asked if there were any concerns regarding the low bid cost. Jim Randall noted the Oak Lawn Blacktop generally bids low as they are a local company and they appreciate the opportunity to work with our District.

Vote on Motion: Ayes: Frank Florentine, Craig Maksymiak, Denis Moore, Brian Mulheran, Joe Vlosak, Dave Macek, and Ken Blackburn. Nays: None. Motion passed.

The District is in the process of repairing paths in Lighthouse Pointe.

Cracks greater than 3” will be filled throughout the District’s path system, and paving will be completed within one to two years.

Ed Reidy, Superintendent of Parks, is preparing a plan to join the park path from Hilda Walker School to Kiwanis Park. A geotech-style grid stone base will be installed this year and will be paved next year to ensure the path has a solid foundation.

Asphalt work is finished at Champions Park and the District will install a 2” stub to irrigate the practice football field to ensure it is ready for the upcoming season.

Tree planting will be conducted at Island Prairie Park in advance of the Maddog Giving Tree Park event, scheduled at this site on June 25.

The Park District will take delivery of the 2021 Ford F-350 truck on Friday, June 18, (*ref. May 20, 2021 Minutes, Motion 21-1642.*)

B. Recreation

Erin O’Brien, new employee, will begin employment at Recreation Supervisor on June 28. She comes from the Fox Valley Park District in Aurora. Jim Randall noted it will be good to have Nicolette Jerik in place to assist with the transition.

The summer day camp programs began on June 14.

C. Information Technology

Sufficient information was included in the Executive Director's monthly report.

D. Special Recreation

Audrey Marcquenski reported that LWSRA completed their annual audit.

LWSRA conducted its monthly meeting of its Board of Directors on Tuesday, June 15. A newly married couple were in attendance, and the man was paralyzed in an accident. They moved to the area, COVID hit, adding to their difficulties. He spoke about how competing in wheelchair softball made him feel alive again, and Audrey noted that is what Keith Wallace, LWSRA's Executive Director does for his participants on a daily basis.

LWSRA is opening more in-person opportunities, while balancing virtual programming, as many participants are unable to wear masks or are immunocompromised and cannot be vaccinated.

Audrey noted it was good to be back in their building and to observe the activity that is underway.

Dave Macek, President of the LWSR Foundation, reported that the first golf outing, scheduled for Friday, August 13 sold out instantaneously, and a second outing has been scheduled on August 20 at The Links of Carillon. This second outing is now being promoted and Dave will forward promotional material to FSPD Board Members.

Dave further noted that the Foundation is having a good year, which is surprising due to the pandemic.

E. Finance and Planning

Sufficient information was included in the Executive Director's monthly report.

F. Golf Course

Sufficient information was included in the Executive Director's monthly report.

G. Office

Nicolette is training for the Office Manager position.

H. Risk Management

Sufficient information was included in the Executive Director's monthly report.

I. Community Updates

Jim Randall reported that the sewer treatment plan improvements have been completed and the site is now a holding pond. Commissioner, Frank Florentine asked if drainage had been improved, and Mr. Randall noted they addressed the issue by installing a manhole in the back corner that held water, resolving the issue. The Village of Frankfort also installed oversized parking blocks to prevent people from driving onto the site.

J. Freedom of Information

No FOIA requests were received over the past month.

XII. Old Business

No old business was discussed.

XIII. New Business

No new business was discussed.

A. Commissioner's Comments

No comments were provided.

XIV. Executive Session

No business came before the Board that required an executive session.

XV. Adjournment

Dave Macek made Motion 21-1654 to adjourn the meeting at 8:47 p.m. Craig Maksymiak seconded. Motion carried in a vote by voice.

Respectfully submitted:
Linda Mitchell