



# WILMETTE PARK DISTRICT Centennial Committee Meeting Minutes

Monday, July 12, 2021

5:30 p.m. – Village Hall Training Room

## **Present**

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Commissioners/Committee: Chair Mike Murdock, Patrick Duffy, Allison Frazier  
Staff: Emily Guynn, Kristi Solberg

Additional Staff: Director Steve Wilson, Catherine Serbin, Joseph Sanchez and Jason Stanislaw

Visitors: Mary Lark, Alan Golden, Walter Keats, Alexis Keto

## **Absent**

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None

## **I. Meeting Called to Order**

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Meeting called to order at 5:33 p.m.

## **II. Approval of Minutes**

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### A. June 14, 2021

Commissioner Frazier moved and Commissioner Duffy seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the June 14, 2021 Centennial Committee meeting.

By a unanimous voice vote; **motion carried.**

## **III. Communications and Correspondence**

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Commissioner Murdock acknowledged correspondence from Jeff Toth in regards to an indoor pool, which the Committee may discuss under Committee goals.

## **IV. Public Comment**

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Director Wilson facilitated public comment. The Attendance Record will become part of the permanent record.

Walter Keats – He suggested the Committee name remain Facilities. Commissioner Murdock responded that the Board Manual only identifies a Centennial Committee. From a practical standpoint, it is simply nomenclature. Commissioner Murdock agreed in that Facilities is a more informative name as this Committee includes paddle tennis and potentially pickleball in the future.

## **V. Committee Scope and Responsibilities**

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Commissioner Murdock started the discussion by noting Commissioner Frazier had suggested at last month's meeting that this Committee establish policies, procedures and criteria for community input. He then asked her if this goal was appropriate for this Committee or if it would be more appropriate for the Financial Planning and Policy Committee or the full Board. Commissioner Frazier rephrased

her goal as the process of vetting of new ideas and community input specifically. She stated the community input is a big component of vetting new ideas and as this is a Committee that also houses recreational programming, she would like to see new ideas vetted through it.

Commissioner Duffy stated he believes that would be a goal better suited for the Financial Planning and Policy Committee as opposed to this Committee as it can encompass all Committees. Commissioner Frazier agreed and stated she has brought this up at every Committee meeting because she believes this to be an important goal. Commissioner Murdock stated that this vetting process and the process of community engagement are priorities that the Board will take up over the year; the question is whether this is an appropriate goal for this Committee. Commissioner Frazier stated that she would like this listed as a goal until the Financial Planning and Policy Committee adopts it. She stated the framework that she has previously discussed is very broad and intended to empower staff to take control and present thoroughly vetted ideas. It was ultimately decided that this goal be directed to the Financial Planning and Policy Committee.

Commissioner Murdock noted that Commissioner Duffy has previously listed pool deck expansion as a goal. Commissioner Duffy stated he would like to focus specifically on what this Committee is responsible for and that he has seen a need for deck expansion. Commissioner Frazier added she would like to see the space redefined such as cubbies on the outside of the pool facility. She would also like to see event space. Commissioner Duffy noted that on a busy day, all of the pool chairs are taken except the ones on the hill – which are hard to sit on due to the angle of the hill. Commissioner Murdock suggested that this goal read to increase the deck space, the storage spaces for users and event space at the pool. Director Wilson suggested that since the Village is going to be digging out Thornwood Park to put the underground storage vaults in, instead of hauling the dirt off-site it could be used to level the deck area. Commissioner Frazier asked if this would impact garden space. Commissioner Murdock stated that conversation is premature.

Commissioner Murdock added that this Committee had listed taking advantage of grant opportunities and identifying projects that are shovel ready as a goal. It was unanimously decided that this goal is better suited for the Financial Planning and Policy Committee.

Establishing a pickleball facility, including courts and programming was also confirmed as a Committee goal.

Commissioner Murdock suggested that the Committee begin planning for a replacement pool facility with the possibility of additional amenities, such as indoor swimming, rowing and fitness. Director Wilson clarified that standalone indoor pool facilities in the Chicagoland area are difficult to make work financially unless there is a synergy with some other type of facility – often times, a fitness center. Commissioner Murdock reworded the goal to read that this Committee begin planning for the replacement of the pool facility.

Commissioner Murdock further suggested that the Committee explore the possibility of an additional sheet of coolant-supported ice, whether that be indoor or outdoor. Commissioner Frazier revised the goal to state that the Committee begin strategic planning for Centennial facilities update to include tennis.

It was decided that addressing paddle capacity also be a Committee goal.

There was subsequent discussion as to whether a community needs survey should be included as a goal for this Committee as well. It was suggested that this conversation be taken offline for discussion between the Centennial Committee Chair, the Parks and Recreation Chair and the Executive Director. Director Wilson stated that a needs assessment survey must come from the full Board to the entire community and those responses would then be directed to the appropriate Committee.

## **VI. Unfinished Business**

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None

## **VII. New Business**

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### **A. Centennial Family Aquatic Center 2021 Operational Update**

Jason Stanislaw, the Centennial Recreation Complex General Manager, advised that there was a robust set of data included in this month's Committee packet. He stated that staff built a pool schedule based on existing usage data to balance some higher net producing activities with some lower net producing activities to make the pool financially sustainable regardless of inclement weather. Staff has adjusted to the needs of the community by increasing public access to the main pool. He then opened the floor up for questions from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Frazier stated she is happy with the increased public access and commended staff on their ability to adapt. Commissioner Duffy asked if the data staff relied on was collected during the pandemic. Superintendent Guynn advised that one of the main takeaways from last year is that there is a large dedicated lap swim community as over 700 unique users used the lap swim pool last year. To date in 2021, there are over 450 unique users. Staff does not have 10 years' worth of historical data to go off regarding lap swimmers. She stated the closest comparison would be early morning public swim time because youth aren't in the pool at that time. Commissioner Duffy asked if people are paying during public swim to use lap swim. Superintendent Guynn advised that not during public swim. When there are eight lanes open for public, two are reserved for lap lanes, which is what has been done historically. Commissioner Duffy asked how many of the unique users have revisited the pool since their initial visit. He also expressed frustration at change in the lap swim hours and the fee associated with lap swim reservations. Commissioner Murdock stated that he struggled with the New Trier lap swim times and Commissioner Duffy noted that it seems they get more lap swim time than the public. Commissioner Murdock stated he felt uncomfortable that New Trier is allocated prime time hours for swim practice. Superintendent Guynn advised that the time New Trier is using it is mid-morning from 8:15 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. and on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday afternoon it is shared use

with public swim. Staff felt that it was a reasonable balance between the public and New Trier Aquatics to share public swim on those days. She stated the most important thing to staff is giving as many people access to the pool as possible. Commissioner Murdock then asked if there was a dedicated camp swim time in the past and Superintendent Guynn advised there was not. She stated that she is hoping this year will serve to guide more improvements to next year, whether that is a lap swim pass or a variation of a pool pass. Commissioner Duffy stated that he would like increased access for dedicated lap swim and the lap swim fee removed. Director Wilson advised that staff would like the opportunity to take the data and create pass options and structures for a lap only versus an all-access pass, similar to that at the golf course. Commissioner Duffy then suggested that a survey go out to capture more than just the pool user data. He also spoke briefly about Northwestern's lap swim program. Director Wilson advised that while lap swim reservations have become an unintended consequence of the pandemic they have also become a revenue generator to the tune of approximately \$100,000 and something that operationally, is hard to cast aside knowing that there is pressure to fund new projects. He stated that there is a lot of demand from different groups to use this facility and that staff is doing their best to balance them all.

Commissioner Murdock thanked the staff for their data driven approach and stated he appreciated their thoughtfulness. He also noted that that capacity levels seem to be back to normal but questioned why the camp swim time occurs during prime public swim hours. Superintendent Guynn advised that staff wanted to make it as safe as possible for the campers and that swim lessons occur during the day.

#### **B. Pickleball Court Discussion – Deferred**

It was agreed that this conversation be deferred until all of the results of the community survey are in. Commissioner Frazier asked if the e-mail survey is sent to only the head of the household. Superintendent Guynn clarified that this survey has not yet been sent to the full community. Staff has only sent it to residents within the YourCourts reservation system for the outdoors tennis courts, which is only 1,800 residents. She also clarified that when larger surveys go out, they are sent to the primary household e-mail address. She suggested that residents call and verify their e-mail addresses.

Superintendent Guynn advised that staff has received 396 survey responses out of the 1,100 that were opened. The majority of people who responded to the survey were between 40 to 60 years old. It was about 50/50 when respondents were asked if they currently play pickle. Most of the respondents were beginner or intermediate players. The majority of the people who do play, responded they play weekly. As far as the reasons why people are not playing, most respondents answered no convenient court locations. A majority of people who do not currently play pickleball stated they would be interested in starting. In terms of a preferred location, Centennial and West Park were well liked amongst the respondents. Superintendent Guynn noted that in the comments that Vatmann was mentioned quite a bit but staff does not feel comfortable with that as a location due to the lack of parking. Respondents were also fearful of losing existing paddle courts and tennis courts.

### C. Paddle Deck Expansion – Deferred

Commissioner Murdock advised that this was budgeted in 2020 and was deferred due to capital cutbacks associated with the pandemic. He stated that this facility is above capacity and having some outdoor space to accommodate for this season is critical in his mind. The conversation was tabled until next month.

## VIII. Managers' Reports

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Jason Stanislav, the Centennial Recreation Complex General Manager, Reported:

- Natalie Liang, the Figure Skating Supervisor, has resigned for the Glenview Park District. Her last day of work will be July 16<sup>th</sup>.
- Wilmette Hockey contract for 2021-22 season is almost finalized.
- Carrie Kolles, the Racquet Sports Supervisor, resigned and her last day was June 25, 2021. Staff is currently working on finding her replacement.
- The league has granted the Park District three additional men's teams for a total of 24 teams. He stated we are significantly oversold for the number of courts. Commissioner Murdock stated that according to league rules, the Park District is only entitled to 18 teams based on the six courts and noted this is a capacity issue we need to address.
- In regards to women's paddle, a team that left our facility for Glenbrook last season is coming back. There are six women's daytime teams.

## IX. Next Meeting

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The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for August 9, 2021.

## X. Adjournment

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There being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Frazier moved and Commissioner Duffy seconded a motion to adjourn the Parks and Recreation Committee meeting at 6:29 p.m.

By voice vote; **motion carried.**

Minutes Approved on: August 9, 2021

Respectfully Submitted,

*Catherine Serbin*

Catherine Serbin  
Executive Administrative Assistant