



WILMETTE PARK DISTRICT
Annual Board Meeting
Meeting Minutes
Monday, May 9, 2022
7:30 p.m. – Village Hall Council Chambers

PRESENT

Commissioners: President Michael Murdock, Vice President Kara Kosloskus, Julia Goebel, Cecilia Clarke, Patrick Duffy, Allison Frazier and Lindsay Anderson

Staff: Executive Director Steve Wilson and Executive Administrative Assistant Catherine Serbin

Visitors:

ABSENT

None

1.0 ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS CALLED TO ORDER

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

A. Roll Call Taken

2.0 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

2.1 PRESIDENT

2.2 VICE PRESIDENT

Prior to the election of Officers, Commissioner Murdock reflected upon the last year. While the Board has had a very successful year, he believes the Board ended on a low note. Much of recent discussion has centered on West Park and while he hopes to look back on this process as a success, he acknowledged it probably does not feel like that to too many people right now – himself included. He still believes the District should invest in paddle and pickle to meet the recreational needs of the community. Yet, trying to centralize all that activity in West Park was a mistake. When the Park District partnered with the Village to solve sewer problems in town a decade ago and eliminated natural features of West Park, none of the Commissioners on the current Board were part of that decision. However, President Murdock does not believe the Park District, the Village, or the current Board of Park Commissioners fully understood the impact that decision had on the local community. Although paddle has been operating at West Park for over a decade, the Park District did not fully understand the impact of that facility on nearby residents. When the Board started to hear concerns, the Board could have and should have done a better job listening. The Board should have found better and more effective ways to engage the public earlier in the process. He pledged that the Board will do better moving forward. He also noted that he believes the end result at West Park is a fair solution for the neighborhood, the paddle community and the Village as a whole. He also believes the paddle program will have a significantly smaller impact on the

neighbors as a result of efforts already undertaken by the park district as well as additional efforts that are a part of the zoning process with the Village Board. It was difficult to get to this point and it could have been handled more effectively. As President of the Park Board, President Murdock stated he takes responsibility for those mistakes but he is hopeful the Board can build elsewhere and right the ship. He cited the Community Playfields bathroom and fitness path project as a recent example of a path forward. Nearby residents were effectively informed throughout the process and he has heard nothing but positive feedback since the plan was finalized. He believes it is worth noting some of the other Board successes over the past year such as emphasizing the importance of better stewarding natural resources, funding a horticulturalist position, additional funds for tree plantings in the capital budget in addition to funds that were already in the operating budget, and commissioning landscape plans that are currently being implemented. At the lakefront, the Board has brought in a new vendor for beach concessions that has been extremely well received. There is a plan to remodel Lakeview Center. The Board has made progress on the Gillson Park Comprehensive Plan and has a plan for the Langdon Bluff restoration. At the Golf Club, the Board has completed the golf cart path, identified a new vendor for concessions and is in the process of making improvements to the interior of the facility. He believes this is especially exciting given that this is the 100th year anniversary of the course. The Board has allocated funds to complete a facility assessment at the CRC and Centennial facility and has hired a Strategic Plan Consultant so the Board can move forward with a District-wide Strategic Plan. He noted the Board has brought the first electric vehicle charging stations to Wilmette, rewrote the IGA with the Village to better allocate resources for investment at Thornwood, Hibbard and the Community Playfields, achieved the highest credit a Park District possibly have and issued additional debt extension base so the District did not lose some of the funding that was set to expire this past year. Furthermore, the District has successfully relaunched camps and came out of the pandemic in far better standing than other area Districts. Lastly, the Board rewrote its Board Manual to provide for increased flexibility for future Boards.

Director Wilson then entertained nominations for the Office of President. Commissioner Goebel moved and Commissioner Anderson seconded the nomination of Commissioner Clarke for the Office of Presidency.

Commissioner Duffy moved and Commissioner Frazier seconded the nomination of Commissioner Murdock for the Office of Presidency.

Commissioner Murdock moved and Commissioner Kosloskus seconded that nominations be closed.

After nominations were closed, Commissioner Duffy initiated a brief Board discussion regarding the Presidency. He stated the President of the Board does not have more influence on the direction of the Park District than the Vice

President or any other Commissioner. He expressed concerns regarding Commissioner Clarke's public engagement and believes Commissioner Murdock has been successful in leading the Board this past year. Furthermore, he noted that votes on major projects were unanimously approved by all seven members of the Board. He concluded his remarks by reciting the role of the President, per the Board Operation Manual.

Commissioner Goebel thanked Commissioner Murdock for his year of service as the President of the Board and on a job well done. She stated during her tenure on the Board, each year there has been a one-year term limit for the President. She feels a new individual can lead the Board and not have that serve as an indictment on the prior President. With that said, this is why she has chosen to nominate Commissioner Clarke. She concluded by listing Commissioner Clarke's qualifications as a trained attorney with extensive experience serving on other Boards in Wilmette.

Commissioner Clarke stated she did not have any involvement with the public with respect to e-mails the Board had received and resents any implication of bad faith actions on her part. While had not requested support from the public, she is grateful for their support.

Commissioner Frazier acknowledged that the current Vice President has decided not to seek the Office of Presidency, which has presented the Board with a difficult decision. However, she feels the tenure of the Board President should be two years, especially with election cycles and appointments which can disrupt the flow of two-year cycle, to allow the Board time to catch up. She believes a change in Presidency now will not fix the issues that are most detrimental to the Board and recommended the Board dissolve the existing Committee structure and move to a Committee-of-the-Whole structure. This change will remove the President from sitting on or Chairing individual Committees, in efforts to help the Board improve communication and transparency to the public.

Commissioner Kosloskus stated she has also been inquiring about a Committee-of-the-Whole concept. She had asked Park Board Attorney, Andrew Paine, to prepare a memorandum specifying the difference a Committee Structure as compared to a Committee-of-the-Whole. In her own research, she noted the Village of Northbrook had a similar discussion in 2019. She acknowledged the public's requests for change but noted Commissioner Murdock was one vote out of seven. She agreed with Commissioner Frazier in that moving to a Committee-of-the-Whole would produce better discussion and give the public a simpler schedule to follow.

Commissioner Anderson thanked Commissioner Kosloskus for her research and supported moving to a Committee-of-the-Whole for all the reasons previously stated. With respect to the motion for President, she agrees that there has been much good done by the Board this past year. While the Board has been plagued

with rumors regarding division, she has not experienced this during her time on the Board. With that said, she supports Commissioner Clarke in an effort to seek consensus, among the Board, staff and community members. She would like to find ways to continue to inspire confidence, respect and support from residents.

Commissioner Clarke concluded her earlier remarks by stating the Board should be proud of themselves for its many accomplishments this past year but agreed with Commissioner Anderson in that movement should be driven by the community as compared to the Board.

After Board discussion, Director Wilson held an election in the order they were received. The first motion was for Commissioner Clarke for the Office of President. By a roll call vote, voting *Yes*, Commissioners: Anderson, Clarke and Goebel. Voting *No*, Duffy, Frazier, Kosloskus and Murdock. *Absent*, none; **motion failed**.

The second motion was for Commissioner Murdock for the Office of President. By a roll call vote, voting *Yes*, Commissioners: Duffy, Frazier, Kosloskus and Murdock. Voting *No*, Anderson, Clarke and Goebel. *Absent*, none; **motion carried**.

Commissioner Murdock resumed the role as President and entertained nominations for the Office of the Vice President.

Commissioner Goebel moved and Commissioner Duffy seconded the nomination of Commissioner Kosloskus for the Office of Vice President.

Commissioner Frazier moved and Commissioner Clarke seconded the nomination of Commissioner Goebel for the Office of Vice President.

After nominations were closed, Commissioner Frazier initiated a brief Board discussion regarding the Vice President. She feels that continuity is important and that having tenured Commissioners lead the Board will be a great asset to the Board. Commissioner Goebel thanked Commissioner Frazier for her nomination but stated that she feels it is not the right time for her to be Vice President for a variety of reasons. Additionally, she appreciates Commissioner Kosloskus' interest in further leadership. Commissioner Goebel remains grateful for her opportunity to have served as Vice President of the Board for two years as well as Chair the Finance Committee, Golf Operations Committee and Lakefront Committee.

Commissioner Kosloskus recognized that the Board does need to think towards a succession plan and appreciated Commissioner Goebel's nomination.

After Board discussion, Commissioner Frazier withdrew her nomination for Commissioner Goebel to serve as Vice President. President Murdock moved and Commissioner Anderson seconded that nominations be closed and that Commissioner Kosloskus be unanimously elected to the office of Vice President.

3.0 APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

3.1 SECRETARY

3.2 ASSISTANT SECRETARY

3.3 TREASURER

Commissioner Goebel moved and Commissioner Clarke seconded a motion to approve the appointment of Stephen P. Wilson for the office of Secretary, Catherine A. Serbin as Assistant Secretary and Sheila Foy as Treasurer.

Commissioner Clarke noted that staff has done an excellent job in their roles. By a roll call vote, voting Yes, Commissioners: Duffy, Anderson, Frazier, Kosloskus, Clarke, Goebel and Murdock. Voting No, None. *Absent*, none; **motion carried**.

4.0 APPOINTMENT OF PARK DISTRICT LEGAL COUNSEL

Vice President Kosloskus moved and Commissioner Frazier seconded a motion to approve the appointment of Tressler LLP as the Wilmette Park District's legal counsel.

By a roll call vote, voting Yes, Commissioners: Duffy, Anderson, Frazier, Kosloskus, Clarke, Goebel and Murdock. Voting No, None. *Absent*, none; **motion carried**.

5.0 CONSIDERATION OF COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

President Murdock advised that per the Board Manual, the Board has maintained a Committee structure in which there are three members on various Committees. Over the course of this past year, the Board revised the Board Manual to provide the Board flexibility and the Board can now consider moving to a Committee-of-the-Whole structure at which topics can be discussed among the full Board and consensus formed as recommendations. There was a brief Board discussion regarding the benefits of a Committee-of-the-Whole structure. Vice President Kosloskus requested that the Board consider alternatives as opposed to the President continually chairing Committee-of-the-Whole conversations. It was mutually agreed that this be considered. Commissioner Frazier moved and Vice President Kosloskus seconded a motion to inactivate all Standing Committees and move to a Committee-of-the-Whole structure effective June 1st, 2022.

By a roll call vote, voting Yes, Commissioners: Duffy, Anderson, Frazier, Kosloskus, Clarke, Goebel and Murdock. Voting No, None. *Absent*, none; **motion carried**.

6.0 ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, Commissioner Goebel moved and Commissioner Frazier seconded a motion to adjourn the Annual Board meeting at 8:32 p.m.

By a unanimous voice vote; **Motion Carried.**

Minutes Approved on July 11, 2022.

Respectfully Submitted,

Catherine Serbin

Catherine Serbin
Executive Administrative Assistant