WILMETTE PARK DISTRICT
Committee of the Whole
Meeting Minutes
Monday, October 27, 2025
6:30 p.m. – Mallinckrodt

PRESENT

Commissioners: President Patrick Lahey, Vice President Allison Frazier, Patrick Duffy, Cecilia Clarke, Julia Goebel, Mike Murdock, Julie Adrianopoli

Secretary/Executive Director: Chris Lindgren

Staff: Superintendent Sheila Foy, Superintendent Dave Merrill, Superintendent Josh Wallace, Superintendent Lindsay Thomas, Adam Kwiatkoski

Visitors: Mary Lawlor

1.0 MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

A. ROLL CALL TAKEN

2.0 COMMUNICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE

All correspondence received on time was included in the packet.

3.0 PUBLIC COMMENT/RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Alan Golden – Mr. Golden makes a comment about the beach and sailing beach parking.

4.0 OLD BUSINESS

None.

5.0 ONGOING DISTRICT PROJECTS

5.1 GILLSON PARK COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Gewalt Hamilton has the completed the As-Builts, is reviewing them, and will submit them to the Village. They are also working to close out the permit with MWRD, including submission of the Plat of Easements.

5.2 Langdon Shoreline Protection

The engineering firm is finalizing closeout documents, permitting, and pay estimates.

5.3 Hibbard Park

Work continues at the south baseball field. The concrete has been poured and the fencing is being installed. The contractor is finalizing a corrective action plan for the ECC playground with defined steps and a schedule to bring the Poured-in-Place surface up to ADA compliance. For now, the playground will be open until the weather improves in the spring and the correction is made.

5.4 CRC Reconstruction

Staff held a project kick off meeting on October 23rd. We met with the general contractor and key subcontractors to review construction timelines, logistics, potential impacts and coordination throughout the project.

5.5 CRC Solar Project

The contractor is finalizing their installations and punch list items. Verde will be requesting final inspection from the Village in the next week. Once this is completed, the final inspection reports will be submitted to ComEd to get authorization to liven the solar panels.

6.0 NEW BUSINESS

6.1 SEPTEMBER 2025 FINANCIAL UPDATE

Superintendent Foy explains that revenue is under budget by the amount of property taxes. Miscellaneous income is over. Revenues are ahead of budget in all the other categories. Staff has worked very hard on projection numbers. There is an operating surplus of $6.5M versus a budget of $6.0M, with most of it being related to miscellaneous revenue. Budgeted fund deficit was going to be about $3.2M but it looks like it'll be around $3.9M, with most of it related to capital spending (projects that caught us by surprise). Projects that come to mind are the bus, the lift and the well at golf.

Commissioner Duffy asks what happens if property taxes come in late. Superintendent Foy says that we will have some cash flow coming in on Cyber Monday, with the subsequent big influx of cash coming in with camp registration in February. She also states that she has a meeting scheduled with Wintrust to talk about possibilities if property tax dollars don't come in on time. President Lahey mentions that it's possible to explore a loan for the amount of the expected property tax receipts. Commissioner Goebel also says it's possible for the district to pause capital spending while we wait for property tax funds.

6.2 BUDGET DISCUSSIONS

6.2.1 GOLF

Adam Kwiatkoski and Nick Marfise answer board questions about the budget.

Most of the staff at golf are part-time, which is why the payroll has increased so much each year. Part-time employees start at minimum wage and because of the increase in minimum wage law each year, you will see the increase has been more than 3%. Minimum wage has increased by $1.00 each year since 2021.

Adam explains that for 2026, we used the following to budget: a 3% decrease in rounds with a 5% rate increase in most areas. The golf course uses dynamic pricing, meaning rates change based on season, time of day, weather, etc., we are able to charge more or less to encourage play at slower times and maximize revenue during busy times. We are the highest price municipal golf course on the north shore.

Commissioner Murdock says that revenues are flat, which makes sense because Winnetka's course opened back up last week. On the expense side and salary side, labor

cost is going up 8% relative to last year's budget, 4% relative to the end-of-year projections, whereas revenues are flat. He asks if there is any way to tighten the gap in some way. Adam answers that yes, that revenue comes in our "shoulder" season, so is weather dependent. But also, when we are open more days, we have to have staff on the schedule more days. There was a portion of the season this year when we were short some maintenance staff, but we budgeted back to full staff all next season. That probably accounts for a percentage point or so.

Commissioner Duffy asks about tee times being every 10 minutes. Adam explains that during covid, we had to go to 15-minute intervals so there weren't two groups on the same hole. Then, at some point they changed it from 15 minutes to 10-minute intervals, so we had to run a whole season on 10-minute intervals. What we found with that was it helped the pace of play. It cost us a couple of tee times over the course of a whole day, which we were comfortable with. If we went to 9-minute intervals, it backs up. With 10-minute intervals we can also account for some situations like a computer glitch.

Commissioner Murdock asks about camp revenues being down about 9%. The thought was that normally our golf camps are sold out. Adam explains that some of that is making sure our numbers are regulation based. Some of that is more residents signing up early, which changes the revenue because resident rates are less than non-resident. We also so more employee participation in golf programs, a number that keeps going up every year (a good thing).

Commissioner Adrianopoli asks if the junior membership is just for our course or if it crosses multiple golf courses. Adam answers it is only for our golf course.

Commissioner Murdock asks about the projected decline in revenues for the driving range for this year, following a 30% increase the year before. This year we hit the number and expect it to be the exact same next year. Commissioner Murdock asks if we are at capacity with our driving range. Adam states that, yes, we are likely at capacity for the driving range. President Lahey asks what kind of year we are planning on in terms of weather. Adam answers that we are planning on a year similar to this year for weather.

6.2.2 Recreation Facilities & Programs

Superintendent Merrill introduces the Recreation Department budget.

Commissioner Murdock asks about the report totals. We have a generated consolidated budget of $2.8M, our projection is about $2.6M and the proposed budget is about $2.5M. It seems we are trending in the wrong direction. He looks at diving to see we had a fairly robust diving program in 2023 and 2024, and we expected to have one in 2025 but it didn't happen because of staffing issues. He asks why we aren't trying to rebuild that area in 2026. Superintendent Merrill states that we did not have the staff to run a diving program in 2025, and we do not expect to have staff for that area in 2026.

Staff have worked very hard to make sure we are renting the ice out as many hours as possible, even in the summer. We continue to work with our vendors to maintain

relationships. Commissioner Clarke asks why locker rental revenue is down. Florence Krieger, the Ice Supervisor, explains that we removed some of the lockers and placed cubbies for people's belongings. We also, during covid, stopped renting lockers and only began renting them again this year.

Community Appreciation Events
Superintendent Merrill explains that the budget has increased for Community Appreciation in 2026. This is the home of our July 3rd event, Block Party and Wallace Bowl events. Commissioner Duffy asks what kind of events are being put on at Wallace Bowl. Superintendent Merrill explains that we have the children's theater putting on a performance. Laura Grunschel, CFA Supervisor, says we are moving forward with more musicals down at the Bowl in addition to the concerts. This summer we had two nights per week of concerts, one more fine arts and the other more rock/pop bands. We are ready to take suggestions from the community. The board asks staff to see if there would be community interest in sponsoring the fireworks for July 3rd.

Lakefront
The Lakefront staff introduce themselves: Conor McCormick, Emin Jakupovic and Megan White. Megan White, Lakefront General Manager, explains that fee increases on the lakefront have followed board guidance of 5%. Daily passes remain the same based on the pricing of our neighbors. Our sailing pass did increase by $1 because it hasn't been changed in the past couple of years. We budgeted based on the actuals for this year because it is not possible to predict what the weather will bring. Aquatics camp cost decreased so we can bring more people back into the camp. Kayak and SUP camp has increased in cost for next year based on vendor request. Megan explains that Kayak and SUP camp is very specialized and it makes sense that it is the most expensive camp per hour. President Lahey stresses the tracking of data at the beaches over a few years so we can adjust accordingly. Megan explains the balance between sending part-time staff home on bad weather days and the ability to get those staff back the following summer.

Commissioner Duffy asks the general manager what her impression is of the changes made at the lakefront. Megan answers that she has seen a huge difference for staff experience. We made less calls and less reports. Commissioner Duffy asks about the upgrade to post and rope, rather than beach fence. Megan answers that she believes that some people feel heard in their opinion of the aesthetic and that has been improved. She also believes there is more understanding in what staff were facing in managing the property when South Beach was free. Commissioner Goebel says there was a lot of positive feedback in terms of the look and feel of the beach.

Commissioner Murdock asks about the increase in miscellaneous contract services and the further increase for next year. Megan explains that most of that is credit card fees and next year we will be cashless (credit and debit only). Commissioner Murdock asks about overall revenues staying flat, but staffing costs are going up by 12%. Megan says that we are budgeting for the most amount of staff hours, which we don't expect.

[At this point, the board takes a 10-minute recess.]

Racquet Sports
Jason Stanislaw, Racquet Sports General Manager, explains to the board that there were significant changes to the budget in 2025, including initiation the apprenticeship program. We lost two coaches who had been with the district for a significant amount of time (one of them was here for 20 years). We made a significant change to the curriculum for kids under eight years old; we are now using stations to keep kids active more of the time they are in class, which has also allowed us to increase capacity. We have also had a jump in private lessons, with two levels of professionals teaching.

Commissioner Duffy asks why we are tracking prime time versus non-prime-time court usage. Jason explains that there are different rates for different times, but it is determined that in the budget it makes no difference, as they are all rentals.

Commissioner Adrianopoli asks about pickleball revenue: do people reserve courts, do people purchase their own pickleballs, etc. Jason answers that our dedicated pickleball courts are outdoors in parks and we treat them as park amenities. Residents of Wilmette can reserve pickleball court 2-days in advance for no fee. Indoor pickleball is a minor sliver of what we are doing in tennis – we have three indoor classes and a few mornings of drop-in play. The only expense are the pickleballs that get used indoors.

For platform tennis, we still have the lowest price for residents in the area. Commissioner Adrianopoli asks if there are additional opportunities for rental revenue. Jason explains that there are limitations to what we can do at the platform tennis facility due to conditions on the zoning from the Village such as we can't play music and the lights go out at 10pm on weekends. There are also a number of foundation events that take place at the facility during the season to raise money. President Lahey asks about opportunities to rent the space during the summer months, since it is an air conditioned space. Jason responds that we have not explored renting the space during the summer yet. President Lahey asks about how to control the increase in food cost. Jason explains that food expenses are a payment in addition to the membership. Food costs are a direct pass-through expense. The board asks for a follow-up explanation of food costs.

Commissioner Murdock asks about lesson revenue projection being 13% below budget on revenue, but the instructor expense is 7% higher. Jason says that is the deployment of pros at matches. The dollars that are paying the increase are located in memberships.

Fitness
Superintendent Merrill tells the board that Center Fitness Club is very stable, consistent business. Our users have been very understanding and tolerant of all the work that has been going on at the club.

Gymnastics
Superintendent Merrill introduces Sara Emory, who has been with the district for 11 years. Sara is the current Gymnastics Manager. Sara announces that we just had our rock climbing wall installed. Commissioner Goebel calls out the high school gymnastics

program that started in June which is a nice teen outlet.

Mallinckrodt
Superintendent Merrill introduces Lisa Sullivan who manages the Mallinckrodt facility and has been with the district for almost six years. We are cost-sensitive with these programs and Lisa worked to expand some of our Saturday programming. We promote the two big rooms at the facility as rental spaces. Vice President Frazier asks if we make any money on the trips offered. Lisa explains that the goal is to make money but they haven't been as popular this year. She does her best to break even and get all of the trips off the ground. For smaller groups we take our own bus. Commissioner Adrianopoli asks about marketing to other areas of high senior population. Lisa states that one of her goals is to increase sponsorship as well. Commissioner Clarke brings up the fact that camp came in under budget. Lisa explains that afternoon Safety Town camp ended up with only five (out of twenty) kids.

CFA
Superintendent Merrill introduces Laura Grunschel, Supervisor for Center for the Arts. Laura explains that there are several areas in arts that will require new equipment because it was damaged in the sprinkler incident. Commissioner Clarke asks about the children's programs that are under budget in 2025, but are projected to be higher in 2026. Katelynn Putkonen explains that it is important to understand that a lot of the CFA areas are operating with 50% less space currently, as well as some classes having been canceled due to the damage. Laura has created a program that can move around as construction takes place.

CRC Operations
Superintendent Merrill introduces Christine Vaughn, CRC Operations Supervisor.

Utilities
Superintendent Foy explains that she went back to the beginning of 2024 and got usage numbers. The price of the commodity and delivery went up this year. The budget was created with a 20% increase in Comed charges. The solar panels are not going to show a significant savings to us as a park district. We will be paying Onyx for the solar energy they are selling us because they bought these panels. The solar farm will start giving us energy credits in September 2026. Director Lindgren adds that we will see our peak demand lower, which will be savings that are hard to capture.

Green Team
Superintendent Merrill introduces Katelynn Putkonen, Recreation General Manager. Katelynn asks her team to introduce themselves: Andrew Puccetti, Rachel Schmidt (Preschool Supervisors); Kathy Chuckas (Sports Supervisor); Rosie Aliperta (School Age Supervisor); and Julie Freels (Gen Rec Supervisor).

Katelynn commends her team on collaborating with each other. She challenged her team to identify the community needs and altering our programs to meet those needs, instead of continuing to do the same thing over and over. Rebranding the before and after school

rec program was a huge effort across many departments that took a year to complete. We are now able to serve double the amount of families through that program. She goes on to explain changes made in many other areas. Vice President Frazier asks about increasing the number of children in preschool. Katelynn explains that we would love to increase numbers our preschool program but we need more space to do so. Commissioner Murdock asks about Early Childhood, relative to budget we were down 12% and next year we won't quite replace that. Katelynn explains that we have many employee children in our program but that we will be graduating a lot of them soon.

Commissioner Duffy thanks the recreation staff for making sure the park district has such a great reputation in town.

7.0 ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, Commissioner Duffy moves and Commissioner Goebel seconds a motion to adjourn the Committee of the Whole.

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

Minutes Approved on **January 12, 2026**.