



City of Palos Heights  
Recreation Committee Meeting  
Tuesday, February 8, 2022  
7:00 p.m.  
**MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Key called the regular meeting of the Recreation Committee to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Palos Heights City Hall, 7607 W. College Drive. In attendance were Chairman Key, Alderman Bylut, Alderman Clifford, Director of Parks and Recreation Matt Fairbanks, Director of Lake Katherine Gareth Blakesley, Superintendent of Facilities Joe Smith, Superintendent of Programming Lauren Koszola, and recording secretary Tayler Swiedals.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairman Key moved to approve the minutes of the January 11, 2022 meeting as written, seconded by Alderman Clifford. On a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENT – None**

**LAKE KATHERINE REPORT**

Director of Lake Katherine, Gareth Blakesley provided the Lake Katherine update:

- Lake Katherine held a Martin Luther King day of service where volunteers helped to clear invasive wood materials from the children forest.
- Botanical drawing and wine night was held with participants drawing and painting on pieces of reclaimed wood.
- Lake Katherine resumed joint meetings with the library and the Recreation Department to discuss upcoming programs and potential collaboration ideas.
- Fitness February month focuses on being active and staying healthy in nature with tips from programs and social media outlets.
- Lake Katherine is talking with the Chicago Christian biology teacher on the possibility of setting up a pollinator area on site.
- While the lake has been frozen, work on clearing and removing buckthorn from the island in the lake has taken place with the plan to plant new shrubs and trees in the spring.
- Lake Katherine is in the process of planning and updating signage around the lake.
- The youth education programs have been running well with many sessions being full.
- Staff have been participating in webinars and online trainings on diversity, inclusion, herpetology, and composting.
- Green Team meetings will resume tomorrow.
- Rental bookings are slightly ahead of 2019 numbers.

**PARKS & RECREATION REPORT**

Director of Parks and Recreation Matt Fairbanks, provided the Parks & Recreation update:

- **Cook County Vaccine Mandate Update-** The Recreation Department has been following the CCDPH vaccine card mandate since January 10<sup>th</sup>. Staff has asked patrons to present their vaccine card prior to using the facility. We do not maintain copies of the cards. Staff notes the vaccine status and updates our registration software eliminating the need for patrons to bring their card each visit. This procedure is coupled with a weekly update provided by staff given to City Administrator David Strohl, Alderman Key and Mayor Straz. The report includes current procedures of local south suburban Park and Recreation agencies; percentage of positive cases in Cook County; percentage of population with complete vaccination status in Cook County and Palos Heights; number of fitness center memberships cancelled or suspended; number of patrons refused entry because they did not have a vaccination card; and number of group fitness participants who cancelled their sessions due to the mandate. Director Fairbanks informed the committee that the department has seen an increase in fitness center memberships and group fitness registrations after the vaccine mandate was put in place.
- **Misty Meadows-** Staff was given the update the playground equipment will be delivered February 15<sup>th</sup>. This will be delivered directly to our contractor, George's Landscaping Inc. We have also received the signed copy of the contract, which, due to FedEx, was lost in the mail for a couple weeks.
- **CAPRA Update-** Staff continue to prepare for our virtual visit and self-evaluation review. We have been meeting twice a month to finish this project. Staff has received two online workshop invites for later this month, one for a virtual visit training for the host and the other for a visit team training. Our next scheduled staff meeting is Tuesday, February 15<sup>th</sup>.
- **2021 Annual Report-** 2021 was a rebound year for the Parks and Recreation Department. While we are not back to pre-Covid numbers in all areas, we have seen areas such as the pool, youth athletics, and summer camp have great years. We finished the year with \$244,818.43 in revenue and \$150,458.45 over our budgeted projected loss. Superintendent Lauren Koszola presented an update on youth athletics, summer camp, Little Learners preschool, Power Play before and after school programming, special events, and the farmer's market. Superintendent Joe Smith provided updates on the fitness center memberships, visits, and revenue, personal training, facility rentals, and the pool. Alderman Key commended the Parks and Recreation staff for their work at the department. Alderman Bylut commented on the success of the pool opening in 2021.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Motion to approve Intergovernmental Agreement with School District 128 for the use of rooms at Independence Middle School for the summer camp programs. There are no financial obligations attached to this agreement. This is the same agreement that was introduced to the committee in 2021.

Alderman Kay motioned to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement with School District 128 for use of rooms at Independence Middle School for the summer camp programs, seconded by Alderman Bylut. On a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously. – **AGENDA**

- b. Motion to approve the annual Certifications and Assurances for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) of the PACE Vehicle Program Agreement. This is the annual agreement for the PACE Bus vehicle agreement. Alderman Key motioned to approve the annual Certifications and Assurances for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) of the PACE Vehicle Program Agreement, seconded by Alderman Bylut. On a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously. – **AGENDA**

- c. Motion to approve \$43,699.50 for the second installment for the 2021-22 membership contribution to the South West Special Recreation Association (SWSRA). This is the bi-annual dues payment for being affiliated to SWSRA which provides services and programs to the SRA population. It also allows the city to levy taxes for special recreation purposes at facility and playground improvements inclusion and education. Alderman Key made a motion to approve \$43,699.50 for the second installment for the 2021-22 membership contribution to the South West Special Recreation Association (SWSRA), seconded by Alderman Bylut. On a voice note, the motion passed unanimously. – **AGENDA**
  
- d. Request approval to draft an ordinance to sell on i-Bid the “pontoon boat” as surplus equipment. The pontoon boat was previously used by Lake Katherine and has not been used over the last couple years. It is currently stored in the barn next to the Recreation Center and needs to be removed. Alderman Key motioned to approve the request to draft an ordinance to sell on i-Bid the “pontoon boat” as surplus equipment, seconded by Alderman Clifford. On a voice note, the motion passed unanimously. –**AGENDA**

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

- a. Motion to approve a new 5-year lease of new Fitness Center Equipment from NCL Government Capital and supplied by Direct Fitness Solutions. Total cost of the equipment is \$98,738.00, monthly lease cost of \$1,862.40. Staff received an updated quote that was a 5-year versus the 3-year lease as previously discussed. This has significantly changed the monthly cost and is recommended as the preferred fitness center contract. Alderman Key motioned to approve a new 5-year lease of new Fitness Center Equipment from NGL Government Capital and supplied by Direct Fitness Solutions in the amount of \$98,738.00 with a monthly lease cost of \$1,862.40, seconded by Alderman Bylut. On a voice note, the motion passed unanimously. -- **AGENDA**

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Chairman Key moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Alderman Clifford. All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Taylor Swiedals – Recording Secretary