

b.



City of Palos Heights
Recreation Advisory Board Meeting
Wednesday, February 23, 2022
12:00 p.m.
MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

The Recreation Advisory Board Meeting (via Zoom) was called to order at 12:03 pm. In attendance were Lisa Pesavento, Denise Hyker, Lynda Schiappa, Gayle Greenwald, Tim Cronin, Angie Pope, Paul Hunt, Bill Poore, Director of Parks and Recreation Matthew Fairbanks, and Recording Secretary Tayler Swiedals.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Gayle Greenwald made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 17, 2021 Recreation Advisory Board Meeting, seconded by Tim Cronin.

PUBLIC COMMENT

NONE.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Recreation Advisory Board Review Update: At the end of the December Recreation Committee meeting, there was a discussion regarding the procedures for RAB, how they are being followed, and the current role of the advisory board. This prompted some committee members to ask staff to research how other advisory boards operate within their municipalities and departments. Director Fairbanks and staff have met with Mayor Straz, Aldermen, and the City Administrator to begin discussions regarding the structure and focus of the RAB moving forward. Director Fairbanks noted that a few of the RAB members have met with Mayor Straz for similar discussions. Staff has been asked to create a plan to be reviewed with the Mayor, Aldermen and the City Administrator in a special meeting with the RAB and Recreation Committee included to have everyone on the same page with the goals for the committee and RAB moving forward.
- COVID/ CCPHD Mandates Update: Since January 10th, staff has followed the Cook County Department of Public Health vaccine mandate. We have asked patrons to present their fully vaccinated status prior to using the facility. We note the vaccine status in our registration software once the patron has shown proof of vaccination status, and we do not maintain copies of cards. This procedure is accompanied by a weekly update staff provides for Alderman Key, our City Administrator and Mayor Straz. This report includes current procedures for other local Parks and Recreation agencies, percentage of positive cases in Cook County, percentage of

people with complete vaccination status in Cook County and Palos Heights, number of fitness center memberships cancelled or suspended, number of patrons refused entry due to vaccination status, and the number of group fitness cancellations. At 6 weeks in, there have been about 15 people cancel their memberships, half of which had not used their membership within the last year. We have seen some increase in membership during this time. We are evaluating our plan with the mitigations being set to end in Illinois on the 28th of this month. We will most likely follow the suggestion to not require masks or proof of vaccination.

- **State Conference Update:** Staff attended the annual IPRA/IAPD state conference at the end of January. This gave staff an opportunity to attend workshops and network with peers that has not been available during the pandemic. The conference was different due to COVID restrictions, but staff was able to bring back great information for the Department to use moving forward. Director Fairbanks looks forward to continued education and networking opportunities for staff as time and mitigations allow.
- **Basketball Leagues Update:** The Youth Basketball League's first week of practices began the week of January 24th. There are currently 396 participants enrolled compared to 196 in 2019, and 392 in 2019. The league is divided by grade level; Kindergarten, 1st-2nd grades, 3rd-4th grades, and 5th-8th grades. The league will conclude on Saturday, March 26th. The Men's Basketball League began last Sunday, February 20th with 10 teams registered. This is compared to 12 teams in 2019. The league will run for seven weeks, and the last games will be at the end of April. Lisa Pesavento inquired whether our Department has any outreach for women or girls' basketball team participation. Director Fairbanks explained that the youth league is co-ed, and the department will put out a survey regarding a women's adult league.
- **Cal-Sag Benches Update:** Staff received an email from Steve Bechtel of the Friends of Cal-Sag Trail providing an update regarding the installation of the benches. This included an estimated cost of about \$275 and a timeline of early June for completion. Materials will be covered, but installation is the city's responsibility. Director Fairbanks has reached out to Public Works to schedule this. Friends of Cal-Sag Trail would like to a ribbon-cutting for the benches on National Trails Day, June 4th, with a kind of progressive/rolling celebration along the trail. Each bench will have a ribbon to be cut by the person who donated the bench. Gayle Greenwald explained that at a focus meeting it was discussed that Director Fairbanks will meet with Palos Park and Alsip to coordinate a day to pour cement for the benches. Ozinga is donating the cement and this would allow the company to pour the cement on one day. Denise Hyker asked how much each bench cost, and whether the information to donate is published anywhere. The cost to donate a bench is \$2,500.00, and it was suggested to promote this in our playbook.
- **Pool Landscape Update:** A Pool Landscaping plan was developed by Upland Design. The plan includes the removal of a number of dead trees around the perimeter of the pool as well as planting new plants and flowering landscape. Staff has begun to receive quotes for the project

which will begin in early spring and be completed prior to the pool opening. Lynda Schiappa asked that the plan be emailed to RAB members.

- Annual Review Update: Staff compiled an annual review that was presented to the Recreation Committee at the last meeting. While we are not back to pre-COVID numbers in all areas yet, there were areas such as the pool, youth athletics, and summer camp that saw great growth. The Department finished the year with \$244,818.43 in revenue and \$150,458.45 over the budgeted projected loss - \$57,724.00. An electronic version of the annual review will be emailed to RAB members to review. Lisa Pesavento suggested the Department begin tracking statistics pertaining to diversity in the programming offered. This can be done during the evaluation process at the end of each session.
- Misty Meadows Update: During December, staff continued to work with Kendall and Michael Schofield on some of the final design pieces of the Misty Meadows playground. The equipment was delivered to George's Landscaping on February 16th. The Department has received the signed copy of the contract. A planning meeting is currently being scheduled by JSD for mid-March and construction will begin in the spring weather permitting. The park has a timeline for completion at the end of summer. Lynda Schiappa asked that Director Fairbanks share the updates made to the design of the park. The updates regarding signage include a donation plaque on the bench swing donated by Kendall and Michael's foundation, adding a bio about Kendall at the entrance of the park, and adding handprints and a signature at the entrance. The contractors will take care of all of this at no extra cost. Director Fairbanks will send the updated plans to the RAB members as soon as he receives them.
- CAPRA Update: Staff has received confirmation for the virtual site visit scheduled for the week of June 13th. All information will need to be completed and uploaded to the NRPA website by the first week of April. The Department continues to move forward on completion of the required standards, and have been meeting twice a month to finish. Director Fairbanks has been selected again to be on a virtual site review team for Grand Prairie, Texas the week of May 16th. This will help our Department prepare for our review a month later. There are two online workshops later this month that staff has received invites for regarding virtual visit training for the host and visit team training. Our next scheduled staff meeting is Tuesday, February 15th. Lisa Pesavento asked what role the RAB and city staff will take during the accreditation process. Director Fairbanks explained that the RAB members and city staff can provide their expertise in certain matters to maintain our accreditation.

NEW BUSINESS

NONE.

OLD BUSINESS

- A. Parks and Recreation Design Standards Manual Update: This month, RAB discussed page 10 of the Park Design Standards which covers baseball and softball fields, soccer, volleyball, tennis courts, and fitness equipment. Staff suggested updating the pricing and cost ranges, as well as

confirming the current manufacturers and their stock of the products we currently use. For soccer, include a concrete pad or crushed stone if bleachers will be permanent. For volleyball, Director Fairbanks suggested reaching out to IRMA regarding signage to warn people about the bees in the sand. For tennis, it was suggested to add a sub-section regarding pickleball courts and the differences between the two sports. For fitness equipment, adding a sub-section for outdoor fitness equipment if we add an outdoor area down the road.

- B. Denise Hyker asked about the lighting for the PBO pony field and whether the new lighting is dark sky compliant per our standards. Director Fairbanks explained it is in line with our standards, and will be energy saving with LED bulbs. Denise Hyker asked what projects would use capital expenditures for the department. Director Fairbanks informed the board that capital expenditures would be going towards Misty Meadows, Orchard Park, and the pool landscaping plan. Denise Hyker suggested adding a contact number on the postcards sent out for the playbook for the residents. The department has created a mailing list for those residents who would like a physical copy of the playbook sent to them, and the contact information will be added to the postcards moving forward. Lynda Schiappa asked what the City has for the new residents to advertise the amenities we offer. Director Fairbanks will reach out to city hall about reinstating the welcome packet previously sent out to new residents. Denise asked what the "TCC" referred to on the bi-monthly report, and mentioned the decrease in population of Palos Heights by 500 people per the census report.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, Lynda Schiappa made a motion to adjourn at 1:12 pm, seconded by Tim Cronin. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 1:12 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tayler Swiedals, Recording Secretary