



City of Palos Heights
Recreation Committee Meeting
Tuesday, March 9, 2021
7:00 PM
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 McGovern, Alderman Clifford, Director of Parks and Recreation Matt Fairbanks, Director of Lake Katherine Gareth Blakesley, Superintendent of Facilities Joe Smith, IT Coordinator Chuck Hankus, and Recording Secretary Jessica Swiedals.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Key moved to approve the minutes of the February 9th, meeting as written, seconded by Alderman Bylut. On a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT - none

LAKE KATHERINE REPORT

Director Gareth Blakesley provided the Lake Katherine update:

- Staff participated in a site visit to a residence in Palos Heights to offer their input into pollinator gardening.
- Fencing has been replaced in and around the waterfall. Portions on the east side have been completed. New arbors are being installed during the spring as part of a Nicor grant.
- Invasive brush removal from waterfall and waterfall islands has been completed in preparation for new plantings this spring and early summer.
- Many of the staff attended the Wild Things Conference. This conference was held virtually over two weekends and was host to many different presentations and seminars related to natural resource management, science and education. The majority of these sessions were catered specifically to the Chicagoland natural area.
- Staff will be meeting with different volunteers in different gardens to assess their needs leading into spring and summer. Many of the gardens are in need of compost, new mulch and edging, especially after a snowy winter.
- Staff met with Eagle Scout members to discuss a potential project in the Children's Forest.
- Education programs are continuing to fill with new participants and families. Summer plans are being made with the expectation that the release of the summer guide will be mid-March.
- Family programs offered Winter Trees and Warm Snuggly Snow, Little Explorers offered Simply Swans and Out of This World. Homeschool offered restoring Lake Katherine and Out of This World. After School offered Outdoor Cooking which was very popular with the class being filled and a waitlist of four people. Another session was opened that filled and has a waitlist of two people.
- Rentals are beginning to book and there were three rentals reserved for the Clubhouse over the past two weeks. The events were two trainings and a wedding. Capacity is limited to fifty people or fifty percent capacity in Lake Katherine Facilities.
- Brews and Birdhouses will be held Thursday and this event is filled.

PARKS & RECREATION REPORT

Director of Parks and Recreation Matt Fairbanks and Superintendent Joe Smith provided the Parks & Recreation update as well as a pool update:

- **Recreation Report-**The ribbon cutting ceremony for Palmer Park will be on March 24th at 3 pm. Invites have been emailed to Channel 4, The Regional Newspaper, The Recreation Advisory Board, The Recreation Committee, all of the Alderman, The Mayor and residents of the community. Upland Design has donated \$400 that will be used to purchase giveaways such as sunglasses and hand sanitizer for the public and there will be coffee mugs with hot chocolate kits for the VIPs in attendance. Attendees will be encouraged to social distance while at the ceremony. The Mayor and Alderman Key have agreed to speak at the ceremony and it should last around thirty minutes. Staff have been working with Integral and Upland to get on the schedule to complete the final landscaping needed for the park.
- **Pool Report-** Opening day for the pool will be June 5th and the season will run through September 7th. Guidelines have changed very little with only the removal of temperature checks since last pool season, so as of right now the pool season will look similar to last season. Maximum capacity will be fifty people per two hour session. There will be three two hour sessions per day with daily rates being charged. Pool passes will not be sold as of right now due to limited capacity. Lap swim, team swim, open swim and the baby pool will all be available this season as well as swim lessons. Staff are researching if there is a way to have the water slides open this season. The fees have no change for open swim however team swim rates will now be higher. Staff are hopeful new guidance will come out and capacity can be higher. Eric met virtually with students at Stagg High School to promote summer jobs at the pool.
- **July 3rd and 4th Independence Day Celebration-** Staff have been meeting since January to discuss plans for July 3rd and 4th. July 3rd there will be a concert in the gazebo, food vendors and a fireworks show. The fireworks that will be used this year are high flying fireworks. This can help spread out crowds and promote a more socially distanced atmosphere. The July 3rd concert and firework show will be from 6:30-9:30 pm. The July 4th parade will be held at 12 pm. Attendees will be encouraged to social distance and wear masks. The park will be gated and there will be staff and CSOs at the entrance supervising and checking bags for alcohol. Alcohol will be sold by the vendors and will not be allowed to be brought in.
- **CAPRA-** Last month staff met and a plan was created to break up standards into smaller, easier to manage sections. Staff have been reminded to verify each standard being completed as to not create duplicates. Staff will now be meeting twice a month and are optimistic that this will be completed on time. Superintendent of Facilities Joe Smith will be taking on a larger role and bringing his knowledge of CAPRA to support staff throughout the remainder of this process.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Motion to hire Sertoma Centre Inc. in the amount of \$5,950 for general cleaning of four washrooms in Community Park from April 1st – October 31st.

Alderman Key motioned to approve the hiring of Sertoma Centre Inc. for washroom cleaning from April 1 – October 31st in the amount of \$5,950, Alderman Clifford seconded the motion. On a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously. - **AGENDA**

2. Motion to approve the memorandum of understanding between the Parks and Recreation Department and Experimental Station. The MOU is to ensure compliance with USDA FSN rules for the purpose of participating in a GusNIP grant project.

Alderman Key motioned to approve the memorandum of understanding between the Parks and Recreation Department and Experimental Station to ensure compliance with USDA FNS rules for participating in a GusNIP grant project, Alderman Clifford seconded the motion. On a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously. - **AGENDA**

3. Motion to approve the memorandum of understanding between the Parks and Recreation Department and School District 128. The Recreation Department will be utilizing areas of Independence Junior High School for the summer camp program. There will be no financial obligation attached to this agreement.

Alderman Key motioned to approve the memorandum of understanding between the Parks and Recreation department and School District 128 for use of areas of Independence Junior High School for the summer camp program with no financial obligation, Alderman Clifford seconded the motion. On a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously. – **AGENDA**

Discussion- There was discussion between the Aldermen about the act of tossing candy at the July 4th parade. Tossing candy is a beloved part of parades and families look forward to this however, with COVID-19 there may not be a safe way for this to occur. Recreation staff agreed to revisit this at a later time in hopes there will be more guidance provided.

OLD BUSINESS – none.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Swiedals – Recording Secretary