



City of Palos Heights
Recreation Committee
Tuesday, March 14th, 2023
Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Key called the regular meeting of the Recreation Committee to order at 7:15 p.m. at the Palos Heights City Hall, 7607 W. College Drive. In attendance were Chairman Key, Alderman Bylut, Director of Parks and Recreation Matt Fairbanks, Lake Katherine Director Gaerth Blakesley and recording secretary Morgan Pukula.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Key moved to approve the minutes of the February 14th, 2023 meeting, seconded by Alderman Bylut. On a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

LAKE KATHERINE REPORT

Lake Katherine Director Gaerth Blaksley, provided the Lake Katherine update:

- ANCA peer review included setting up focus group meetings and facilitating the oral presentation on Saturday. A written report will follow within the month. For those who may have not seen the presentation, it was recorded and can also be sent a PDF PowerPoint of the slides.
- We met with Sag Moraine Native plant community and discussed a way to collaborate on native plant community restoration and education.
- We gave our monthly senior center presentation at the Palos Senior Center; this presentation was on bird houses.
- We visited Chicago Agricultural High School to train their students on how to start native seeds for personal use and for us to plant.
- Staff attended CPR and First-Aid training
- Staff attended the Wild Things conference in Rosemont, which provided workshops and sessions from regional and national experts on conservation, fauna and flora of the prairie state.
- Staff attended in house front line training including interpretive education updates.
- Park Lawn Choice Group came out to volunteer on site.
- We hosted an adult evening class on Macramé, which was at capacity.
- Our Green Team meeting was hosted to discuss items for Earth month including the Arbor Day tree planting and the city cleanup day. All of which will be in the next green notes.
- We were invited on two Channel 4 presentations. One was our Green Team initiatives and the other was on the history and future of Lake Katherine.
- Our evening night hike was at capacity.
- Our Nature Center prep for the ANCA visit included interpretive sign installations.
- St. Patrick's waterfall dying will be at 10 a.m. and noon on Friday.
- Scouts had two groups come out for snowshoeing and about habitats.
- There was one school group that came for a field trip to learn about our different positions here at Lake Katherine.
- March 2nd, our educator visited Red Oak Nature Center to shadow one of their tree

tapping programs and see how it works/what information they could provide for us to replicate the program after.

- **Programs:**
Junior Explorers offered a Healthy Hearts program learning about the function of a heart and the various rates across animal groups and their own. There were 3 sessions offered with one full and the rest half full. A tree tapping program was also offered where students tapped Maple trees, learned about Maple tapping and tried maple syrup. There were 4 sessions offered with all of the full and some waitlisted.
Little Explorers offered Heads Up! (Skulls) which was all about animal skulls, teeth, and diet. One session ran and it was half full.
Nature Tots offered Lights & Shadows which was all about light sources and shadow play. Two sessions were offered and both were at capacity.

PARKS & RECREATION REPORT

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

- **Recreation Program Updates:** The first session of the all-star sports class ended on Valentine's Day. There were a total of 33 participants. The second session began on February 21st and we have 24 participants registered. The adult men's league began on February 19th and registration ended with 13 teams, compared to the last year with only 10 teams. This league runs for 7 weeks and the top 6 teams will go into playoffs at the end of the season.
We had a kids' night out special event on February 17th where we hosted 16 participants. They were able to enjoy a movie and the theme was a glow in the dark party with pizza, juice and games.
We hosted our first of two trivia nights this year, on February 24th. We had 74 participants register for this event. It was hosted by a contractual group who leads the games for us. Our prizes that were given out to winners were donated by local businesses here in town, including: Aurelio's, Joe's, Jullianni's, Pop's and more.
Our spring events are coming up soon, including our Easter events, St. Patrick's Day events and then straight into summer.
- **Pool Decking and Pavilion Roof:** The current roof on the gazebo located outside the pool is well past it's useful life. The current roof has several signs of wood rot due to being outside and facing all weather types should/will be replaced. Working with Public Works, we were able to obtain 3 price quotes to have the roof replaced. We are looking to match the aluminum, green roof that is on the pool bath house and all the other structures that are in the community park. The roof will follow our design standards as well for all parks. It was suggested that we complete this project at the same time as the pool deck. Based on the three quotes we received, Stan's Roofing gave us a proposal for \$11,820.00 which was a better than what was originally suggested. We are saving roughly \$15,000 by having Public Works do the labor for the project.
- **Orchard Park Update:** On March 2nd, Matt met with Aurimas from Morris Engineering, Sarah from JSD Landscaping and Adam from Public Works to discuss the Orchard Park project. The main topic of discussion was the MWRD and potential permitting that we may have to complete. Per MWRD, they indicate that impervious area will increase by .59 acres as a result of the new pavement with the path, spray pad and other features we included. When we replace grass with pavement, it is considered development so projects greater than .5 an acre of development require WMO permit. We will follow through for a permit for the pavement development. As pervious and past less than 14 feet in width may be considered open space development, so that does not count against us. The open space development is not subject to the run-off, volume control or the detention requirements of

their rules. The MWRD has a formula for whether or not we need water retention. If we do or do not require to have detention, they need to know if we own the land surrounding it as well. Overall we have a lot of impervious area that will force us to have some sort of a water detention. We are waiting for the final decision from the MWRD but we collectively decided we will have to fit this detention in for the final project. We are contemplating several pervious options around the splash pad to follow the MWRD standards.

- **OSLAD Pool Phase 1:** On March 1st, we received the notification that we were awarded the 2023 OSLAD grant in the amount of \$600,000. This was for the 1st phase of the pool project. The primary focus of this matching grant was for the updating of the bath house, showers, changing rooms, ticket office, as well as the second water slide and shading around the pool. We're in the early stages because we just received the announcement, but we are able to move forward with our projects in the upcoming year using this grant.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Key motioned to approve the hire of Stan's Roofing and Siding for materials and installation of steel roofing on the pool deck pavilion in the amount of \$11,820.00, seconded by Alderman Bylut. On a voice note, the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Key motioned to hire Sertome Centre INC. in the amount of \$900.00 monthly for general cleaning of four washrooms in the Community Park from April 1 – October 31, 2023, seconded by Alderman Bylut. On a voice note, the motion passed unanimously. –

AGENDA

Chairman Key motioned approve Palos Baseball Organization request for extended use of lighting on Pony Field and North Field on June 3 and 23, 2023 until 11:00 p.m. and rain dates of June 27-29, 2023 until 11:00 p.m., seconded by Alderman Bylut. On a voice note, the motion passed unanimously. – **AGENDA**

OLD BUSINESS

Employee Recreation Benefits Survey Review – We sent out a six question survey and the survey was recreational based benefits. Of the 200 employees the survey was sent to, 90 staff members responded.

Alderman Bylut expressed concern about the answers that were made selectable. He questioned why there was not a "No" option or a negative response option. Alderman Bylut asked for a breakdown of the departments that responded to the survey, but due to it being anonymous, there was not.

The City Administrator David Strohl stated from the ones that did not respond or if some questions were not answered, you can infer the answer is no. If specific options were stated, then we can infer the other options are not going to be used by employees. David asked the concern of the committee and what can be changed in order for an agreement. Alderman Bylut was concerned about how many people would actually use these benefits and that we would be giving them free of charge. Matt stated these benefits were originated by the rec center employees in order to retain and recruit new employees using these benefits. They expanded it out to the entire city as well, so it would not be exclusive to just rec employees.

Alderman Bylut requested more information from surroundings recreation centers and park districts to compare the benefits other employees receive. Conversations included changing the wording for family members and immediate family, along with side by side comparisons from other surrounding cities.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Morgan Pukula, Recording Secretary