



City of Palos Heights
Recreation Committee
Tuesday, April 11th, 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, Alderman Clifford, Director of Parks and Recreation Matt Fairbanks, Lake Katherine Director Gareth Blakesley and recording secretary Morgan Pukula.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Key moved to approve the minutes of the March 13th, 2023 meeting, seconded by Alderman Bylut. On a voice note, the motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

LAKE KATHERINE REPORT

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

- Prescribed burns: prairie, hillside along eastern trails, south shore of the lake. Multiple locations within the children's forest, with this season being approximately 6 acres burnt.
- Our 2022 Lake Katherine annual report was completed and will be sent to the city.
- Our grow with Lake Katherine fundraiser will be held Friday evening and we expect over 80 attendees and over \$26,000 pledged.
- Our monthly senior home presentation was on terrariums.
- We plan to assist Marist High School with their pollinator garden as they plan for a garden install.
- Our green team cleanup day set up, had 11 Palos Heights residents signed up for tree planting.
- Our Saint Patrick's Day waterfall dying was at 10:00 am and noon and had a respectful amount of attendees.
- Our birdhouses and brews evening event was at capacity and attendees built bird houses.
- We assisted Chicago agricultural high school with their seed planting day.
- ANCA final report: some key points were mission draft, revenue diversification and developing Lake Katherine's capacity first.
- Staff attended the Trinity Christian college SALT open house.
- We hosted a Trinity and Saint Xavier volunteer work day where they removed buckthorn.
- Staff attended Lyman woods nature preschool to learn how elements within their school could be brought to Lake Katherine. Thoughts about creating a nature preschool will be in the works.
- Education program: 6 field trips, three scout groups, little explorers had one session, nature tots had three sections, junior explorers with sessions on Earth Day, where does the water go, spring animals and rocks.
- We held our first spring nature camp which was at capacity.

PARKS & RECREATION REPORT

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

- Recreation Program Updates:** Our Little Learner's preschool on March 8th hosted an art show at the Rec Center. The students displayed their art for families and friends. Ms. Angie's Early childhood program classes started March 1st, with three of the four classes running and a total of 41 participants. The messy art class started on March 20th with 6 participants and the class concluded April 10th.

The youth and teens program update: On March 6th we held our guitar class with 10 people enrolled; this class runs until April 24th. Another program we held is called Snapology, which is a Lego class that had six people enrolled and runs until April 27th.

Our youth athletic program: The second session of the All-Star sports ended March 21st with 37 participants enrolled. Today, the third session began and have 35 people currently signed up. The Sports Kids Inc, which is another contractual program we have, ran a soccer t-ball and basketball spring break camp during the week of March 27th-31st. We had 45 participants enrolled within the 3 camps. This week began spring classes of basketball, flag football, tennis, track & field, archery and golf. The Rec Department also co-opted for a youth fencing program with Palos Park, Palos Hills and Worth Park District. The second session began March 1st and ended March 29th with 5 participating Palos Heights residents. Two weekends ago, we hosted two egg hunts and a pancake breakfast. On Friday night, we started the events with a sensory friendly egg hunt. 25 participants hunted for eggs inside the Rec Center with monitored sounds, lights, etc. The following Saturday morning, we had our Eggapalooza hunt with two different sections. One was for the infants to 4 years old and the next was 5 year olds to 12 year olds. There was a total of 9,000 eggs throughout Meyer's Park with about 500 participants. Following the egg hunt was pancakes with Peter Rabbit, all catered by Royalberry. The event was sold out with 120 participants. Families were able to take pictures with the bunny and participate in Easter crafts and a dance party.

Farmer's Market: We are set to begin the farmers market May 17th and it will run until October 11th. Currently we have 33 vendors signed up with staff working to secure more. The playbook for the summer is available online as of Monday. Residents can register for summer camps and pool passes, etc and the rest of the community/non-residents can start registering April 17th.
- Powerplay Grant:** Lauren applied and received the Illinois Association of Park District Powerplay beyond school grant for our after school program. The program focuses on modeling health, nutrition and fitness for kids ages K-12. 30 agencies throughout the state were awarded a \$1,000 grant, which we were grateful to receive.
- SWSRA:** At the March board meeting the SWSRA staff provided us with an update that the budgets were significantly decreased due to the reduced EAVs from the member districts. It was suggested that all of the members continue to contribute the same amounts with a special assessment from the previous year so that the services and operations are not affected. We budgeted the same amount as last year, so there is no additional cost. Based on the levy that the association utilizes, the contribution has been a consistent 2% since 1981, so the proposal is to eventually change the contribution. As an agency we can contribute up to 4% through the levy and we asked that they update us by June.
- Orchard Park Update:** On March 24th, we received an update from JSD regarding the MWRD permits and water detention requirements. It was determined that Orchard Park does not need any additional water detention requirements and a permit will not be required. However, MWRD found an issue with the city property that the rec center sits on and they found us to be in violation. Aurimas and Adam were very confident that we did not need permits at the time and water detention was not required. Aurimas has been in contact with MWRD and we are waiting for a response. In the meantime, JSD is going to hold off on work while we hear for a response from MWRD.

- **RAB Member:** The mayor will appoint Craig Moore for the open position in RAB. He will be replacing Tim Cronin. Next year there will be two open positions.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Key motioned to approve the agreement between the Parks and Recreation Department and Experimental Station for participation in the Link Up Illinois Link Match Grant Program, seconded by Alderman Bylut. On a voice note, the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman 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 note, the motion passed unanimously. – **AGENDA**

Chairman Key motioned approve facility fee waiver request from Girl Scouts, Palos Troop 56555 for use of the Orchard Room on Friday, May 19, 2023 from 5:00 – 8:00 pm for a service unit event titled Mom & Me movie night.

Discussion was had about a precedent of 50% for all use by charitable organizations in the Orchard Room. Waivers for all charitable groups will be given at a 50% precedent and every request will not have to be approved by the Recreation committee.

OLD BUSINESS

Alderman Bylut was concerned on the amount of information from surroundings recreation centers and park districts that was previously requested.

The pilot program was discussed and would only include full recreational benefits for full time employees until December 31st, 2023. This benefit would not be voted on because it is a policy and more information was requested.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Morgan Pukula, Recording Secretary