



City of Palos Heights
Recreation Committee Meeting
Tuesday, June 8, 2021
7:00 p.m.
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 Begley, Alderman Clifford, Director of Parks and Recreation Matt Fairbanks, Director of Lake Katherine Gareth Blakesley, and Recording Secretary Lauren Koszola.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Key moved to approve the minutes of the May 11, 2021 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:

- The nature center is open from 10am to 3pm Monday through Saturday, and Sundays 10am to 1pm, these hours will be expanded as the summer progresses, Gareth was happy to welcome the first visitor to the nature center in over a year. We took the opportunity to redo the nature center with wildlife murals, done by staff and volunteers. Also an opportunity to pair things down a bit and make it more streamlined and more on mission. We are still requiring the public to wear mask when they enter the nature center as we are an education institution with children younger than the vaccination age.
- Facility rentals will be at full capacity starting Friday, we are asking our clients to ask their guest about vaccinations, but leaving it to them.
- Native plant sale was on Saturday with about half the plants sold. We are having the remainder available in the nature center, where we are putting together pollinator kits. So people can jump start their pollinator garden.
- Staff hosted a volunteer BBQ June 9th 2021 for all those who volunteered throughout the pandemic as a bit of thank you.
- First Canoe kayak tour was on the May 26th, next one is on June 21st and will be close to sunset on the solstice.
- Staff conducted a pollinator garden planting at Nicor new Glenwood facility, the plan was designed and managed by staff.
- Completed tree and shrub dedication spring plantings, plantings will resume again in fall
- Piloted online registration for a variety of programs including canoe rentals using Civic Rec

PARKS & RECREATION REPORT

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

- **Mask Update-** Director Fairbanks spoke with both Mayor Straz and Alderman Key and they both agreed to move forward with relaxing the mask requirements per updated DCEO information, CDC guidelines and the Governor's anticipated move to Phase 5 on this Friday, June 11th. Signage was posted at the Recreation Center and at the Pool.
- **Pool-** On Monday, May 24th, the Recreation Department began selling season pool passes. Pool pass information was on social media, City and Recreation Department marquees, websites, and emails were sent out. Pool pass fees remained the same from the 2019 pool season with the exception of not offering the early bird purchase rate. Pool Pass sales as of June 7th were just under \$40,000. Reservation opened for pass holders and Palos Heights Residents on June 1 at 8:00am. The opening weekend had 375 people per day. Staffing at the pool is good even with the national shortage of part time staff. The pool is still looking to hire 3-4 more staff. Staff that were hired are willing to step in and work as much as they can.
- **Misty Meadows-**A Community Meeting was held Wednesday, June 2 at 6:00 p.m. at the Misty Meadows site. 28 participants were in attendance. The meeting began with a brief history on the project and then updated the audience as to where the City is at in the process. Afterwards, Michael Schofield spoke about Kendall and his involvement with the project as well as their Family Foundation. Lori and Sarah from JSD discussed the two draft concepts that were developed and answered questions on playground equipment and accessories for the park. The audience was allowed to make comments and ask various questions. They then did a vote on their favorite concepts and pieces that were presented. The sport themed park was the preferred concept presented for the vote that was onsite. It was asked that an online survey be posted on the Parks and Recreation website. The survey is up for community members to take and will be up until June 14. Once the information is back from the survey Director Fairbanks will work with JSD, Kendall and Michael, RAB and the Recreation Committee to narrow down what the park design will be.
- **Book Buddy Bench-** Kristin Restivo has spoken to Natalie's family, and they are very supportive of the project. Kristin had told Natalie's family that a location for the bench is still being worked on and it will be located near the north-west corner of Meyers Park. Kristin also just received the rendering of the bench. Kristin was in contact with Jesse from the Palos Heights Library and stated the library will donate the Children's Library Box. The Library Box will be wood and then staff are going to have the preschool kids paint it with colorful handprints.
- **CAPRA-** Staff continues to work on completing their assigned standards. To date staff have 107 of 154 total standards completed or near completion. Of these 154 standards, 36 are considered fundamental and must be completed. Staff currently have 22 of these 36 completed or near completion. Director Fairbanks spoke to Alderman Begley and brought her up to speed with the work the department has done. She is very pleased to know that the department is striving for a national accreditation standards. She also stated she is willing to help the department in any areas.

Discussion- Municipal Code 34.50 was discussed among the committee per Alderman Begley's request.

NEW BUSINESS-None

OLD BUSINESS-

- a. **Bike Rack Update-**Aldermen Begley's suggested to identify a good location closer to Harlem Ave to place a bike rack or additional bike racks at the municipal lot where the farmer's market is located. It

was going to be address in Building & Grounds committee meeting. The topic was discussed and there were no good options for the placement of racks along Harlem Ave. This will continue to be addressed via Building and Grounds with Adam.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Koszola – Recording Secretary