



City of Palos Heights  
Recreation Committee Meeting  
Tuesday, June 9th, 2020  
1:00 PM  
**MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Key called the regular meeting of the Recreation Committee to order at 1:00 p.m. via virtual meeting. In attendance were Chairman Key, Alderman Bylut, Alderman Clifford, Recreation Director Matt Fairbanks, Lake Katherine Operations Director Gareth Blakesley, Superintendent of Recreation Lauren Koszola, Superintendent of Facilities Joe Smith, Chuck Hankus, and Recording Secretary Jessica Swiedals.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairman Key moved to approve the minutes of the March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020 meeting as written, seconded by Alderman Bylut. On a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** - none

**LAKE KATHERINE REPORT**

Lake Katherine Operations Director, Gareth Blakesley provided the update:

- Education programs commenced today with clients helping plant grant funded native plants in a new small garden in the children's forest. Programs are on a per family basis. Classes began filling up as soon as they were offered.
- Extended canoe/kayaking hours started this week including Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays.
- Phased opening following the state of Illinois restore plan.
- Two new grant funded custom arbors went in the waterfall area, these areas will be more desirable for wedding bookings.
- Rental bookings for later this year and for next year are being taken for weddings and facilities.
- Native plant sale was on Saturday and there were over 30 orders with additional people buying items this week.
- There have been a variety of revamped programs that are being reconfigured and should be advertised by the end of the week. These programs are the family camp out, evening canoe/kayak tour, four fishing events (one being more of a fundraiser), an evening walk and a campfire. Currently other programs are being re-evaluated.
- COVID-19 protocols include daily staff temperature screening, sanitation upon entry and exit, allocated bathrooms for staff, screens, and updated protocols for canoe and kayak education programs.
- The waterfall has been turned back on. The waterfall was turned off to prevent people from congregating, especially during graduation period.
- The volunteer program has resumed.

**PARKS & RECREATION REPORT**

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

- **COVID-19 Updates**-The Recreation Center remains closed to the public until Phase 4. We have been allowed to offer one on one personal training sessions which began on June 8<sup>th</sup>. Updates to the Recreation Center include signage, social distancing, hand-washing, and wearing masks. Social distance markers have been placed at the front desk, drinking fountains are blocked from use other than to fill bottles, additional hand sanitizers are available throughout the building, foot handles have

been installed on frequently used entrances, caution tape has been added in front of staff's offices and seating throughout the Recreation Center has been removed to avoid groups congregating while they are in the facility. Regarding operations; staff is required to enter and exit the south parking lot, once staff has entered the building they are required to take their temperatures and complete a brief health survey to determine if they may proceed to their shift for the day. Staff must wear a mask while in the building unless they are in their office. Social distancing must be practiced at all times in the Recreation Center, common areas and breakrooms are not allowed for meetings or socializing at this time. Staff lunches must be kept on their own shelf in the refrigerator only and the microwave will need to be cleaned before and after each use. Multipurpose cleaner will be available throughout the facility for commonly used items such as copiers, postage machine, hole puncher, laminators ect. Restrooms will be cleaned two to three times per day and staff are required to clean their desks and personal space once per day. The fitness center equipment has been spaced out approximately 10 ft apart and every other cardio machine will be taped off and rotated in use. Tough to clean equipment has been removed from the fitness center. Plexiglass has been added to the desk, a hand washing station has been added next to the water fountain, the walking track will remain closed due to social distancing. A reservation system is being developed for the fitness center members when we reopen.

The Farmer's Market will be opening July 17<sup>th</sup>. Staff has been in close communication with the Cook County Health Department and have been following their guidelines in planning the market this year. These guidelines include information for staff/volunteers, the vendors and the patrons. The market will have a new funneled entrance and exit off 71<sup>st</sup> Court (east of the Municipal Lot). There are guidelines available online as well as onsite. Vendors will be spaced accordingly and will minimize their contact with the customers and their products. Some vendors will offer a pre-purchase option to minimize congregating within the area. There will be fourteen vendors at the market this year.

Summer camp has canceled the first session and is scheduled to begin operations for the second and third sessions July 6<sup>th</sup> – August 14<sup>th</sup>. Marketing for this program went out in May. Summer camp modifications will include no kidde camp, no teen camp and no CIT program. Camp groups will consist of two counselors and eight campers. Campers will stay with their group each day they attend, there will be no mixing of campers or staff and campers from the same household will be grouped together. Thirty feet of distancing will be maintained between groups. Camper groups will range in ages from five to fourteen year olds. When indoors, camp groups will have a designated room or space. All field trips and pool trips have been canceled and the activities have been set up for six feet social distancing. To minimize contact during drop off/pick up, parents will remain in their vehicle and staff will do curbside sign in and out. Each group will be assigned a designated drop off/pick up time. These times will be the same all summer. Masks for staff and campers will be required when indoors. Campers will be required to bring a mask daily. Hand sanitizer stations are available throughout the Recreation Center.

Summer concerts and movies have been canceled through the end of July. IDPH and DCEO guidelines for Phase 3 prohibit us from providing these special events due to group sizes and social distancing. We are hopeful that the Phase 4 guidelines will offer us more flexibility to potentially offer these events in August. We are researching the possibility of doing a drive in movie and virtual concerts. However these events have received mixed reviews from other agencies.

The pool season is suspended until Phase 4 guidance can be obtained from IDPH. Once received, we will further evaluate the situation to determine if we can safely operate for any portion of the season. We have provided refunds to those patrons who purchased a pool pass. If it is determined that at a later date we can safely operate, we will communicate the next steps in doing so to the residents.

Staff has dealt with challenges over the last two weeks with people destroying and disposing of the fencing that has been placed around the parks. Under the Governor's orders, IDPH and DCEO playgrounds are not to open. Per the guidance in the Restore Illinois plan the soonest we can open the playgrounds in Phase 4. The earliest this will occur could be June 29<sup>th</sup> based on the virus numbers.

Staff has been planning a "While you Were Gone" event. This will take the place of the missed special events. We are projecting a three day event in early October pending state guidelines. This event will include movies, concerts, food, games and fireworks. We will also invite local restaurants to set up a booth during the event to recoup revenue lost during the quarantine.

- **Palmer Park Update-** The pre-construction meeting for the Palmer Park redevelopment project was held Monday May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020. City staff, engineer, Upland Design and Integral Construction were on the Zoom meeting. Integral Construction registered with the city and is in the process of registering all the sub-contractors to work in Palos Heights as well. Integral contacted JULIE to stake out the site, which was completed last week. Staff has also placed signage indicating that work at Palmer Park would begin the week of June 8<sup>th</sup>, as well as signage that the tennis and pickleball courts at Palmer will be closed during construction. Two alternative courts were created at Passerelli Park with the approval of the school district. There are also courts that are available at Community Park. The Palmer Park Redevelopment Project will begin with temporary fencing being installed this week.
- **CAPRA-** Matt was contacted in March by CAPRA informing me there was an opportunity to participate in a visit at the end of March in Coppell Texas. With the numerous developments with COVID-19 this onsite visit was changed to a virtual visit. A few days after that when the stay at home order was mandated, this visit was postponed until August as a virtual visit. This caused our staff to reevaluate our ability to successfully complete our self-assessment by the end of the calendar year. With the constant ongoing changes and CAPRA allowing us to postpone with no penalty until 2022, we decided to take advantage of this generous offer not knowing where our time, resources and budget will be. On May 4<sup>th</sup> NRPA and the CAPRA team approved our extension of our site visit.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

1. Motion to approve the agreement with Kids Around the World, Inc. to donate old playground equipment from Palmer Park.

Alderman Key motioned to approve the agreement with kids Around the World, Inc. to donate old playground equipment from Palmer Park. On a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

2. Motion to approve the Recreation Center's updated hours of operation for reopening in Phase 4 of the Restore Illinois plan.

Alderman Key motioned to approve the Recreation Center's updated hours based on Phase 4 of the restore Illinois plan. On a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

3. Motion to approve the reactivation of fitness membership charges on August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020 pending Phase 4 of Restore Illinois plan has occurred.

Alderman Key motioned to approve the reactivation of fitness membership charges pending Phase 4 of Restore Illinois plan occurs. On a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**OLD BUSINESS** – Dog park locations. There were a few locations discussed for a dog park. The area with the first hole of the disc golf course, the soccer field area at Crawford Park, and there were discussions about a possible area near Lake Katherine.

**ALDERMAN COMMENTS**

- Alderman Key inquired about Orchard Park. Currently the plans for Orchard Park have been put on hold due to COVID-19. The Alderman expressed that the public has interest in a naming ceremony and possibly signage for the new park.
- Alderman Clifford asked if the meeting for the Zoning Board of Appeals is being planned. Joe Smith provided information that the meeting will be held in the gym due to social distancing regulations.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Jessica Swiedals  
Recording Secretary