



City of Palos Heights
Recreation Committee
Tuesday, June 14, 2022
Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Key called the regular meeting of the Recreation Committee to order at 7:05 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 Tayler Swiedals.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Key moved to approve the minutes of the May 10, 2022 meeting as written, seconded by Alderman Begley. On a voice note, the motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

LAKE KATHERINE REPORT

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

- Kayak season started May 23rd with Sunday openings and Tuesday and Thursday evening openings.
- Planting season has finished.
- The Bugs and Bats night hike had 24 attendees looking for bats and bugs using night lights and bat detectors.
- Lake Katherine will hold their first archery class this weekend and registration is full.
- River clean-up day was held in May with 38 volunteers coming out to clear brush and trash along Harlem Ave.
- A migratory bird walk was held coinciding with migratory bird day.
- The first fishing day was held in May with one a month throughout the season.
- The volunteer base has doubled this year.
- Classes at the senior center have begun with the first class on bird watching.
- South West Special Education, Cummins, and Exelon came out for work days with volunteers cleaning up and planting around Lake Katherine.
- Camps will start next week, and scout programs have expanded this year with participants doing activities to earn their badges from the Scouts.

PARKS & RECREATION REPORT

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

- **Misty Meadows Update:** George's Landscape continues to move forward with the project. The weather has caused delays in pouring the concrete, but they are hoping to pour this Wednesday and Thursday. The playground equipment, swing set, and drainage have been installed. There was a change order to remove decorative fencing between the Coyne property and the park. The Coyne family preferred to fill in more landscaping instead of the fencing. The change order eliminated the cost of maintenance for the fencing. The fencing was preordered and can be used in other parks. Kendall Coyne and Michael Schofield personally donated 5% of the total cost of the park, and the Foundation bought the swing bench for the park.
- **Community Events Manager Update:** The position was filled by Nikki Gotsch. Nikki most recently worked for Lockport Township Park District. She started as the part time marketing and public relations assistant, moving into the full time Recreation Supervisor, and, most recently, the Facilities Manager. She has experience with sponsorships and marketing. Nikki has been involved in the South Suburban Parks and Recreation Association and is familiar with our Department's staff. She is also a resident of Palos Heights. Nikki will start on June 27th, giving her the opportunity to jump right in to the events of our Best Week Ever leading up to our July 3rd celebration.
- **Pool Update:** The pool opened on Saturday June 4th for its 50th season. The first week was slower due to the cooler weather with only 2 full days open. Staff passed out reusable shopping bags with the 50th anniversary logo to commemorate opening day. Pool pass revenue is just under \$80,000.00. Swim Lessons began on June 11th with a total of 280 people registered with just over \$17,000.00 in revenue.
- **July Special Events:** The July 3rd committee has been preparing for the past 6 months for the event. This year, there will be 5 local food vendors, the Kiwanis tent selling beer, carnival games, a dj, the live band, and the fireworks show to end the night. The food vendors include: Bojo's, Aurelio's, Rainbow Cone, Taco Burrito King, and Tropical Sno. The inflatables will be back this year with an event in the morning from 10 am-1 pm. Wristbands are currently on sale at the Rec Center for residents to pre-register. Non-residents will be able to purchase wristbands at the event. The 4th of July parade currently has 38 entries with the Palos Pool being the grand marshal. Our mascot, Waddles, will be in the parade with staff handing out commemorative beach balls. The sensory friendly portion will be back this year.
- **Bench Donation:** The Friends of the Cal-Sag Trail held a bench ribbon cutting ceremony for the donated benches along the Cal-Sag Trail on National Trails Day. There were 2 benches donated in Alsip and Palos Park with one bench in Palos Heights donated by Bill Poore, a resident and a member of the Recreation Advisory Board. Bill's bench is located just East of the Harlem Overpass facing the aeration pool in Alsip. Public Works framed the pad and the Friends of Cal-Sag Trail worked with Ozinga to get the concrete donated.
- **CAPRA Update:** Mid-May staff received the first draft review of the self-evaluation from the review team. The results were not as ideal as we had hopes. There were a number of standards the team felt needed additional evidence and information to be considered met. Although there would have been time to update a number of the standards before our site visit that would be

taking place this week, the review team proposed applying for an extension. After discussion with the City Administrator and Alderman Key, Director Fairbanks decided to move forward with applying for the 12-month extension, and the extension was granted on May 25th. This extension will provide time to show updates to the evidence, as well as time to get further evidence approved through the Recreation Committee and City Council. This initial review allows the Department to focus on the small number of standards that need to be improved upon.

NEW BUSINESS

- Request for motion to approve the 2nd payment to George's Landscape in the amount of \$57,369.60 for work completed on the Misty Meadows Park Project.

Alderman Key motioned to approve the 2nd payment to George's Landscape in the amount of \$57,369.60 for work completed on the Misty Meadows Park Project, seconded by Alderman Bylut. On a voice note, the motion passed unanimously. — **AGENDA**

- Request for motion to approve facility fee waiver request from the Office of the 6th District with Cook County Commissioner, Donna Miller, for use of room 102 regarding a free discussion on Property after Death on Thursday, August 4, 2022 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. This is one of our smaller rooms and does not interfere with any programming at the Department. This is a free workshop that will be beneficial to the community.

Alderman Bylut motioned to approve a facility fee waiver request from the Office of the 6th District with Cook County Commissioner, Donna Miller, for use of room 102 regarding a free discussion on Property after Death on Thursday, August 4, 2022 from 5:30-7:30 p.m., seconded by Alderman Begley. On a voice note, the motion passed unanimously.

- Request for motion to approve annual payment to TimeClock Plus, LLC. In the amount of \$4,944.06 for administrative services to the Parks and Recreation Department.

Alderman Key motioned to approved annual payment to TimeClock Plus, LLC. In the amount of \$4,944.06 for administrative services to the Parks and Recreation Department, seconded by Alderman Bylut. On a voice note, the motion passed unanimously. --**AGENDA**

OLD BUSINESS

- **Orchard Park/OSLAD Grant Update:** A grant application was submitted by staff in 2021. Director Fairbanks reached out to Upland Design and IDNR, and due to staffing issues, the process is extremely behind. Grants awarded in 2020 have yet to be paid out. The 2022 state budget will have \$54,000,000.00 for the OSLAD Grant. Applications that have not been reviewed from 2021 will be pushed into the next grant cycle for approval.
- Director Fairbanks presented the RAB proposal to the City Administrator, Alderman Key, and Mayor Straz who were all in agreeance to the proposed updates to the ordinances. Director Fairbanks is looking to invite RAB members to the Recreation Committee meeting in July to discuss the proposal. Director Fairbanks will send the proposal to the Recreation Committee members as well as members of the RAB to review before the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Tayler Swiedals, Recording Secretary