



City of Palos Heights  
Recreation Committee  
Tuesday, July 11, 2023  
Minutes

### CALL TO ORDER

Alderman Bylut called the regular meeting of the Recreation Committee to order at 7:21 p.m. at the Palos Heights City Hall, 7607 W. College Drive. In attendance were Alderman Bylut and Alderman Clifford, also present was Director of Parks and Recreation Matt Fairbanks, Lake Katherine Director Gareth Blakesley and recording secretary Morgan Pukula.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

### LAKE KATHERINE REPORT

Lake Katherine Director Gareth Blakesley reported:

- Our annual volunteer BBQ will be held on July 12<sup>th</sup>, as a thank you to our volunteers.
- Ovarian cancer survivor group had a retreat on Saturday and we contributed by aiding in a monarch butterfly release.
- We held our quarterly staff safety meeting.
- We met with members from the MWRD who may be able to help develop content for creating signage around our site.
- We held our solstice evening sunset canoe and kayak tour, which we had 20 people signed up for.
- The board met and discussed at length the ANCA suggestions and recommendations.
- We attended the concerts in the park this week with Bridget selling drinks.
- Our rear door to the auditorium has been installed today and it may require some follow up items to it.
- We held 1 Southwest Cook work day on June 27<sup>th</sup>, with 25 people who volunteered in clearing invasive patches along the parkway.
- Staff attended the Farmer's Market on June 28<sup>th</sup>.
- Lake Katherine had its clubhouse open for people to watch fireworks on July 3 and we had 41 people attend.
- Our monthly fishing day had 20 people attend despite the rain.
- Education programs: We had 3 field trips, all about insects. Summer explorers offered wetland wonders and had 1 ½ sessions.
- Summer camp offered outdoor adventures/skills which was full, with 21 kids on the waitlist.
- We were watering the trees, but the rain has taken over our efforts and has returned our lake to above normal levels.
- Daily trash pickup and trail maintenance.
- Mowing trails has resumed since rain brought the grass back to life.

### PARKS AND RECREATION REPORT

Director of Parks and Recreation Matt Fairbanks gave the recreation report:

- **Recreation Update:** We have officially offered the position of superintendent of recreation to Rachel Bauer, who has accepted. Rachel is currently at the Mokena Park District and has been in the field for 19+ years. She has background experience in facilities, rec programs, special events, and administration. She attended Central Michigan University and graduated summa cum laude in Community Leisure Service Administration. Rachel was the 2021 SSPRPA professional of the year and is the incoming president of the SSPRPA board.

We are excited to welcome Rachel to the team and her skill set and experience she will bring to the department. Her official start day will be Monday, July 31<sup>st</sup>.

July 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> events continued in the “Best Week Ever” and kicked off on July 3<sup>rd</sup> with the Independence Day celebration. This included a family event with inflatables in the morning from 10 am until 2 pm. The event reconvened at Memorial Park at 5 pm with a DJ, food, vendors, bands, and concluded with fireworks. We had a great turn out for both. The week continued with a Beach Bash at the pool on July 5<sup>th</sup>, a concert in the park on July 6<sup>th</sup> and karaoke and a movie on July 7<sup>th</sup>.

Special events: Concert in the park – On Thursday, June 22<sup>nd</sup> we held the second concert in the park for the summer. The Wayouts played at the Memorial Park Gazebo from 7 pm – 8:30 pm. About 600 people were in attendance for the concert. National Bomb Pop Day was on Tuesday, June 27<sup>th</sup> and took place from 11 am – 1 pm. Full-time staff drove around the Palos Heights Parks and Recreation van, stopping at all the parks to hand out popsicles.

- **Pool Update:** The pool had above average attendance during June, with higher temperatures during the second half of the month. Since June 14<sup>th</sup>, we only closed the pool once due to weather and have had reduced hours 4 times.
  - Pool pass sales are at \$123,742.00 as of June 30<sup>th</sup>. This is compared to our entire 2022 total of pool pass sales at \$103,882.00.
  - The pool has brought in \$42,151.00 in sales for daily admission passes. There has been a total of 9,010 visits this year as of June 30<sup>th</sup>.
  - Swim lessons started on Saturday, June 10<sup>th</sup>. To date, \$26,561.00 in revenue has been generated compared to 2022 with \$29,052.00. We have 11 more sessions of the year.

At the June 20<sup>th</sup> city council meeting, the OSLAD agreement was approved for the Palos Pool project which includes renovating the bathhouse, an additional water slide, an additional fabric shade structure, open space with artificial turf, two ping pong tables, two bean bag toss stations, a woodland story walk and the removal of invasive species. A request for architect proposals will be brought to the next recreation committee meeting for review and approval. After the selected architects are able to design and create construction documents, we will go to bid for hiring a construction company later in the year or at the start of 2024.

- **Orchard Park Update:** On June 6<sup>th</sup>, City Council approved the legal bid notice. The notice ran in the Daily Southtown on June 8<sup>th</sup>. As of today we have 5 contractors who have purchased the construction documents to potentially bid. The 100% completed project manual and construction documents were received. Staff has ordered the materials for the Splash pad from Waterplay LLC. Via the Sourcewell Co-Op. The open bid is scheduled for July 18<sup>th</sup> at the city council meeting. A special meeting will be scheduled prior to the August 1<sup>st</sup> city council meeting to approve the contractor of the winning bid so construction can begin the end of summer.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- a) Alderman Clifford motioned to approve payment to Stan’s Roofing and siding in the amount of \$11,820.00 for work completed on the shelter at the pool, seconded by Alderman Bylut. – **AGENDA**
- b) Alderman Clifford motioned to approve proposal and payment to Cedar Forest Products Co. in the amount of \$60,327.72 for a pavilion at Orchard Park, seconded by Alderman Bylut. – **AGENDA**
- c) Alderman Clifford motioned to approve proposal and payment to NuToys in the amount \$13,164.00 for site furniture at Orchard Park, seconded by Alderman Bylut. – **AGENDA**
- d) Alderman Clifford motioned to approve proposal and payment to NuToys in the amount of \$5,838.00 for site games at Orchard Park, seconded by Alderman Bylut. – **AGENDA**
- e) Alderman Clifford motioned to approve payment #6 to JSD Landscaping in the amount of \$6,466.01 for electrical, engineering, design, construction documents, and grant administrative work completed on the Orchard Park project, seconded by Alderman Bylut. – **AGENDA**

## **OLD BUSINESS**

- a) Resident Recreation Benefits – The proposed fitness center use for the residents was moved to Sundays for 3 hours. The pool will be available for residents for 4 hours on Fridays and they will receive two complimentary guest passes. This benefit will end December 31<sup>st</sup> and will be publicized on our website, social media, newsletter and Channel 4. The resident recreation benefits will start for the residents from here until December 31<sup>st</sup>.
- b) Power Softball fence proposal – Matt Fairbanks stated Power Softball has not mentioned the new, proposed field but they are still going to work towards purchasing the fence. They have requested the city assist in the purchase of the fence as they have raised \$5,000.00 of the total \$22,000.00. Both Alderman Bylut and Alderman Clifford were opposed to the purchase of the fence in Community Park. They agreed that if Power Softball wanted to keep a temporary fence there, it would not create for such separation between the park and the fields.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Morgan Pukula, Recording Secretary