

**STATE OF ILLINOIS
COUNTY OF DUPAGE
DARIEN PARK DISTRICT REGULAR MEETING**

August 12, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

President Ray Jablonski called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. at the Darien Park District Community Center, 7301 Fairview, Darien, Illinois.

ROLL CALL OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Upon roll call the following Commissioners were present:

PRESENT: Ray Jablonski, Luanne Spiros, Frank Noverini, Cathy Marchese

ABSENT: None

Staff: Stephanie Gurgone; Executive Director, Matt Henderson: Director of Parks and Facilities, Jordan Rossi; Sportsplex General Manager, Gina Madden; Attorney

PUBLIC COMMENTS & GUESTS

a. Presentation by Wight & Company: Westwood Park OSLAD Grant Community Meeting

Mr. Gage Berger and Mr. Daniel Wilson, Wight & Company presented the Master Plan and long-term goals. He stated that there is \$54M available in the grant cycle from the State of Illinois and that the development grants are available for up to \$600,000 per project but are only available for up to 50% of the cost of the project.

Mr. Berger stated that the application deadline is September 13, 2024, and that grant winners will be notified around the winter or spring of 2025. He stated that if the grant is received, there is a two-year window to complete the project.

Mr. Berger provided an overview of the Master Plan for the park and the specifics for Phase 1 with an option to complete 8 pickleball courts with 4 now and 4 later. He also provided an overview of the bandshell, path, fitness stations, soccer fields, t-ball field, splash pad, summer camp area, nature play, preschool playground, 5-12 playground and a challenge course.

b. Community input for proposed OSLAD Grant Project

Mr. Berger opened the meeting for community input.

Mr. Vito Abbate stated that pickleball provides a new social network of friends and that there are more seniors than children using the courts. He stated that they are excited to see the courts and that they fully support additional courts at Westwood Park. Mr. Abate stated that Wight set the standard on how to build the courts because the ones at DCP are perfect. He stated that the players love the chairs and canopy, so he was happy to see those included at Westwood.

A gentleman in the audience asked about additional phases and the plan for a grant.

Mr. Berger stated that they can build onto another grant next year and that the focus now is for Phase 1.

Executive Director Stephanie Gurgone reported that if awarded the grant for Phase 1, then the District would begin working on detailed plans for an application for Phase 2 immediately.

A gentleman in the audience asked what will happen if the grant is denied.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that there is a certain amount of bonding ability available annually for the District. She reported that the District can use current capital money to complete the plan in smaller pieces, and they can continue to apply for future grants annually.

President Ray Jablonski stated that the grants have allowed improvements to the parks and as long as grant money is available that the District will continue to apply. He stated that they will not go into long term debt unnecessarily.

Mr. Berger stated that community input is very important because the grant process is competitive.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that staff received great input from the summer camp participants as well.

A woman in the audience questioned the band shelter being seasonal.

Director Matt Henderson reported that the shelters are multifaceted and that they will get used for many months for programs and events.

There was a question regarding lighting. Executive Director Gurgone reported that lighting of the pickleball courts will not be included in the grant, but staff will determine if it can be added in as part of the project.

Commissioner Luanne Spiros questioned what will be added for the wetlands.

Director Henderson reported that it is a priority to put the path through the wetlands and the District is in the process of reestablishing the native areas. He reported that staff has already started to reestablish the wetlands and that it will be on the tail end by the time construction begins.

Mr. Berger stated that they will work this into the narrative.

There was some discussion regarding the play equipment.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that the boat play structure will be removed and more climbing and types of motion added for older camp participants.

Commissioner Spiros questioned if there is any financial benefit to connecting to the Dupage County trail.

Mr. Berger reported that having the trail nearby will add to the value of the project.

Executive Director Gurgone stated that this location is the largest open space in Darien.

Mr. Berger thanked the community for the input and stated that email or letters are welcome.

c. General Public Comment/Guests

There was no general public comment.

COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications to report.

OFFICER REPORTS

- a. President** –President Ray Jablonski had no report.
- b. Treasurer** – Commissioner Cathy Marchese presented the Treasurer’s report ending July 31, 2024.

Commissioner Spiros made a motion, duly seconded by Commissioner Noverini to approve the Treasurer’s report ending July 31, 2024.

Upon roll call the following Commissioners voted:

AYES: Spiros, Noverini, Marchese, Jablonski

NAYS: None

President Jablonski declared the motion carried.

c. Commissioner Reports

There were no Commissioner reports.

ATTORNEY’S REPORT

Attorney Gina Madden had no report.

STAFF REPORTS

a. Executive Director/SEASPAR

Executive Director Stephanie Gurgone reported that she received information from the County for the general election.

Executive Director Gurgone reported on Darien Fest. She stated that there were parking issues at the Community Center. She stated that going forward staff will look at closing the building earlier and dedicating spots for the fitness center and karate class. She also noted that there was a lot of wrong way traffic into the lot and that the preschool circle will be blocked off in the future. She further noted that there were also cars parked on the berm at the park, which is unnecessary.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that the Darien Fest contract dates were August 9-11th and that the equipment was delivered early. She stated that the park was open, but noted that there could have been issues with rentals.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that the City has offered to do a 50th Anniversary Proclamation for the Park District. She reported that a draft was provided to the Board asking for any suggestions. She further reported that she will update the Board when a date is set for the reading of the proclamation.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that she provided a draft of the revised advertising and sponsorship guidelines for the Park District.

Commissioner Luanne Spiros suggested adding “pending approval” to the draft.

There was some discussion regarding being too specific and it was agreed to add additional language to the draft for review.

b. Finance Report

Executive Director Gurgone reported that the paperwork for the OSLAD grant was submitted to the auditors for their review and as soon as the certification is received, it will be turned into the State of Illinois for the \$400,000 reimbursement. She further reported that staff is aiming for Nov./Dec. for the annual audit.

c. Sportsplex General Manager

General Manager Jordan Rossi stated that he has some open positions.

d. Director of Parks & Facilities

Director Matt Henderson reported that the Recreation Report was included in the packet. He reported that Driftwood Park is officially open and that Gardenview Park/802 Plainfield Road is moving along. Mr. Henderson reported that the crew is working on the garden plots, a native area, and starting the prep work to install the splash pad with a completion date by the end of October. He reported that there are 20 plots available but that there is more space to expand. He further reported that the Native Planting Report was provided.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business to report.

PUBLIC COMMENT (FOR CONSENT AGENDA)

Mr. Joe Myczek, Darien resident stated that there was no notification in the Direct Connect that the meeting started at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Myczek stated that he missed the presentation on Westwood Park. He stated that the surface finish at Community Park is already popping up. He also stated that the District should follow the new recommendations for fencing and follow the USA Pickleball guidelines.

Mr. Myczek questioned why the volleyball courts had no fence and that it is very foolish to have no fence. He stated that the net is also not good quality.

Mr. Myczek stated that the southwest area of Darien keeps getting pushed back for projects and that people are dumping yard waste in South Grove Park.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Noverini moved, duly seconded by Commissioner Spiros to approve the June 10, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes, July 17, 2024, Special Meeting Minutes, Warrants – July and August and Resolution 2024-25-04: Resolution authorizing intergovernmental agreement between the City of Darien and the Darien Park District for the purchase of road salt.

Upon roll call the following Commissioners voted:

AYES: Noverini, Spiros, Marchese, Jablonski

NAYS: None

President Jablonski declared the motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Tree Risk Management Policy

Executive Director Stephanie Gurgone reported that the Board received the Tree Risk Management Policies and Procedures document with the help of the Great Lakes Urban Forestry, the company that completed the District-wide tree inventory. She reported that the policy lays out the steps the District will take in managing risk associated with trees located on the District property.

Commissioner Luanne Spiros questioned reporting.

Director Matt Henderson reported that staff will be working on annually reporting. He stated that the trees will be a priority and that annually there will be an update to the system. Director Henderson reported that software needs to be purchased.

Commissioner Spiros moved, duly seconded by Commissioner Marchese approval of the Tree Risk Management Policy.

Upon roll call the following Commissioners voted:

AYES: Spiros, Noverini, Marchese, Jablonski

NAYS: None

President Jablonski declared the motion carried.

b. Resolution 2024-25-05: A Resolution Approving a License Agreement between the Darien Park District and Eco Hockey, LLC

Executive Director Gurgone reported that after negotiation and discussions that staff is recommending a three-year license agreement with the current pro shop vendor. She reported that there will be an approximate 3% increase per year which is comparable to the future projected CPI of 3.4% next year.

Commissioner Luanne Spiros questioned the free trailer storage.

General Manager Jordan Rossi reported that the trailer storage is part of the license and stored in the corner of the parking lot and that having a pro shop is an amenity for the Hawks.

Commissioner Spiros moved, duly seconded by Commissioner Marchese approval Resolution 2024-25-05: A Resolution Approving a License Agreement between the Darien Park District and Eco Hockey, LLC.

Upon roll call the following Commissioners voted:

AYES: Spiros, Noverini, Marchese, Jablonski

NAYS: None

President Jablonski declared the motion carried.

ADJOURN

There being no further discussion, Commissioner Noverini moved, duly seconded by Commissioner Spiros that the meeting be adjourned.

Upon roll call vote the Motion was thereby carried and the meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m.



**Ray Jablonski, President
Darien Park District**



**Frank Noverini, Secretary
Darien Park District**