

Call to Order:

President Anderson called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Executive Director Herbster announced that moving forward, the Park Board meetings will be broadcast.

Commissioners Present:

Cathy Cagle, Jason Heisler, Michael Jacobson, Karen Johnson, Linda Matthias, Sarah Michehl, Eric Anderson

Legal Counsel: Scott Puma, Ancel, Glink, Diamond, Bush, DiCianni and Krafthefer, P.C.

Staff: Jason Herbster, Executive Director, Erik Jakubowski, Superintendent of Park Services, Amy Olson Manager of Park Planning and Development, Tina Becke, Superintendent of Business Services, Kurt Reckamp, Superintendent of Recreation Programs and Facility Services, Anne Sandor, Recording Secretary

Citizens: Sheree Lavelle, Bob and Diane Miller, Laurie Obermeier, Kim Hankins, Bob Buelow, Joe La Monica, Vince Mosca and Jeremy Husnik, Hey and Associates

Pledge of Allegiance: The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Agenda:

Commissioner Cagle moved to approve the agenda, as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Matthias. All were in favor.

Matters from the Public: None.

Bob Miller distributed pictures showing that the lights were on at the driving range and said there was not anyone at the driving range during the time the lights were on. He expressed concern about the cost of lights and suggested the district buy a weed harvester that will benefit more residents than the lights at the driving range.

Sheree Levelle expressed concerns of safety and that she is worried about children playing in the channel of the lake due to the amount of muck in that area. She distributed photos showing 18" of muck in the channel. She said she contacted the District to request dredging the channel and she has not received a response. Commissioner Anderson said the Board will discuss the issue.

Kim Hankins expressed concerns about the health of the lake and asked the Board to reconsider the purchase of a weed harvester. She asked the Board to spend more time to determine if this is the best path for Crystal Lake, economically, and financially.

Unfinished Business:

Weed Harvester (Hey and Associates)

Vince Mosca and Jeremy Husnik, Hey and Associates were present at the meeting to provide information and answer questions on weed harvesters. Mr. Mosca said he was not asked for a recommendation on which harvester to purchase. Mr. Mosca noted the weeds at West Bay have been an issue over the years. He cautioned that too much harvesting of the eel grass can cause other plants to grow. He stated he has not seen this particular harvester in action. He suggested the District request a trial run prior to buying, to check the performance of the harvester and run through weed beds to see how it will pick up floaters and if it meets the goals of the Park District.

Commissioner Jacobson expressed concerns regarding imbalance of lake for fishing, plant decomposition, phosphorus and the expansion of the biomass in the lake. Jacobson asked if information on harvesting in Wauconda was received. Mosca said there is not a huge amount of phosphorus in the lake; the plants hold 92% of water. Director Herbster answered that milfoil harvesting is done seven days per week beginning in April and ending in November in Wauconda's Bangs Lake. Jacobson suggested looking into a lease option.

Commissioner Cagle noted from all the questions and answers to and from Hey and Associates she understood this weed harvester purchase is not about the health of the lake and the weeds are nature and little to no effect on the ecology of the lake. The District has dedicated itself to lake ecology. Safety issues should go to the Lake Safety Committee for swimming and boating safety issues. The Park District has upheld its responsibility to lake ecology. No one is looking at all of the lake. She suggested inviting the City of Crystal Lake and the Village of Lakewood to work together to look at all of the issues on the lake and moved to table the issue to the next Committee Meeting of the Whole to discuss how to bring together all agencies involved in the lake to meet to discuss these issues for the best interest of the lake. The consultants have told us the lake ecology is good.

Commissioner Anderson stated the weeds and the number of boaters on the lake are safety issues and the District should invest in the purchase of a harvester for all lake users. If the Park District takes the lead, the City and Village of Lakewood will join in. The District owns the lake bottom and is committed to making it better for the users.

Mr. Mosca stated moving forward a realistic boating/harvesting plan needs to be in place prior to the purchase of a harvester. Commissioner Anderson stated he did not feel there is a risk. Cagle noted two full-time staff will be needed to operate the harvester. Anderson stated harvesting will not be done daily and didn't feel that two full-time staff will not be needed.

Commissioner Johnson asked if the piece of equipment is needed and expressed concerned about wasting money. Johnson stated that she is concerned with purchasing equipment that may not be needed.

Commissioner Michehl expressed she was not convinced this type of equipment is the answer, the math has not been worked out and suggested looking at different options.

Commissioner Cagle asked about harvesting weeds at the Main and West beaches? Executive Director Herbster said that a complete kill is done prior to beach season at the beaches. Superintendent Jakubowski addressed the operation of the surf rake equipment, and how it saves a lot of manpower work.

Listed below is the list of questions from the Park Board and answers provided by Hey and Associates.

1. The harvester that has been proposed for the CLPD to purchase is one that would pull weeds from the lakebed as opposed to cutting as the current contractor's machine does. What impacts, good and bad, would this pulling of the weeds have on the lakebed, lake, habitat, etc.? From our research and first-person conversations, the harvesting results have been mixed. The claim that the harvester "pulls the weeds out by the root and no fragments" has not always been verified in the field. Harvesting results have been very mixed and fragments have been seen. One lake in Wisconsin saw no root clusters on the harvested plants. Sounds like the front roller and roller bar mechanism doesn't always work as described and has mixed results in harvesting. May be related to a water "shock wave" in front of the harvester. The claim is intriguing as opposed to just mowing the plants off. But there are concerns about impacts to water quality (sediment suspension) during harvesting and then the void left from the uprooted plants as a vector for milfoil and curly leaf. Operating depth and efficiency are key. A few days long trial run to see if operation might be warranted but we cannot support an outright purchase without local testing.

2. Timing of removal – what would be the best time to remove the weeds in this manner? Simple answer is when the plants are mature enough to grab onto. That will relate to water depth, best operating depth and seasonal variation.

What happens if we do not harvest at all? West Bay will be troublesome for some people and access will be compromised. It's a relatively shallow part of the lake with fertile sediments. If floaters are really the issue for most folks, we should have a frank conversation on what causes most of the floaters, which we think isn't primarily the lake ecology. Eel grass can float/fragment on its own, but boat traffic is probably the biggest contributor. We may need to figure out a compromise and more aggressive 'boat traffic management plan" to promote better access without the perception that all of West Bay needs to be free of aquatic plants.

3. Would harvesting result in less chemical treatment? Chemical treatments would still be necessary and would not be reduced by much, especially for milfoil and curly leaf. They grow in deeper depths and the harvester would not likely be able to reach them and pull them out when desired.

Note: Also, there are many related issues that need to be addressed about buying and operating essentially a full-time harvesting operation. Staffing, insurance, training, storage, realistic goals, value to the overall lake and lake users

4. What are the best practices that lake property owners and users, including the Park District, can do to help maintain the overall health of the lake?

- a. Continued monitoring
- b. Control non-native plant species (generally with herbicide)
- c. Follow a hybrid approach to plant management
- d. Continue to keep shorelines clean
- e. Instruct lawn services to blow grass clippings and leaves away from the lake
- f. Continued education for best practices for lawn care and watershed protection
- g. Limit uncontrolled boat access in plant beds to limit fragments

5. Do decomposing weeds negatively affect the lake ecology?

Decomposing plants will create a mucky bottom over time, which is completely natural and in the end unavoidable. Aquatic plants have approximately 92% water content. So, the amount of actual plant material in any given year that decomposes is small but does accumulate over time.

6. Would the lake ecology benefit or suffer if the lake bottom is disturbed by native plants being uprooted?

Without being flippant, the issue of harvesting/uprooting the plant beds isn't a "lake ecology" issue. It's more a lake user experience issue.

On one hand, if the plant is indeed uprooted fully, the *nuisance (not invasive)* plant mass would potentially be reduced.

On the other hand, disturbing the lake bottom would cause short term turbidity and it may re-suspend nutrients back in the water column causing algal blooms.

Aquatic organism habitat may be compromised in the process of pulling the plants.

Our main concern is what new plant would fill the void left by the areas that are fully uprooted and devoid of plants. Genuine concern of creating opportunities for invasion by milfoil and curly leaf pondweed.

7. Is it possible to harvest too much eel grass? If yes, what might the consequences be?

Yes. Eelgrass is a desirable aquatic plant. Removing too much will produce a loss of habitat and again the potential for invasion by undesirable plants.

8. Are floating weed mats a safety hazard on the lake? If yes, what makes them hazardous and how often do they become hazardous? How well do current weed removal practices do with keeping the lake safe?

Yes, the mats are a safety hazard for open lake swimmers, but more so a nuisance to recreation and other lake uses.

9. If people could agree on just one thing that would keep weeds in the lake more manageable what would that be?

Continued herbicide/harvesting plan. No one thing will work as effectively as a hybrid approach.

Perhaps a more aggressive "boat traffic plan" to get a more desirable boating experience without the need to try to harvest large amounts of native plants.

Also, maybe a more organized approach to preventing/managing the floaters is warranted. Some of the floaters are naturally occurring. It's likely that most of the fragments/floaters are caused by boat traffic. So, if we better manage boat traffic/access, maybe we can create a better recreational experience AND minimize floaters.

Commissioner Anderson moved to purchase the harvester that we are considering as soon as possible. Seconded by Commissioner Heisler.

Roll Call: Ayes: 4 (Heisler, Jacobson, Matthias, Anderson) Nays: 3 (Cagle, Johnson, Michehl)

Consent Agenda:

Commissioner Anderson moved to approve the following consent agenda item, as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Matthias.

- A. Approval: The Voucher Expenses for the month ending, June 30, 2023, in the amount of \$701,390.10.
- B. Approval: The Interim Voucher Expenses for the month ending June 31, 2023, in the amount of \$554,602.21.
- C. Accept: The Treasurer's Report for the month ending, June30, 2023, in the amount of \$18,143,870.60.
- D. Approval: Regular Meeting Minutes 06.15.23
- E. Approval: Committee Meeting Minutes of the Whole 07.06.23
- F. Approval: Resolution 23.24.05 OSLAD Grant Della Street Park
- G. Approval: Ordinance 23.24.03 Della Street Park ROW Property Transfer
- H. Approval: On Angel's Wings Event Request

- I. Approval: Crystal Lake Soccer Federation Request
- J. Approval: Crystal Lake Chamber of Commerce Request
- K. Approval: Race Time -Jim M'Lady Race Event

Roll Call: Ayes: 7 (Heisler, Jacobson, Johnson, Matthias, Michehl, Cagle, Anderson) Nays: 0

Items Removed from Consent Agenda: None.

Business Items

- A. Approval: Resolution 23.24.06 Open Land ComEd Green Region Grant
Commissioner Matthias moved to approve Resolution 23.24.06, Open Land ComEd Green Region Grants, as presented.
Seconded by Commissioner Jacobson. All were in favor.
- B. Approval: Passenger Bus Purchase
Commissioner Michehl moved to approve one 2024 Ford E-Series Passenger Buss for \$103,235, from National Auto Fleet Group, Sourcewell National Joint Purchase.
Seconded by Commissioner Matthias.
Roll Call: Ayes (7) Johnson, Matthias, Michehl, Cagle, Heisler, Jacobson, Anderson Nays: 0
- C. Approval: Haligus Road park Consulting Services -Archaeology Phase 1 Survey Consulting Services
Commissioner Jacobson moved to accept the lowest responsive, responsible proposal submitted by Archaeology & Geomorphology Services in the amount of \$2,500.00.
Seconded by Commissioner Michehl. All were in favor.
- D. Approval: Playground Resurfacing at Spoerl Park and Main Beach
Commissioner Michehl moved to accept the lowest responsive, responsible proposal submitted by Hitchcock Design Group, in the amount of \$17,800.00.
Seconded by Commissioner Johnson. All were in favor.
- E. Approval: Della Park Design Consulting Services
Commissioner Matthias moved to accept Upland Design's professional services proposal in the amount of \$12, 700.00. Seconded by Commissioner Michehl. All were in favor.

Reports to the Board:

Executive Director, Jason Herbster

- Levy discussion will begin at the Committee of the Whole meeting on August 3, 2023.
- Clarified the statement made by Mr. Bob Miller, resident, about the cost of the lights at the driving range was not \$100,000. A grant was received, and the District paid under \$15,000 to cover the costs.
- The City Inspector has been out to read the five banks of lights at the Driving Range and the Park District is not in violation of the City Ordinance. The City Ordinance allows the lights to remain on until 10:00pm. Superintendent Reckamp noted the lights will be turned off when not in use and will be on when needed in compliance within the City Ordinance.

Superintendent of Business Services, Tina Becke

- The District has been awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting award for the 2021-22 fiscal year.
- New Hire: Rocio Arreola-Escutia, Human Resources Manager was hired on July 11.
- Retirement: Kim Dunn, Accounts Receivable, retired on July 14, 2023. Interviews for the position have taken place.

Superintendent of Park Services, Erik Jakubowski

- Seasonal staff are returning back to school.
- Erik and Jason Herbster took a tour of the lake. Jason said the lake looked great for this time of the year.

Manager of Park Planning and Development, Amy Olson

- The Racket Club Court Replacement project is going well. The concrete needs to be cured for the next couple of weeks before they are ready for play.
- A survey to the community will be sent for a theme for the playground resurfacing at Main Beach.

Superintendent of Recreation Programs and Facility Services, Kurt Reckamp

- Summer programs are ending, and the summer staff are returning to school.
- Concerts with the CL Library were a big hit this summer and staff look forward to continuing to work with the Library and these events.

Matters from the Board:

Commissioner Eric Anderson

- Noted the driving range lights were on at 8:30pm on Wednesday, July 19 and did not notice anyone at the range. He asked to remind staff to turn the lights off when no one is using the range.
- Channel Discussion: Executive Director Herbster noted the Park District does not own the channel. There was an issue in the past with a contractor and a project at Lippold Park that discharged silt into the channel. The District did pay to dredge that area. Hey and Associates has installed a monitor on the storm water outlet. There have been minimal readings due to the drought and there has been clean water moving from Lippold to the Channel. The District will continue monitoring and Executive Director Herbster will reach out to the homeowners.
- Requested an easier format for the voucher reports.

Commissioner Jason Heisler

- Asked if there had been any complaints about parking at Main Beach. Executive Director Herbster responded that he had not received any complaints. On Sunday, July 2, a few complaints were received, as the grass area beyond the parking lot was closed during the parade and fireworks display. Closing this area made it easier for traffic flow after the event. Heisler asked if there were plans to expand the parking lot at the ballfield. Herbster answered no because that the area is a flood plain.

Commissioner Sarah Michehl

- Noted she has been out to Lippold Park multiple times and noticed that the lights at the driving range have been turned off.

Adjourn:

Commissioner Anderson adjourned the meeting at 7:51PM.

Approve: _____ Attest: _____
 President Secretary