



Call to Order:

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

Commissioners Present:

Jason Heisler, Michael Jacobson, Karen Johnson, Sara Michehl, Eric Anderson

Commissioner Absent: Linda Matthias

Late Arrival: Cathy Cagle arrived at 6:33pm.

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,

Citizens: Cindy Dunham, Ed Segalla, Denise Smith, Mark Sparber, Bryan Young, Bob Miller

Pledge of Allegiance: The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Jacobson moved to approve the agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Michehl All were in favor.

Matters from the Public:

Cindy Dunham, Crystal Lake Resident and former Park District employee. She referred to the article posted in the Northwest Herald and the proposed disbanding Crystal Lake Park Police department. In the article and saving tax dollars. She expressed concerns of safety in the parks. \$12.43 annually of taxes paid for the Park Police is a small price to pay for safety. The Park Police are proactive, not reactive. They know our parks better than an outside service. She added that there were two suicidal incidents. One person was saved by the Park Police and the other was not saved as the Park Police were not called. She suggested if the Board decides to disband the Park Police, put the issue to a vote for the residents of Crystal Lake to decide on their safety in our parks.

Ed Segalla, Crystal Lake Resident thanked the Board for their work, and understands their work as he is a fiscal conservative. He expressed concern of safety in the parks. He stated that he moved to Crystal Lake from Las Vegas. He lived in Las Vegas during the mass shooting, and his son was in the crowd. He worries if something like that happens in Crystal Lake, it would cost more than the amount budgeted for a Police Department.

Bob Miller, Crystal Lake Resident, expressed that he was in favor of disbanding the Park Police Department. Mr. Miller submitted a copy of his comments. They will be included in the correspondence section of the January 2024 Regular Meeting packet.

Robert Kaempfe, Crystal Lake Resident, noted that the Park Police do provide services that the City Police do not. He attended the Luminaria event and there was a missing child and within 7 minutes were able to reunite the children with the parents.

Crystal Lake Police Department may not have been able to respond as quickly if they were dealing with other situations, i.e., domestic dispute, car accidents, etc.

He asked if the Board contacted the City Police Department if they were able to assist with patrolling the parks, traffic control for events. He stated that he agreed with Ms. Dunham regarding putting the issue to a vote for the residents to decide.

Bryan Young, Crystal Lake Resident, requested the Board to consider naming the new Haligus Road park after Ms. Amy Guse Ottem. Ms. Ottem, former, Village of Lakewood Trustee passed away in December of 2021. Her impact on the Village was profound and her legacy left a positive impact on the residents of Lakewood. A letter was submitted and will be included in the correspondence section of the January 2024 Regular Meeting packet.

Unfinished Business:

Park Police Discussion:

Commissioner Anderson addressed the \$12.43 annual park police tax and noted that if every expense was looked at in the budget it would look minimal. Need to think about the total expenses.

Commissioner Michehl noted that in a previous Committee Meeting, the Board discussed the cost of \$300,000 to resurface the playgrounds at Main Beach and Spoerl playground. The newspaper only noted the savings of \$12.43, there is a lot more to this issue, as staff has compiled a fantastic outline of services, we received community feedback, the impact on the City and Village Police Departments, and the public perception of the safety of our parks if this Board decides to cut the Park Police Department. The Park Police have been with the District for 100 years.

Commissioner Jacobson stated that other districts did not have a Police Department for 100 years and when you have this established a service in a community, values are built in that grows over time. This is like an insurance policy for the District. It does not seem that the premium for this is not exorbitant. Jacobson asked how a 50% reduction is cost (cutting part-time officers) would affect the coverage at the special events, i.e., Fourth of July and summer concerts .

Commissioner Michehl stated that there would be less specialized knowledge to provide safety.

Commissioner Cagle asked what purpose the Board wants to see for the Park Police and would like to see a description of what the conservation district does and does not do. She does not want to see a duplication of administrative duties. Commissioner Jacobson stated that a 50% cut in officers will be significant. He would like to know how the Police Chief would manage. Commissioner Cagle noted that staff would be able to manage many of the duties. Jacobson stated that from his experience managing the beach he has seen that the public did not respect regular staff. He asked if other communities had beaches and how they deal with getting assistance.

Commissioner Johnson noted that she appreciated hearing the feedback from the community. The Park Police Department is unique, but it has fit and worked and helped citizens with safety. She stated when there is a park police presence, there is less fear when in the parks. If disbanded, more staff and/or security will need to be hired.

Commissioner Anderson asked Attorney Puma if the District could do an advisory referendum next year. Puma stated that there is a general election in March. Anderson requested discussion at the Committee of the Whole meeting on January 4, 2024.

Consent Agenda:

Commissioner Cagle moved to approve the following consent agenda item, as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Jacobson. All were in favor.

Items Removed from Consent Agenda: None.

New Business Action Items

A. Approval: Ordinance 23.24.09, an ordinance authorizing the disposal of items of personal property owned by the Crystal Lake Park District

Commissioner Jacobson moved to approve Ordinance 23.24.09, an ordinance authorizing the disposal of items of personal property owned by the Crystal Lake Park District, as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Johnson. All were in favor.

B. Approval: North Veteran Acres Shelter Bid Results

Commissioners Cagle moved to accept the lowest responsible, responsive bid from Team REIL in the amount of \$204,560.00, for the Veteran Acres Rotary Shelter replacement. Seconded by Commissioner Michehl.

Roll Call: Ayes: 6 (Heisler, Jacobson, Johnson, Michehl, Cagle, Anderson) Nays: 0

Discussion Items

A. Haligus Road Park Update - Construction Management Services

Executive Director Herbster noted that Manager Olson has requested quotes for Construction Management Services for the Haligus Road Park. A request to hire a construction manager will be on the Committee Meeting of the Whole meeting on January 4, 2024.

Reports to the Board:

Executive Director Herbster

- Commissioner Michehl stated that she was disappointed that the District did not receive a grant for the Mickey Sund field project and requested staff to prioritize and do some basic upgrades to the complex to make visually appealing and more user friendly. Herbster stated that staff has been discussing this project to make it a priority.

Attorney Scott Puma

- Will present proposed referendum questions at the next Committee Meeting of the Whole meeting on January 4, 2023.

Superintendent of Business Services, Tina Becke

- Auditors are working on the draft. The draft will be presented at the Regular Board meeting on January 18.

Manager of Park Planning and Development, Amy Olson

- Signed agreement for the additional funds for the Nature Center project has been received.
- Received confirmation that the District did not receive the OSLAD grant for the Della Park project.

Superintendent of Recreation Programs and Facility Services, Kurt Reckamp

- Ended the year with two events; Luminaria 2,000 people in attendance and this year's admission revenue for the theatre production \$2255 compared to \$600 last year. Next theatre play registration is almost full. Executive Director Herbster added that there were many in attendance that had no connection to the program, they just wanted to see the show. Cagle requested that the seniors citizens be invited to attend. Reckamp will bring the idea back to staff.

Matters from the Board:

Commissioner *Cathy Cagle*

- Thrilled with the program results. Thanked Kurt for explaining the concession revenues.
- Received good feedback from her doctor regarding the District's programming. Non-resident fees were not an issue. His 3-year old child attends the soccer program. His wife commended the instructor for his great work with the kids.

Commissioner Sarah Michehl

- Received good feedback on the Luminaria Walk.

Executive Session: None.

Adjourn: Commissioner Anderson adjourned the meeting at 7:25pm.

Approve: _____ Attest: _____
President Secretary