Call to Order:
President Gallagher called the meeting to order at 8:30AM.

Commissioners Present:
Jason Heisler, Caroline Bachour-Chemaly, Shawn Zimmerman, Cathy Cagle, Tom Aquilina, Michele Hartwig, Debbie Gallagher

Staff:
Jason Herbster, Executive Director, Erik Jakubowski, Superintendent of Parks Services, Ann Viger, Director of Park Development and Interpretive Services, Katrina Hanna, Superintendent of Business Services, Kurt Reckamp, Superintendent of Recreation Programs and Facility Services, Jenny Leech, Marketing Manager, Anne Sandor, Recording Secretary

Distinguished Accreditation
- Executive Director Herbster reported staff wants to move forward to retain the District’s accreditation status. The review needs to completed in November 2020. Herbster noted the Comprehensive Master Plan is out of date, but the current Strategic Plan is valid and will be accepted for accreditation. The Board agreed to move forward.

Comprehensive Master Plan Revisions - Staff vs. Consultant
- Executive Director Herbster noted the last Comprehensive Master Plan 2010-2014 is still relevant and needs to be updated. Herbster stated the Board and staff were not satisfied with the consultants work on the plan and asked the Board for direction to work on updating the plan in-house or hiring a new consultant to revise. It was a consensus of the Board to seek a new consultant for a 10-year plan. Herbster noted the professional fees will need to be included in the upcoming budget.

Park Police - What information is the Board Seeking?
- Commissioner Cagle commented the Park Police Officers should be Community Police and de-escalate armed officers. Much of what they do does not require arms, they can call the City Police for armed back up if needed. She felt it is not in the best interest of the Park District to have a military presence and would be perceived better by the public.
- Commissioner Gallagher disagreed and stated it would not be fair to put a public officer in public harm’s way without a way to defend themselves. The District has many parks with remote access and things do happen while they are patrolling. The Park Police are capable of navigating the parks; it would be less of a burden for the City Police not to have to patrol the parks.
- Commissioner Gallagher stated we are not in competition with the City Police. They do a great job, and in her opinion, the Park Police Officers are not less than the City Police Officers.
- Commissioner Gallagher stated she was not in favor of the City Police calling the Park Police for backup, as the Park Officers need to focus on patrolling the parks.
- Commissioner Zimmerman stated he felt the Park Police have ballooned out of control. He would like to see a better relationship with the City Police Department. Many park districts have security during the summer and rely on the City for police. Executive Director Herbster noted the Park Police does have a good relationship with the City Police Department, the District has an Intergovernmental Agreement with the City for mutual aid.
- Director Herbster reported a review of the Park District Police was done in 2013. He will share it with the Park Board, and he encouraged the Board of Commissioners to schedule a ride-a-long with a Park Police Officer.
Executive Director Herbster and Commissioner Gallagher expressed the District’s need for Park Police patrol as the District has vast amounts of land, property and remote parks. They provide courier services, parking control for large events, check-in during facility rentals, and open/close restrooms in the parks. If it is decided to disband the Park Police Department, a new position will need to be created to cover these tasks. This change may not affect the budget, however, it would affect the budget if security needs are contracted out. Hiring City or Village of Lakewood Police would be a reactionary type of enforcement, where the District’s Officers are proactive with greeting patrons in the parks. Commissioner Gallagher noted if the thought is to have a Park Supervisor, the position would be only for the summer months.

Commissioner Hartwig reported she is very involved with the Friends of the Hennepin Canal. The Hennepin State Park lost their park patrol officers and there has been major drinking and drug use in their parks. Their Chief of Police told her the patrons are disrespectful of the park, and of the ILDR Officers. She expressed that she feels safe knowing the Park Officers are patrolling the parks, and the public may feel the same.

Commissioner Cagle stated she did not want to get rid of the Park Police Department, she does not want them to carry weapons.

Erik Jakubowski stated there are many nooks and crannies in the parks. The Park Police know the trails at Sterne’s Woods, the Fen and Veteran Acres Parks, and all of the community parks. It could be difficult for the City Police to get to an officer in need. Jakubowski added the City calls on the Park Police for backup, which shows the trust they have for the Park Police. Commissioner Gallagher agreed.

Commissioner Gallagher noted the Attitude and Interest survey stated the people feel safe in their parks, and this was listed as a priority.

Executive Director Herbster stated he would provide the Park Police review of 2013 and he suggested the Commissioner schedule a ride-a-long with Park Police.

Executive Director Herbster noted the staff will go with any direction the Board wants to take. We do have a comfortable level with having our own Park Police department. Since 2010, there have been 6 suicides in the parks. When the City Police were called, they had no idea where these individuals were located.

Commissioner Chemaly stated she did not approve of disarming the officers.

Commissioner Gallagher expressed concerns of the officers having assault rifles. Executive Director Herbster stated the assault weapons are locked up and are not carried by Park Police officers. We tried to give them back to the Army Surplus, but they don’t want them.

Executive Director Herbster noted other Park District Parks are patrolled by their City Police because they can see into the parks and just drive by them. Many of our parks are not visible and need to be walked to patrol them.

Commissioner Aquilina reported he was very surprised to hear the things that happen in the parks when he went on a ride-a-long.

Commissioner Cagle asked what other districts have a Community Service Officers system. Herbster noted Park Districts have Park Supervisors, not Community Service Officers. The supervisors check permits and have no authority to issue citations. With all of the parking issues, at Lippold Park, it would be an issue for the City Police to come out to enforce our ordinances.

The Board requested more information.

Commissioner Gallagher stated this matter will be revisited after the review of the 2013 report. The Board will need to decide to have the Park Police Department or not.

Crystal Lake Park Foundation

Executive Director Herbster reported a press release will be sent out next week to solicit members. One person has expressed interest. If the interest is not strong, we will reach out in the next community newsletter. Commissioner Gallagher noted the press release will include information on raising funds for the ball hockey rink.
Property Inventory Audit/Land Assessment Review and Discussion

- Ann Viger, Director of Park Development and Interpretive Services created a list of nine properties that could be considered potentially for disposal. Executive Director Herbster noted any property over 3 acres must have voters’ approval through referendum to sell. The following properties were discussed.
  - Butternut Preserve: Ann Viger, Director of Park Development and Interpretive Services, noted the City of Crystal Lake acquired the property through a grant in the 1960’s and the Park District was a partner. 2.35 acres of natural area was donated to the Park District. The property would need to remain open space. The District has been leasing the property from the City and maintaining the entire property. The Board agreed to contact the City of Crystal Lake to end the lease agreement.
  - Canterbury Park: This property is approximately 5 acres and adjacent to Canterbury School. There are three ball diamonds on school property, which Crystal Lake Baseball (Park District Affiliate) utilizes. The school’s primary use of the property is the playground. If the District transfers the property to the School District, a referendum will not be needed, but it may impact the baseball league.
  - Cress Creek: This property is approximately 9 acres of wooded area and open space, and requires a high level of maintenance due to the creek and falling trees. Transferring this property to the homeowners association would require a referendum. The Board agreed to send a letter to the homeowners association or possibly the City of Crystal Lake.
  - Oak Hollow: This property is approximately 3.2 acres of wooded area and open space. This property has no value to the Park District. The Board agreed to offer the property to the homeowners association. A letter will be sent to the Homeowners Association.
  - Main Beach Triangle: Commissioner Heisler noted the property is needed for additional parking. The Board agreed to keep this property as it is utilized by the Park District and the Dole mansion for overflow parking.
  - State Street Lots: This property is approximately 2 acres and has no recreational value to the District. The Board agreed to get an appraisal on the property. A referendum is not needed.
  - North Shore/East Street: This property is approximately .11 acres and has no recreational value to the District. The City has shown an interest in this property. The Board agreed to contact the City to discuss a trade for this property for the Colonel Palmer House and the adjacent 3 acres.
  - Prairie Ridge Conservation Area: This 35 acres of property with two ponds, wetlands and wooded area is becoming a high maintenance area and would be costly to make it a more usable, passive recreation area. Commissioner Cagle suggested offering the property to the McHenry County Conservation Department. Commissioner Gallagher stated the County gave the property to the District. Ann Viger stated she understood the District’s contribution to take the value of the land was a part of the grant, but cannot find documentation. Viger added, the property was offered to the Conservation District and they did not want it so it was given to the Park District. Commissioner Bachour-Chemaly suggested contacting the Conservation District. Commissioner Gallagher suggested creating a passive park or autistic park.
  - Colonel Palmer House: Executive Director Herbster noted staff would like to expand offerings and continue services at the Colonel Palmer House. The Park District has an intergovernmental agreement with the City of Crystal Lake to maintain and operate the house and property. The Board agreed the City should be contacted to request transferring the house and property to the Park District.

- Commissioner Gallagher asked the Board to consider selling Seminary Park, Willow’s Edge Park and Hill Farm Park. Commissioner Bachour-Chemaly stated we should not consider selling open space.
- Commissioner Gallagher requested an appraisal for Seminary Park.
- Commissioner Cagle suggested consolidating properties and purchasing one large facility to house the administrative staff, gym and maintenance garage. Cagle also suggested working with a commercial realtor.
- Commissioner Heisler asked if the Sunset Meadows property was buildable. Commissioner Gallagher noted Sunset Meadows was purchased for open space to protect the lake. Executive Director Herbster noted a study was done on the property and the redevelopment costs were approximately $36,000,000.
- Projects and Planning Committee meetings will be scheduled to review properties.
10 Year Capital Replacement Schedule Review/20-21 Budget Priorities

- Executive Director Herbster noted Ann Viger, Director of Park Development and Interpretive Services, created this document for staff to use as a planning tool. High priorities are listed sooner.
- Commissioner Cagle suggested using grade levels to help prioritize. Viger noted the report shows a few “C’s” but mostly keeping the priorities at a “C” or better.
- Commissioner Zimmerman suggested sharing the process in the newsletter. Commissioner Aquilina agreed and suggested showing examples of what the Park District is planning.
- Commissioner Gallagher suggested getting the facilities ready to apply for grants.

Lake Management
Weed Harvesting
- The Board discussed the District’s responsibility for weed harvesting on Crystal Lake. The Board agreed the cost of harvesting, fish stocking and lake ecology should be a shared burden of property owners and will budget for the District’s share.
- The Board will defer Lake Management matters to the Lake Advisory Committee to research.

Lake Meeting
- The Annual Lake Meeting will be held on April 2, 2020, at the Administrative Office, at 7:00pm.

Parks
Shamrock Hills
Ann Viger, Director of Park Development and Interpretive Services, presented the following four development options for the board to review.

- Stay the course with upgrades to the building to provide office space and areas for small programs, meetings and events. Develop outdoor recreation areas such as improved trails, archery range, fishing piers, fire pit, and picnic grounds.
- Leave the building as-is. It would continue to be used for park district office, storage and meeting space only. No public use.
  - Build a picnic shelter in the lawn space south of parking area. Include restrooms and a fireplace in the shelter. Note: This option could be done instead of Option 1 or in addition to Option 1.
- Do nothing with the building and site. Allow the public to use the site as they currently do for hiking and fishing. Keep the use of the building as offices, storage and meeting space for staff.
- Tear down the house and either leave the site as-is or develop according to one of the options listed above.

- The Board discussed options for Shamrock Hills and agreed to research option 2 and use of the lower level of the facility. Camping sites and autistic play areas were suggested for the site.
- The neighbors need to be notified regarding the adjoining well and electric.

Location for Ball Hockey Rink
- The Board agreed to move forward with plans for a ball hockey rink at Woodscreek Park.
- A Special Use Permit and lighting variation, public notice and hearing will be needed.
- A color rendering of the project will be created.

Prairie Ridge Conservation Area
Executive Director Herbster explained that he and staff have been communicating with neighbors of the Conservation Area regarding the weir replacement project and the water level.

- Maps and drawings of the property were reviewed by the Board.
- The property was acquired 30 years ago at the same time Sterne’s Woods and Fen were purchased. Viger stated that she recalls hearing the Conservation Area was used as a local match in lieu of funds for the grant to purchase Sterne’s.
- There is no vehicular access to the property which prevents any type of maintenance.
• Ann Viger, Director of Park Development and Interpretive Services, had drafted a four phase solution, as follows.
  
  o Phase One: Access FY 2020-21: Using the three access points that are owned by the park district, provide vehicular access (for maintenance and police only) into the property. The first step is to hire a surveyor to stake all of the property lines. We then need to work with the neighbors on each side of the three access points so they understand the plan. Also in phase one, provide access from Shamrock Hills to PRCA via the school district property. This will be pedestrian and ATV-type access, not truck access. Both of these projects will be contracted.
  
  o Phase Two: Trails FY 2021-22: Develop the trail system through the property that was laid out by Applied Ecological Services. This work could be accomplished by a combination of park district staff, volunteers (like Scouts) and a contractor. Upon completion of the trails, begin a fish stocking program in both ponds. Develop and install several interpretive signs along the paths.
  
  o Phase Three: Management FY 22-24: Begin regular management of the property including selective, reasonable removal of invasive species, trail maintenance and tree care.
  
  o Phase Four: Restoration FY 23-25: Apply for and receive a Section 319 grant to restore the stream and riparian corridor. As a project identified in the Sleepy Hollow/Silver Creek Watershed Plan, this would receive high priority in the grant process.

• The Board agreed to move forward with the four-phase plan.

Canterbury Park Playground Replacement:
• Ask the School District to contribute to half of the cost for the playground replacement project.
• The Board agreed to bid out and budget to replace the playground, present the bid results to the School District
• The Board suggested turning the property over to the School District.
• The affiliate group will be contacted regarding the ballfield.

Attitude and Interest Survey
Executive Director Herbster noted staff met in December to review and categorize items from the survey. The main topics are listed below.
  
  o Customer Service
  o Recreational Programs/Events
  o Facilities
  o Parks
  o Better/high level maintenance in high use areas - Veteran Acres, Beaches, Lippold, Woodscreek
  o Stewardship
  o Stop acquiring property
  o Maintenance
  o Training
  o Planning
  o Marketing
  o Safety
  o Finance
  o Shared Drive - Board packets, Department meeting minutes placed on shared drive to provide communication for those looking for information
  o Social media usage - employees use to promote/share CLPD information
  o Employees - all need to be trained to be advocates of the CLPD

• Staff’s area of focus will be on enhancing and expanding programming.
• If the Recreational Trail grant is approved, there will be great enhancements to Sterne’s Woods, the Fen and Veteran Acres.
• Commissioner Hartwig requested increasing marketing to the Village of Lakewood Residents, as
the Crystal Lake Park District is their recreation resource.

- The Board discussed changing the name of the Park District to possibly Crystal Lake Area Park District as the district boundaries reach out beyond Crystal Lake. Executive Director Herbster will contact Legal Counsel and staff will research costs for a changeover.
- Commissioner Bachour-Chemaly suggested adding this to the newsletter and social media.
- Lakewood Haligus Park is in the due diligence process. Staff will meet with the Conservation District before creating a timeline of the project.

Facilities
The Racket Club
- The Racket Club fund balance is in compliance.
- Commissioner Zimmerman suggested updating the interior of the facility.
- Enhance the new courts with led lighting.
- Outdoor courts and fencing need to be replaced
- Plans to replace the roof at the Club.
- Solicit input from the members.
- Executive Director Herbster, reported Claire Naughton, Facility Manager and Rob Laue, Racket Club Manager, attended workshops on different court surface options. It is a possibility that all of the outdoor courts can be done with an alternative surface less than the cost of asphalt. It would cost approximately $3000 to have a consultant evaluate all of the courts.
- The Racket Club has been moved out of the enterprise fund. A decision needs to be made to use funds from Capital Projects or the Racket Club funds for projects.
- Commissioner Gallagher and Aquilina requested a cost for the roof replacements.
- Superintendent Reckamp noted there has been discussions of bringing additional revenue producing programming to the Racket Club. Executive Herbster added Pickleball has been added and more activities can be run at the Club, than just tennis at the Club.
- Commissioner Hartwig suggested seeking a grant to help with costs of solar lighting.

The Board agreed to seek consultants to review the condition of the roof, solar lighting, and the courts at The Racket Club.

Finance
- Executive Director Herbster noted this is the year the District will be issuing the every 2-year, 1.5 million dollar bond issuance for capital projects.
- Place funds in the budget for the due diligence process for the Lakewood Park (Haligus Park)
- Begin the process for funding the roof replacement at The Racket Club
- There was discussion on an additional corporate fund and earmarking a portion for capital improvements

Review of Mission and Vision Statements
- Commissioner Cagle suggested reviewing the mission statement and core values of the Park District. Executive Director Herbster noted the review is scheduled every 5 years and is due for review in 2021.
- The Board agreed to commit to budgeting for a consultant to review the mission statement in FY 2021-2022.

Adjourn:
Commissioner Cagle moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:00pm. Seconded by Commissioner Hartwig. All were in favor.

Approve: ___________________________________________ Attest: ________________________________________________
President Secretary