Park District Board of Commissioners
Annual Meeting Minutes
May 18, 2026

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Call to Order: President Tiesenga called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Commissioners Present: Cathy Cagle, Jason Heisler, Richard Hickey, Michael Jacobson, Karen Johnson, Keith Nisenson, Frederick Tiesenga

Legal Counsel: Eric Anderson, Staub Anderson LLC

Staff: Kurt Reckamp, Interim Executive Director, Erik Jakubowski, Superintendent of Park Services, Amy Olson Manager of Park Planning and Development/ADA Coordinator, Tina Becke, Superintendent of Business Services, Jenny Leech, Superintendent of Marketing and Communication Services, Anne Sandor, Recording Secretary, Chief John Longo

Citizens: Debbie Gallagher, Erin Wagner, John Martin, Ron Cagle, Brett Hopkins, Marc Sparber, Bonnie Johnson, Tom Burney, Lynn Doherty, Kristen Davis, Laure Obermeier, Kate Walsh, Bruce Mazurkiewicz, Pat Dieckhoff, Kim Hankins, Michelle, Thimios, David Bradburn, Helene Howalewski, Mike Johnson, Joe Deluca, Margaret Resnick, Ron Mazur, Diane Keen, Brad Fennessy, Cynthia Paulson, Jamie Peterson, Deb Mendez, Christine Park, Natasha Teetsov

Pledge of Allegiance: The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of the Agenda:
Commissioner Cagle moved to approve agenda, as presented.
Seconded by Commissioner Jacobson.
Roll Call: Ayes: 7(Cagle, Heisler, Hickey, Jacobson, Johnson, Nisenson, Tiesenga) Nays: 0

Matters from the Public:
Erin Wagner shared concerns about the Board president's leadership, including conflicts of interest, policy changes, meeting procedures, spending decisions, and transparency. She urged the Board to consider a change in leadership.

John Martin referred to the removal of item D. of the Park District Ordinance 11.41. He expressed concern that removing regulations related to shoreline structures could create confusion and reduce oversight.

Mark Sparber spoke about the value of public comment and encouraged the Board to place it earlier on meeting agendas. He emphasized transparency, respectful dialogue, and meaningful community engagement. Full comments are attached.

Tom Burney expressed frustration with how public comment was handled at a previous meeting, recognized Rosemary Kurtz for her service and recent honor from the Illinois State Legislature, he asked for a moment of silence in her memory. He also encouraged the Board to consider pursuing new leadership.

Lynn Doherty thanked the Board for its service, recommended Karen Johnson for Board president, and suggested the Board review its current legal counsel and consider seeking proposals for attorney services.

Bruce Mazurkiewicz raised concerns about Board leadership, public participation, meeting procedures, and the role of legal counsel. He encouraged the Board to review its policies and governance practices to improve transparency and public confidence. Full comments are attached.

David Bradburn commented on discussions about Three Oaks and public access, questioned how certain terms were being used, and encouraged continued attention to communication, accountability, and public engagement.

Brad Fennessy highlighted recent park improvements and raised concerns about Board leadership, policy decisions, and increasing division within the community. He asked for changes in leadership and legal counsel. Full comments are attached.

Unfinished Business: None.

Consent Agenda:
Commissioner Cagle moved to approve the following consent agenda items, as presented.

A. Approval: Voucher Expenses for the month ending April 30, 2026, in the amount of $542,049.01.
B. Approval: Interim Voucher Expenses for the month ending May 31, 2026, in the amount of $284,915.80.
C. Accept: Treasurer's Report April 30, 2026, in the amount of $14,149,565.14.
D. Approval: Regular Park Board Meeting Minutes 04.20.26

Seconded by Commissioner Hickey
Roll Call: Ayes: 7(Cagle, Heisler, Hickey, Jacobson, Johnson, Nisenson, Tiesenga) Nays: 0
Commissioner Hickey recused himself from the approval of payments to Chas. Herdrich.

Items Removed from Consent Agenda: None.

BINA Public Hearing
Commissioner Tiesenga opened the public hearing at 6:45pm and read the following.
"Conduct of Public Hearing concerning the intent of the Board of Park of Commissioners to sell not to exceed $2,000,000 General Obligation Park Bonds (Alternate Revenue Source) for the payment of land condemned or purchased for parks, for the building, maintaining, improving and protecting of the same and the existing land and facilities of the District and for the payment of the expenses incident thereto."

Commissioner Cagle moved to approve the BINA public hearing.
Seconded by Commissioner Nisenson.
Roll Call: Ayes; 7 (Hickey, Jacobson, Johnson, Nisenson, Cagle Heisler, Tiesenga) Nays:0
Commissioner Tiesengao asked for comment from the public and Park Board. There were none.
Commissioner Tiesenga closed the public hearing at 6:46pm.

Nomination/Election of Officers

A. President: Commissioner Tiesenga nominated Commissioner Nisenson. Seconded by Commissioner Cagle
   Roll Call: Ayes: 7 (Nisenson, Cagle, Heisler, Hickey, Jacobson, Johnson, Tiesenga) Nays: 0
B. Vice President: Commissioner Johnson nominated Commissioner Jacobson. Seconded by Commissioner Jacobson
   Roll Call: Ayes: 7 (Hickey, Jacobson, Johnson, Tiesenga, Cagle, Heisler, Nisenson) Nays: 0

Special Appointments

A. Board Secretary: Commissioner Cagle nominated Interim Executive Director Kurt Reckamp. Seconded by Commissioner Jacobson
   Roll Call: Ayes: 7 (Heisler, Hickey, Jacobson, Johnson, Tiesenga, Cagle, Nisenson) Nays: 0

B. Board Treasurer: Commissioner Cagle nominated Commissioner Tiesenga. Seconded by Commissioner Heisler
   Roll Call: Ayes: 7 (Heisler, Hickey, Jacobson, Johnson, Tiesenga, Cagle, Nisenson) Nays: 0

C. Assistant Board Treasurer: Commissioner Cagle nominated Superintendent Tina Becke. Seconded by Commissioner Jacobson
   Roll Call: Ayes: 7 (Tiesenga, Cagle, Heisler, Hickey, Jacobson, Johnson, Nisenson) Nays: 0

D. Legal Counsel: Commissioner Cagle moved to appoint Attorney Eric Anderson, Staub Anderson LLC. as the Park District's legal counsel for a three-month term while the Board conducts the annual evaluation required by the General Practices Policy Manual.

   Seconded by Commissioner Jacobson.

   Commissioner Tiesenga moved to amend the motion to continue with Attorney Eric Anderson, Staub Anderson LLC as the Park District's legal counsel without a term limitation. Seconded by Commissioner Heisler.

   Roll Call on Amendment: Ayes: 3 (Tiesenga, Heisler, Nisenson) Nays: 4 (Johnson, Cagle, Hickey, Jacobson). Motion Failed.

   Roll Call on Commissioner Cagle's motion to appoint Attorney Eric Anderson, Staub Anderson LLC. as the Park District's legal counsel for a three-month term while the Board conducts the annual evaluation required by the General Practices Policy Manual: Ayes: 4 (Hickey, Jacobson, Johnson, Cagle) Nays: 3 (Heisler, Tiesenga, Nisenson) Motion Carried.

E. FOIA Officers: Commissioner Cagle moved to appoint Kurt Reckamp and Anne Sandor. Seconded by Commissioner Jacobson.
   Roll Call: Ayes: 7 (Johnson, Tiesenga, Cagle, Heisler, Hickey, Jacobson, Nisenson) Nays: 0

F. Open Meetings Act Officer: Commissioner Cagle moved to appoint Kurt Reckamp. Seconded by Commissioner Johnson.
   Roll Call: Ayes: 7 (Jacobson, Johnson, Tiesenga, Cagle, Heisler, Hickey, Nisenson) Nays: 0

G. NISRA Board of Directors: Commissioner Cagle moved to appoint Kurt Reckamp. Seconded by Commissioner Johnson.
Roll Call: Ayes: 7 (Cagle, Heisler, Hickey, Jacobson, Johnson, Tiesenga, Nisenson) Nays: 0

H. Crystal Lake Park Initiative Foundation: Commissioner Cagle moved to appoint Commissioner Johnson. Seconded by Commissioner Jacobson.
Roll Call: Ayes: 7 (Hickey, Jacobson, Johnson, Tiesenga, Cagle, Heisler, Nisenson) Nays: 0

Agenda Items:
A. Brochure Bid Results
Interim Executive Director Reckamp noted that the bids came in over budget due to increased paper costs. Commissioner Hickey asked how the price compared to last year. Superintendent Leech reported that the budget for the series was $56,150 and that this year's bid came in at $62,900, and is confident in moving forward with Paulson Press, Inc.

Commissioner Cagle moved to approve the bid received from Paulson Press, Inc. in the amount of $62,900 for the Activity Guide Printing Series for Fall 2026, Winter/Spring 2026-27, and Summer 2027. Seconded by Commissioner Hickey.
Roll Call: Ayes: 7 (Johnson, Tiesenga, Cagle, Heisler, Hickey, Jacobson, Nisenson) Nays: 0

B. Purchase: Toro Groundsmaster 7500 96" Deck Mower
Commissioner Cagle moved to approve the purchase of one Toro Groundsmaster 7500 96" Deck Mower for $47,322.14 from Reindeers, Sourcewell National Joint Purchase. Seconded by Commissioner Jacobson.
Roll Call: Ayes: 7 (Heisler, Hickey, Jacobson, Johnson, Tiesenga, Cagle, Nisenson) Nays: 0

Reports to the Board:
Interim Executive Director Reckamp
- Beaches will open over Memorial Day weekend, kicking off the summer season.
- Lifeguard training is underway, and regular summer programs, including Tuesday night concerts will begin soon.
- The District is testing the "Away With Geese" deterrent system to help reduce geese activity and prevent elevated bacteria levels that led to beach closures last year. The technology has been used by other park districts and was featured at the IPRA conference. Staff will continue monitoring its effectiveness and will provide an update later in the season.

Superintendent of Business Services, Tina Becke
- Staff reported that a large number of seasonal employees have been hired as preparations continue for the summer season.
- The department has been busy processing new hire paperwork

Jenny Leech, Superintendent of Marketing and Communication Services
- The Marketing Department welcomed a new marketing intern, who has already begun assisting with social media projects and marketing analytics.
- Staff is currently focused on summer marketing materials, advertising, social media, and seasonal communications.

- Work on the website redesign has been delayed while staff prioritizes summer programming, but a launch is still anticipated in early to mid-August.
- Additional seasonal publications, including a beach e-newsletter, the summer Park Report will be June 24 and the fall Activity Guide on August 13.

Erik Jakubowski, Superintendent of Park Services

- Park Services staff reported that this is a very busy time of year and noted the team is doing a great job.
- Staff is looking forward to the upcoming Memorial Day weekend as the start of the summer season.

Manager of Park Planning and Development, Amy Olson

- The concrete pad for the shelter at Woodscreek Park was installed last week, showing progress on the project.

Chief John Longo, Park Police Department

- Noted the Park Police report to the Board was about 12 pages and reflected an increase of department activity. Staff is documenting all ordinance violations, including after-hours use, leash issues, and suspicious vehicles.
- Conservation and park checks have increased, including 19 fishing license checks and routine site inspections.
- The department recorded 226 calls for service in April, with activity continuing to rise year-to-date.
- Two sexual assault cases were reported in the parks; one remains under investigation and one is not proceeding at the victim's request, with both handled through proper procedures.
- Enforcement activity included 171 property checks, 26 ordinance violations, and ongoing foot patrol documentation.
- Upcoming efforts include joint boat launch enforcement with Lakewood PD and access compliance checks.
- Staff training is planned for new hires and beach staff, including active shooter awareness training.

Matters from the Board:

Commissioner Cagle

- Noted that the program brochure looks great. Reckamp noted that summer camps have filled quickly after going to print, though they are not fully sold out due to ongoing registrations and cancellations. He explained that camp enrollment remains flexible, with openings often changing as families adjust their schedules closer to summer.
- Thanked staff for their work on program planning and camp coordination. She commented that there was a fifth grade dance for any kid graduating from fifth grade. Reckamp noted that the dance was successful, though attendance was lower than expected; staff views it as a pilot event that can be improved in future years.
- Cathy recognized the Marketing department for adding an accessibility feature to the website, making it easier to use for people with different visual or cognitive needs. She noted her appreciation for the ongoing compliance efforts.

Commissioner Jacobson

- Expressed gratitude to community members for their engagement and participation over the past year.
- He shared that he is "so proud to call this place my home," noting a long personal history in the community since 1965, and added that this time of year is their favorite, as "things come back to life" and the community becomes active again.

Commissioner Nisenson

- Shared positive comments about Lakewood Meadows, describing it as "absolutely vibrant and electric," noting it is often crowded with families and community users, including early-morning pickleball players. He encouraged others to visit the park. .
- They added personal remarks about enjoying visits to Lippold Park, sharing that recent maintenance work had noticeably improved conditions, with weeds treated and the park quickly restored to a well-kept appearance. They thanked staff for their work in maintaining the parks and "making spring come alive."
- The member also noted ongoing interest in improvements at Lippold, including future parking lot paving, and expressed appreciation for staff efforts overall.
- He thanked the attendees for participating in the meeting.

Executive Session:
Commissioner Cagle moved to enter Executive Session at 7:12pm, to discuss item
B. Personnel 2(c)1. Seconded by Commissioner Jacobson
Roll Call: Ayes: 7 (Tiesenga, Johnson, Jacobson, Hickey, Cagle, Heisler, Nisenson) Nays: 0

Reconvene: Commissioner Nisenson reconvened the meeting at 8:29pm.

Adjourn: Commissioner Nisenson adjourned the meeting at 8:30 pm.

Approve: _____ Attest:_____
President Secretary

Speech: Restoring the Standard of Decorum

Introduction
Good evening, President Tiesenga, members of the Board, and fellow residents of Crystal Lake.

I am here tonight to speak on a matter that is fundamental to the health of our local government: the standard of decorum—both from this dais and from the public gallery.

The Purpose of Public Comment
The mission of the Crystal Lake Park District is to "build trust and provide transparency." For that trust to exist, the public comment portion of these meetings cannot be treated as a legal formality to be buried at the end of a long night. It is the primary bridge between the taxpayers and the commissioners who represent them.

When the public is required to wait hours to speak on items that have already been voted upon, it creates a barrier to engagement. I want to thank the commissioners who recently moved to return public comment to its rightful place before the vote. This isn't just about efficiency; it is about respect for the community's time and the value of their input.

A Call for Mutual Decorum
However, decorum is a two-way street.

- **To the Public:** If we want our voices to be heard and taken seriously, we must approach this podium with the intent to inform and advocate, not to disrupt. We must respect the three-minute limit and maintain a tone that allows for constructive dialogue.
- **To the Board:** Decorum from the dais means more than just following Roberts Rules of Order. It means active listening. It means avoiding dismissive body language and ensuring that the public feels their three minutes are being valued, not just endured.

Conclusion
We are all here because we care about our parks, our lake, and our community. Whether we are discussing the budget, the lakefront, or policy changes, we can disagree without being disagreeable.

I ask this Board to commit to a permanent policy that prioritizes public input early in the agenda and to lead by example in fostering an environment of professionalism and mutual respect. Let's get back to the business of "enriching lives through recreation" in a way that makes every resident proud of how our District is governed.

Thank you.

Marc Spacher

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD,

I AM HERE TONIGHT TO ADDRESS A SEVERE BREACH OF PUBLIC TRUST AND A FAILURE OF LEADERSHIP THAT OCCURRED AT OUR LAST MEETING. WHEN THE BOARD PRESIDENT USED THEIR PLATFORM FROM THE DAIS TO PUBLICLY TARGET, SHAME, AND EMBARRASS TWO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC FOR SENDING CRITICAL TEXT MESSAGES, A LINE WAS CROSSED FROM GOVERNANCE INTO OUTRIGHT INTIMIDATION.

FIRST, LET'S BE ENTIRELY CLEAR ABOUT THE LAW. PUBLIC COMMENT AND CRITICISM OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS ARE FUNDAMENTALLY PROTECTED UNDER THE FIRST AMENDMENT. WHEN A PRESIDING OFFICER USES THEIR OFFICIAL AUTHORITY TO SINGLE OUT AND HUMILIATE A RESIDENT FOR EXPRESSING CRITICAL VIEWPOINTS, IT IS NOT JUST UNPROFESSIONAL, IT IS A FORM OF RETALIATION. IT

CREATES A DANGEROUS 'CHILLING EFFECT' MEANT TO SILENCE DISSENT. COURTS HAVE MADE IT CLEAR: PUBLIC OFFICIALS CANNOT USE THEIR POWER TO HARASS CITIZENS FOR EXERCISING THEIR RIGHT TO PETITION THEIR GOVERNMENT.

SECOND, THIS BEHAVIOR IS A DIRECT VIOLATION OF THE BASIC RULES OF ORDER AND THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT. THE ROLE OF THE CHAIR IS TO MAINTAIN DECORUM, NOT TO WEAPONIZE THE GAVEL TO SETTLE PERSONAL GRIEVANCES. IF A BOARD MEMBER OBJECTS TO A RESIDENT'S CRITIQUE, THE PROPER, LEGAL CHANNEL IS TO ADDRESS THE FACTS PROFESSIONALLY, NOT TO LAUNCH A PERSONAL ATTACK ON A CITIZEN'S CHARACTER.

FURTHERMORE, THIS FAILURE EXTENDS DIRECTLY TO THE PARK DISTRICT'S LEGAL COUNSEL, WHO SAT BY SILENTLY AND WATCHED THESE VIOLATIONS OCCUR. THE PRIMARY

DUTY OF BOARD COUNSEL IS TO PROTECT THIS DISTRICT FROM LEGAL EXPOSURE AND CONSTITUTIONAL VIOLATIONS. BY FAILING TO INTERVENE AND FAILING TO STOP AN OPEN VIOLATION OF THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT, LEGAL COUNSEL UTTERLY FAILED THIS BOARD.

BECAUSE OF THIS PROFOUND ABDICATION OF PROFESSIONAL DUTY, I CALL TONIGHT FOR THE IMMEDIATE RESIGNATION OF THE PARK DISTRICT LEGAL COUNSEL. POWER DYNAMIC MATTERS. WHEN YOU SIT BEHIND THAT MICROPHONE, YOU REPRESENT THE INSTITUTION. USING THAT POWER TO BULLY A RESIDENT FROM A POSITION OF AUTHORITY IS AN ABUSE OF OFFICE.

I CALL ON THIS BOARD TO IMMEDIATELY REVIEW ITS CODES OF CONDUCT, CUT TIES WITH LEGAL COUNSEL WHO WILL NOT PROTECT THE LAW, ISSUE A FORMAL APOLOGY TO THE INDIVIDUALS WHO WERE TARGETED, AND ENSURE THAT THIS

4.

CHAMBER REMAINS A SAFE, DEMOCRATIC SPACE FOR PUBLIC DISCOURSE.

THANK YOU.

Bruce Mazurkiewicz
217 Sunset Terrace

5/18/2026

Good evening.

We live in a community defined by its resources. Whether it's the quiet, vital restoration work happening right now at Sterne's Woods, or the incredible energy at the new Lakewood Meadows Park on Haligus Rd, our parks are meant to be a refuge. These public spaces, especially new successes like Lakewood Meadows, remind us of what's possible when we have a clear, community-focused vision in place. That is the Park District we should be celebrating.

But lately, in this room, that celebration has been replaced by an atmosphere of hostility.

Transparency and fiscal responsibility aren't just buzzwords; they are the floor upon which good governance stands. Unfortunately, under President Tiesenga's leadership, that floor has fallen through.

We have been dragged into a cycle of manufactured crises. We've seen established DEI policies dismantled, lake advisory groups upended, and taxpayer money used to fund a "Drama Tax." When our district's counsel, Eric Anderson, spends his $425-an-hour time filing police reports over a resident's Facebook message, he isn't protecting this district. He is building a high-priced shield to protect a board member's ego from public accountability. And that's a shame.

You see, this is more than just a First Amendment concern; it is a competency concern. When a board is more afraid of a camera lens than it is focused on our parks, it has lost its way.

As a concerned citizen, I have lost confidence in this leadership's ability to protect the interests of the public from the many months of wasted energy put forth by members of this board and your legal counsel.

As we approach the annual reorganization on the 18th, it is time for a "System Reset." President Tiesenga, for the health of this board, I urge you to allow a fellow commissioner to step into the chair, someone who can model engagement rather than avoidance. Give yourself the chance to watch how the role should be performed.

Furthermore, we must address the counsel. Mr. Anderson, your performance this year has shown that you are underqualified for the specific needs of a public Park District. Your focus on "investigating" citizens rather than facilitating governance has cost us enough. It is time for this district to seek counsel that values the law over political theater.

Restructuring isn't just about changing names; it's about reclaiming our direction. Let's stop running in circles and start moving toward a vision, like the one we see at Lakewood Meadows, that we can actually celebrate again.

Thank you.

Brad Cameron