

Call to Order:

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

Roll Call:

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

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, Claire Naughton, Manager of Facility Services, Anne Sandor, Recording Secretary

Pledge of Allegiance: The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Anderson asked if there were any corrections to the agenda. There were none.

Matters from the Public: Keith Nisenson, Resident request the Board consider limiting human powered watercraft to remain between the buoy line and shoreline during the no wake hours for safety purposes. Commissioner Anderson stated the Park Board will discuss making a recommendation to the Village of Lakewood and the City of Crystal Lake.

2024-2025 Proposed Budget Review

Executive Director Herbster thanked the staff for work done on the proposed budget and the Park Board for their review. Herbster noted that the bottom line shows the budget operations have gone from \$14M-\$19M. A direct reflection on the amount of use of services. We need to make changes in the daily routine to keep up with the services. Once the budget review is completed, changes will be made and the budget will be placed on display for 30 days.

Superintendent Tina Becke highlighted the following items in the proposed budget.

- The budget shows historical data from the previous two fiscal years through January 2024.
- Based on actuals, the liability fund will be within policy by the end of the fiscal year.
- The total expected ending fund balance is \$4.944M based on the proposed budget.
- The proposed budget included the addition of a full-time manager of Business Services. Director Herbster noted that with position will allow Superintendent Becke to focus on long term projecting and other projects. Commissioner Cagle suggested not to grow staff for the next budget and utilize contractors or bring in interns to work in the marketing, recreation, accounting, human resources and programming.
- A merit salary and wage increase pool of 5% was proposed. Commissioner Anderson asked if the budget included COLA. Executive Director Herbster stated that COLA was not part of the merit pool.
- Staff will be meeting with the health, dental and group life insurance broker in April to discuss benefits plan renewal. Allowances for the possibility that current employees currently who are waiving the coverage may require coverage in the future along with the change in the status of current employees are included in the budget.
- A few re-budgeted items are included in the Capital Projects.

- The Budget and Appropriation Ordinance will be completed once the proposed budget is approved. Commissioner Anderson asked if projecting over 20% for unexpected needs is too high. Executive Director Herbster stated 20% is standard in the park district industry. Superintendent Becke added the 20% allows staff to present unbudgeted items to the board for approval. Executive Director Herbster will check with other agencies
- Reviewed the Budget Timeline.
- Commissioner Anderson questioned the surplus in the capital fund. Executive Director Herbster stated that funds are used to complete capital projects. Working with a 5-year financial plan will make it easier. Commissioner Anderson stated that the projections need to be budgeted better so there is no surplus. Commissioner Jacobson noted that the Park District is in the business to provide recreational opportunities for the community and that revenue reduces spending. Herbster noted that a portion of the surplus is earmarked for the Haligus park project. Commissioner Michehl noted that unexpected expenses do come up and could be funded by the surplus; i.e., the weed harvester purchase.
- Review of the budgeted revenues were discussed.

Executive Director Herbster highlighted the following items in the proposed budget.

- Herbster noted that the Comprehensive Master Plan and Agency Goals are included in the proposed budget. Moving forward the agency goals will be a part of the budget process, the staff will be working on a 5-year Capital Plan that will include the Master Plan Agency Goals along with the 10-year Capital Replacement/Improvement schedule.
- The Organization Chart shows one additional position and changes to two current positions. The position of a Manager of Business Services is being proposed due to the increase of services being used which has caused an increase of work handled by the Business Services. The position will also allow the Superintendent of Business Services to focus on projects and financial planning. Due to the size of the organization and the high level and quality of work done by the Marketing Department, the Marketing Manager position is being reclassified to a Superintendent level and the Marketing Coordinator positions reclassified to a manager level. Commissioner Cagle asked the Board to consider working on not growing staff next year and to look at contractual agencies for seasonal work and to look for internships to work with marketing, accounting, programming and human resources. Herbster stated that he hesitates to increase staff unless needed and noted that Recreation Services has budgeted for a summer intern. Superintendent Becke noted that the contractual agency costs are extremely high.
- PDMRA rates have increased. The liability fund is projected to have an ending fund balance which falls below the fund balance policy.
- Health Insurance rates are projected to increase. Staff has budgeted higher to cover any employee changes. Commissioner Anderson asked that a review of the figures proposed for health insurance be done by staff.
- Commissioner Anderson requested a review of the percentage the district appropriates for the budget and appropriation ordinance. Executive Director Herbster will research other park district's percentages to compare.

Superintendent Eric Jakubowski highlighted the following items in the proposed budget.

- Eric Jakubowski noted that due to the lack of leased vehicles received this year funds will be carried over to the 2024-2025 fiscal year.
- The purchase of a dump truck, a work truck and a Toro 4000 mower and tractor have been added to the budget.
- Proposed projects for the 2024-2025 fiscal year include irrigation repairs at the soccer fields, roof replacement at Main Beach, railing replacement, boat ramp and driveway rehabilitation at West Beach.

Commissioner Anderson asked questions regarding the proposed budget for the Weed Harvester and Lake Usage Decals. Executive Director Herbster noted that the cost and revenue include Park District expenses, wages to run the weed harvester, Lakewood patrol, additional lake ecology costs, boat decal supplies and postage. Superintendent Jakubowski stated that staff will track hours as this is the trial year to run the weed harvester.

Superintendent Kurt Reckamp highlighted the following items in the proposed budget.

- Aquatics: The purchase of swim docks and a jet ski. Trained staff will utilize the jet ski to retrieve stranded watercraft.
- Recreation Fund is at the 30% profit margin to cover salaries, wages and commodities.
- Senior programming and special events are budgeted for loss or break even.
- The Extended Time staff health insurances costs are covered by the ET/Summer Camp programs.
- Plans for a Recreation Intern
- Retirement: One employee will be retiring this year; a replacement will be hired for the position.
- Special Recreation: Inclusion needs have increased this year. An additional \$80,000 is proposed to cover costs.
- Museum Fund: Program participation has increased at the Colonel Palmer House, as well as the field trip and birthday party programs.
- Upgrades to Facilities: Flooring and court resurfacing at The Racket Club. A recommendation is proposed to change the part-time Racket Club Business Manager position to a full-time position. All upcoming project costs will be paid by The Racket Club fund.
- The Outdoor Court Grand Opening at the Racket Club is scheduled for April 27, 2024.
- The Nature Center Grand Reopening is scheduled for June 1, 2024.

Manager of Development and Planning, Amy Olson highlighted the following items in the proposed budget.

- ADA projects include the new Haligus Park, the front walk at the Nature Center and walking paths at Woodland Estates.
- Current Fiscal Year Projects include:
 - Haligus Park plans are on track with design and development and will go out to bid this upcoming spring.
 - Spoerl Park playground resurfacing and The Racket Club outdoor court projects are completed.
 - The Nature Center exhibits are being fabricated. Special thanks to the Nature Center, Park Services and Marketing teams for their work on this project.
 - North Rotary Shelter replacement will be carried over to the 2024-2025 fiscal year.
 - Main Beach upgrades to the deck and canopies
- 2024-2025 FY
 - Della Park Playground Design: staff is waiting for the IDNR approval to begin construction documents.
 - Mickey Sands Fields; the main focus will be on replacing the field netting and backstops
 - Boncosky Complex building improvements
 - Maintenance Garage roof replacement
 - Woodland Estates Playground replacement

Manager Olson has update the 10-year replacement plan to spread out projects to be able to fund appropriately.

Commissioner Anderson noted that he was not prepared to approve the proposed budget and requested the Board to have additional time to review and submit changes.

Executive Director noted changes on the Health Insurance will be made and will be emailed to the Board and any other changes will be discussed at the Regular Park Board meeting on March 21, and staff will adjust the timeline. Commissioner Cagle requested in the future an additional meeting to be added to the timeline to address changes after the Budget Review meeting.

Discussion:

Barlina Barn

Commissioner Cagle requested the Board to reconsider restoring the barn to a historical museum. It was a consensus of the Board to discuss the Barlina Barn at the Regular Park Board meeting on March 21.

Skate Park:

Commissioner Cagle requested the Board to consider relocating the Lippold Park Skate Park to Woodscreek Park and adding sand volleyball courts at Lippold Park.

Executive Director Herbster noted that staff will review the employee health insurance budget and email the revisions to the Park Board. Staff will also review the percentages the district appropriates for the budget and appropriation ordinance and will email the information to the Park Board.

Commissioner Anderson adjourned the meeting at 8:33 PM.

Approve: _____ Attest: _____
President Secretary