

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE OAK BROOK PARK DISTRICT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
December 16, 2024 – 6:30 p.m.
Canterberry Room

1. CALL TO ORDER THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE OAK BROOK PARK DISTRICT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS AND CONDUCT THE ROLL CALL

President Knitter called to order the Regular Meeting of the Oak Brook Park District at the hour of 6:32 p.m. Commissioners Gondek, Ivkovic Kelley, Suleiman, Vescovi, and President Knitter answered “present” from the Oak Brook Park District Family Recreation Center, Canterberry Conference Room. Also present in Canterberry Conference Room was Laure Kosey, Executive Director; Marco Salinas, Chief Financial Officer; Bob Johnson, Deputy Director; Robert Pechous, Director of Recreation and Communications; and Steve Adams, District Attorney.

2. OPEN FORUM

President Knitter announced that there will be a meeting concerning the Saddlebrook stable in April, so there will be more time to research. The Board has communicated with the Historical Society which found that the stable is not a historical property, and the stable is uninhabitable and unsafe. The Park District will continue maintenance on the stable and insurance payments.

President Knitter asked if there were any public comments.

Allen Koren president of the Saddle Brook Community Association stated that the association has been pleased with the Oak Brook Park District, and Saddle Brook is one of two Oak Brook communities that has a park. Koren continued to present the history of the Saddle Brook horse barn. Koren reported that the Developer had an agreement with the Park District in 1975 in owning the land and barn. The horse barn has been used for storage since then. The Saddle Brook Community Association would like the Park District to preserve the horse barn. Koren provided handouts concerning the horse barn to the Board.

Jonas Vainius, an Oak Brook Saddle Brook resident, presented the history of the land transfers where the horse barn is located. Vainius stated that polo was the foundation of Oak Brook. Although the horse barn will not accrue revenue, the horse barn will be an Oak Brook asset as preserved history for the next generation of homeowners.

Steve Adams announced that the meeting is being audio and video recorded by an audience member.

Tina Chan, an Oak Brook resident, commented on the tax levy increase. Chan recommends that there should be an explanation for increasing the tax levy each year, so the approval process should be changed.

Karen Bushy, a long-time Oak Brook Saddle Brook resident, asked residents to ask themselves why Oak Brook is different. Bushy presented Paul Butler’s vision; Paul Butler said there is always change and change is growth. Change must be managed for the benefit of Oak Brook. Paul Butler wanted people and children to know that history happened in Oak Brook. Bushy suggested to be creative in preserving the history of the barn instead of demolishing it.

Elizabeth Gossage, President of Oak Brook Historical Society, stated that Oak Brook is a historic community since the early 1800’s. There are seven historic structures in Oak Brook, however, only three of them have been designated as historic. Gossage requests that the Board allows residents of Saddle

Brook to continue their research on the horse barn especially since horse barns are very rare. Please contact Gossage if the Board has any questions.

Lindsay Koski, a Saddle Brook Oak Brook resident, stated that she posted about the horse barn on social media to gather more information. Koski stated that young families who she knows do not know the horse barn is in Saddle Brook. Koski would like there to be more research on the horse barn and avoid a quick decision.

President Knitter stated that there is a pause on the horse barn. President Knitter invites residents to come to the Board meetings. There have been many discussions on the horse barn but the Board will continue the discussion in April.

Commissioner Suleiman announced that the horse barn was not confirmed to be demolished. Commissioner Suleiman suggested that the best method of discussion is to come to the Commissioners or Park District staff instead of posting on social media. Commissioners and staff will not respond to social media, so residents will not receive more information through that method.

Commissioner Ivkovic Kelley added that the Board and staff have been considering other options.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 16, 2024 AGENDA
- b. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
 - i. November 18, 2024 Regular Board Meeting Minutes
 - ii. November 18, 2024 Closed Meeting Minutes
- c. APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL STATEMENT ENDING NOVEMBER 30, 2024
 - i. Warrant 691

Motion: Commissioner Suleiman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Ivkovic Kelley, to approve taking a Single Omnibus Vote on the Consent Agenda as presented.

There was no additional discussion, and the motion passed by roll call vote.

Ayes: Commissioners Gondek, Ivkovic Kelley, Suleiman, Vescovi, and President Knitter
Nays: None

Motion: Commissioner Suleiman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Ivkovic Kelley, to approve the Consent Agenda.

There was no additional discussion, and the motion passed by roll call vote.

Ayes: Commissioners Gondek, Ivkovic Kelley, Suleiman, Vescovi, and President Knitter
Nays: None

4. STAFF RECOGNITION

- a. None

5. COMMUNICATIONS/PROCLAMATIONS

- a. Board of Commissioners to share communications.

There was no communication between Board Members.

- b. Mike Kies, Gold Medal Finalist Presentation

Mike Kies presented the Oak Brook Park District with the 2024 Gold Medal Finalist Award for the Excellence in Park and Recreation Management.

6. REPORTS:

- a. Administration and Enterprise Operations Report

Dr. Laure Kosey presented her report, which can be found in the Park District's records.

Dr. Kosey stated that the Administrative Policy and Procedures Manual has been divided into six sections. Section 1 has been reviewed, so Section 2 is next and longer. Dr. Kosey asks the Board to please send her the comments if there are any by January 7, 2025.

Dr. Kosey stated that Bob Johnson will present the solar panels for the Family Recreation Center (FRC) roof.

- b. Finance and Human Resources Report

Marco Salinas presented his report, which can be found in the Park District's records.

Salinas reported on the financials for the first seven months of the 2024/2025 Fiscal Year (FY). All three major funds have surpluses. Membership and programming revenues are up.

Commissioner Vescovi asked about the expense to Red Feather.

Johnson responded that the Red Feather expense is for the general contractor for the Central Park West renovation.

Salinas stated a schedule is included in the Board Packet for Capital Improvement details.

- c. Recreation and Communications Report

Robert Pechous presented his report, which can be found in the Park District's records.

Pechous reported the Evergreen Bank Group turf field revenue was doing well due to the warm November weather. Returning 4-year-old preschool student registration has opened. Pioneers lunches have occurred in November. Taylor Swift and Visiting Cultural Artist: Starr Chief Eagle events were both sold out. Winter Lights have opened for the season and have more attendance compared to last year. Winter/Spring registration postcard has been mailed. Outdoor Pickleball is being used, so reservation for the court can still be made. The Park District will continue to observe the usage of the Pickleball courts.

- d. Parks and Facilities Report

Bob Johnson presented his report, which can be found in the Park District's records.

Johnson reported that the ice rink and sled hill are set up but not open due to the weather.

The turf athletic field has been aerated and snow removal equipment is prepped. The Frosty Float Cardboard Boat Regatta in Aquatics is taking registration. A new ADA chair lift has been relocated on the pool deck. There were extended open swim hours during Thanksgiving week and Winter break. The new fitness equipment is receiving positive feedback. Please contact Kara Smith, Fitness Supervisor, if orientation and demonstration are needed for the fitness equipment. The Park District annual coat drive was successful, and coats were donated to the World Relief Chicagoland.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a. Ordinance No 24-1216: An Ordinance Levying Taxes and Assessing Taxes for the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 of the Oak Brook Park District of DuPage and Cook Counties, Illinois.

Motion: Commissioner Suleiman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Ivkovic Kelley, to approve Ordinance No 24-1216: An Ordinance Levying Taxes and Assessing Taxes for the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 of the Oak Brook Park District of DuPage and Cook Counties, Illinois.

Salinas reported that the proposed total levy is lower than last year's tax levy.

Commissioner Vescovi stated that the DuPage County Board did not increase its tax levy, so is it possible for the Park District to avoid increasing the tax levy.

Commissioner Suleiman communicated that we cannot defund the Park District since the Park District relies on some of the tax levy for the operating expenses and services fees.

A resident asked for a clarification on the tax levy. The resident's understanding is that the maximum increase has been set by Illinois law based on inflation.

Steve Adams stated that the resident is asking about the tax cap. If the tax cap is lower than the requested tax levy increase, then the Park District will receive the lower tax cap. Adams added that the DuPage County has a large budget so may have more flexibility. The Park District is required to keep a surplus level in all the funds.

Commissioner Vescovi asked why the Park District needs an increase in the tax levy.

President Knitter responded that the Park District need to keep operating surpluses in certain funds. Due to the pandemic the reserve funds have been decreased, so the Park District needs to ensure there is enough in the reserve. Also, the Park District will have unexpected expenses this coming year.

Dr. Kosey stated that the Park District can review cutting expenses in the budgeting process, but the tax levy must be approved in December.

Adams added that the Park District will need to be competitive with wages and keep up with inflation.

The motion passed by roll call vote.

Ayes: Commissioners Gondek, Ivkovic Kelley, Suleiman, and President Knitter

Nays: Vescovi

b. IAPD Annual Business Meeting Credentials

Motion: Commissioner Suleiman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Ivkovic Kelley, to appoint Dr. Laure Kosey as the District's delegate for the Annual Business Meeting of the Illinois Association of Park Districts.

Commissioner Vescovi asked for the purpose and the result of the conferences.

President Knitter stated that conference reviews are in the Board Packet.

Commissioner Ivkovic Kelley suggested that Commissioner Vescovi attend conferences because the sessions are helpful.

Commissioner Suleiman stated that this conference is in Chicago under a calculated strict budget. The conferences are beneficial.

President Knitter added that credit card reward points were used for the flights and purchases for the Atlanta conference.

The motion passed by roll call vote.

Ayes: Commissioners Gondek, Ivkovic Kelley, Suleiman, Vescovi, and President Knitter

Nays: None

c. 2025 Board Meeting Dates

Motion: Commissioner Suleiman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Ivkovic Kelley, to approve the 2025 Board Meeting Dates.

There was no additional discussion, the motion passed by roll call vote.

Ayes: Commissioners Gondek, Ivkovic Kelley, Suleiman, Vescovi, and President Knitter

Nays: None

d. Ordinance 24-1217: An Ordinance Declaring Surplus Personal Property and Authorizing Conveyance or Sale Thereof

Motion: Commissioner Suleiman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Ivkovic Kelley, to approve Ordinance 24-1217: An Ordinance Declaring Surplus Personal Property and Authorizing Conveyance or Sale Thereof.

There was no additional discussion, the motion passed by roll call vote.

Ayes: Commissioners Gondek, Ivkovic Kelley, Suleiman, Vescovi, and President Knitter

Nays: None

e. Part Time Competitive Wage Increase

Motion: Commissioner Suleiman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Ivkovic Kelley, to approve the Part Time Competitive Wage Increase.

Commissioner Suleiman stated that the increase in Part Time wages is offset with the increase in non-resident fees.

The motion passed by roll call vote.

Ayes: Commissioners Gondek, Ivkovic Kelley, Suleiman, Vescovi, and President Knitter

Nays: None

8. NEW BUSINESS

a. Section 1 – Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual

President Knitter reminded the Commissioners to submit their feedback to Dr. Kosey by January 7, 2025.

b. Solar Panel Options for the Family Recreation Center

Johnson presented the solar panel options. Solar panels have been considered in the past, but the condition of the FRC roof delayed further discussion. The FRC Roof replacement is now completed.

Johnson stated there are three options concerning solar panels: 1. Continue purchase of energy solely from ComEd; 2. The Park District can purchase the solar panels upfront; 3. Power Purchase Lease Option. If purchasing solar panels upfront, then the Park District will receive State rebates and incentives and Federal reimbursements. If the Park District consumes less solar energy than generated, then the extra energy goes to the power grid which will then provide a credit to the Park District. The upfront cost will be high but there will be major future savings. The Power Purchase Lease option does not have an upfront cost to the Park District. The solar company leases the space on the Park District roof, so the Park District does not pay for the equipment or installation. The Park District purchases the solar energy which will be less than purchasing energy solely from ComEd.

President Knitter asked about the returns for leasing.

Johnson answered that the lease option will take longer to receive benefits; however, if the panels are damaged then the solar company will take care of the repairs.

Commissioner Suleiman asked if there are changes and upgrades to solar technology.

Johnson responded that the panels do not change much but over time the panels diminish in generating energy. Solar technology does not change quickly.

President Knitter asked what the other park districts are doing concerning the solar panels.

Johnson answered that half are leasing and the other half are purchasing. Some park districts are leasing first and then purchasing the solar panels later.

Commissioner Suleiman asked if the Park District could purchase solar panels for one of our buildings and lease solar panels for another building.

Johnson stated that the Tennis Center would be the other possible building, but the roof system is not ready for installing panels.

President Knitter asked if there is a lease option that the Park District prefers.

Johnson responded that the RFP or RFQ process will vet well established companies with high experience and high-quality equipment.

President Knitter asked if there is a power outage would ComEd still help.

Johnson responded that the Park District will still be connected to the grid, so ComEd would help the Park District since energy will still be delivered from ComEd.

Pechous stated that the Park District would need energy from ComEd to run the solar panels. If there is an outage, the solar panels will not work so ComEd would need to come out for repairs.

President Knitter asked that the purpose of the Board is to either deny solar option or explore solar option.

Dr. Kosey stated that the Park District would like the Board to direct the staff.

Commissioner Suleiman asked if the Park District started with the lease option, then switched to purchase, would the panels be replaced.

Adams responded that the panels would be replaced if purchased later. Adams asked about the life expectancy of the solar panels, and if the federal credit goes away, will there still be substantial savings.

Johnson stated the life expectancy is about twenty-five or more years, and there would still be significant savings without federal credit.

Commissioner Suleiman asked if there are grants to cover the expenses.

Johnson answered that staff are investigating grants.

Commissioner Gondek questioned the cost for the purchase options and where the funding would come from.

Johnson responded that the purchase option cost is equipment and installation. The Park District could consider funding from the Capital Project Fund. As of now, the Park District is investigating the possibility of pursuing solar energy.

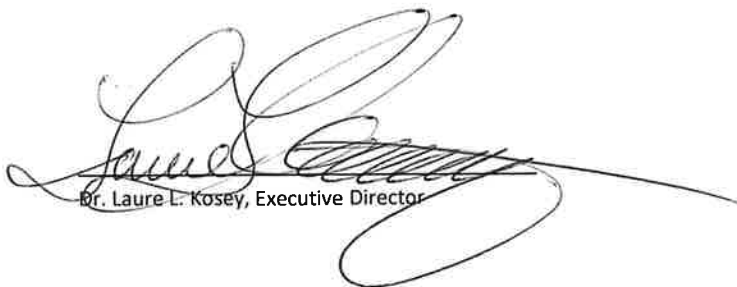
President Knitter stated that the solar option is interesting to explore.

9. THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF THE OAK BROOK PARK DISTRICT BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS WILL BE HELD ON JANUARY 20, 2025, 6:30 P.M.

President Knitter announced the next Regular Meeting of the Oak Brook Park District Board of Park Commissioners will be held on January 20, 2025, at 6:30 p.m.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Commissioner Suleiman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Ivkovic Kelley, to adjourn the December 16, 2024, regular meeting of the Oak Brook Park District Board of Commissioners. The motion passed by voice vote, and the meeting adjourned at the hour of 7:56 p.m.



Dr. Laure L. Kosey, Executive Director

