

Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of the New Lenox Community Park District Board of Commissioners held on Wednesday, July 15, 2020 at approximately 6:02 p.m. in the Board Room of the Village Hall, New Lenox, Illinois.

**GENERAL FUNCTIONS:**

- Call to order** President Schulz called the July 15, 2020 meeting to order at approximately 6:02 p.m.
- Pledge of Allegiance** President Schulz led the Board, Staff, and all others present in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Roll Call** President Schulz directed the Recording Secretary to take roll call. Upon taking roll call, the following were present, Commissioners: Fischer, Larson, Thomson and President Schulz.
- Also in Attendance** Executive Director Greg Lewis, Deputy Director of Recreation Olga Viano, Parks-Maintenance Assistant Director Ken Stephens, Director of Golf Bob Schulz, Deputy Director of Recreation Jason Braglia, Deputy Director of Business Services Karen Acklin and Deputy Director of Executive Services Jacque Tuma.
- Treasurer's Report** President Schulz quoted the totals from the monthly Treasurer's Report as presented for June 30, 2020. President Schulz requested any questions or comments regarding the monthly Treasurer's Report for June 30, 2020. Hearing no questions or comments, President Schulz requested a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented for June 30, 2020. Motion made by Commissioner Thomson, seconded by Commissioner Fischer. Upon a roll call vote, all were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.
- Payment of Bills** President Schulz quoted totals from the Payment of Bills as presented for June 30, 2020. President Schulz requested any questions or comments. Executive Director Lewis noted there was a typo on page 2 & 3 with Andromeda being listed as fund 10; totals were the same. Hearing none, President Schulz requested a motion to approve the Payment of Bills as presented for June 30, 2020. Motion made by Commissioner Fischer, seconded by Commissioner Thomson. Upon a roll call vote, all were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.
- Communications** President Schulz acknowledged for the public there was the following communications in the board packet this evening; 2019 IPARKS Annual Report, Thank You letter from the New Lenox Police Department, H.R. 7073 Special District Provide Essential Services Letter to Congress, and a Press Release & Flyer about being awarded the National Fitness Campaign award.
- Approval of Minutes** Approval of the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of June 17, 2020  
President Schulz requested any questions or comments on the Regular Board Meeting minutes of June 17, 2020. Hearing no questions or comments, President Schulz requested a motion to approve the Regular Board Meeting minutes of June 17, 2020 as presented. Motion made by Commissioner Fischer, seconded by Commissioner Larson. Upon a voice vote, all were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.
- Committee & Staff Reports**
- Business Services** Commissioner Thomson noted this evening we will be passing our Budget and Appropriation Ordinance; currently staff and committee are monitoring shortfalls but staff is in a good position. Phase 4 has begun; the Golf Course and programs are picking up. The Audit is completed and will be presented in the fall.  
Budget & Appropriations Ordinance #20-05-01  
President Schulz requested a motion to adopt Budget & Appropriation Ordinance #20-05-01. Motion made by Commissioner Thomson, seconded by

Commissioner Fischer. Upon a roll call vote, all were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

**Facilities / Planning**

President Schulz reported preventive maintenance at all locations has been done along with daily cleaning. Both Hibernia and Walker Concessions opened on June 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Golf Course**

Golf Course

Commissioner Thomson reported the golf course has picked up a lot since the end of June; rounds have doubled since last month with the time between foursomes is back to normal instead of 9-12 minutes apart. The Junior League has been postponed until next summer. Year to Date revenue should be good and the expense side is being well managed. Director of Golf Schulz noted the board will see refund checks this past month which is for leagues that couldn't be had. It was also noted Golf and Fish is scheduled for September.

**Parks/Development**

Development Projects Update

Commissioner Larson reported at Bristol Park there is another sink hole which is being looked at.

Leigh Creek South Update

Commission Larson noted underground drainage is being tied into the site's perimeter stormwater structures and concrete work will start Monday with the shelter being shipped out by the end of the week.

Sky Harbor Update

Commission Larson noted we are waiting for the signed agreement from IDNR; once we received the executed agreement, we have 2-years to complete the project.

Tri-Annual Update

Commission Larson reported the Tri-Annual was held this past Monday, July 13<sup>th</sup> to the Lions Community Center; all associations except baseball were present. Baseball began competitive play in Phase 4; they had a successful 4<sup>th</sup> of July tournament sponsored by Game Day which was held at Bentley/Tyler (58 teams participated which had 5 New Lenox teams). Soccer is reporting summer/fall registration is down by at least 30% than a year ago; they have not played any competitive games yet and are looking to extend their summer/fall season. Girls Softball has been practicing and playing competitively in Phase 4; and will be extending their fall season by 4 games. Mustangs and NLYFA are planning to start their summer/fall season on August 3<sup>rd</sup> or August 10<sup>th</sup> with games starting either at the end of August or the beginning of September. Registration seems to be solid for both football associations. Executive Director Lewis noted all Associations are following COVID-19 guidelines.

Commissioner Larson noted the irrigation system has been activated for Mustangs at Martino. A couple got married at one of our park sites (Crystal Springs overlooking the wetlands). We had great teamwork with the Village and Township with diverting stormwater that's was running underground to the North end entrance of Walona Park. As a team we were able to divert the water to an underperforming detention pond adjacent to the west end of the site.

Intergovernmental Agreement with the Village of New Lenox – Discussion

Executive Director Lewis noted this agreement is currently at committee and counsel is working with the Village's counsel. This will be another land swap with the property behind Taco Bell, 901 Country Creek Drive, and Waste Water Treatment Plant #2-Partial Land. The Village will not get credit for the building

located at 901 Country Creek Drive only the land it sits on. This will help us build out a future dog park/high ropes court and will be hopefully our larger central park. If there are any concerns please reach out to committee and we can schedule a workshop if needed.

## Recreation

### Asset of the Month – Family Support and Love

Executive Director Lewis read the asset of the month quote out loud.

### Special Recreation Update

Executive Director Lewis commented this will be better discussed at the Questions and Comments section of the meeting. It was noted we received several emails from Frankfort's Park Board Meeting. Executive Director Lewis noted the packet will be out the end of this week as their meeting is on Tuesday.

Commissioner Fischer announced the New Lenox Community Park District has been awarded the National Fitness Campaign Grant for the amount of 30K. This will be located next the trails; it will be a 38x38 area with 20 different pieces of equipment that are made in the USA. This started out west and has made its way this way. We are currently looking for sponsorships possibly naming rights, there will be more to come. Executive Director Lewis noted Forest Park has built one out. We are currently partnering with Village of New Lenox and looking for a big sponsor. The location was pinpointed by the traffic for walking to the fitness area; it will fit nicely on the corner of Haven and Veterans Parkway.

## Unfinished Business

### Resolution #20-05 Authorizing the Execution of an Option and Lease Agreement between the New Lenox Community Park District and Central States Tower IV, LLC (Verizon Wireless)

President Schulz noted this will be tabled again until we receive more parameters

## New Business

### Executive Session Minutes Released December 2019-May 2020 Including Previously Withheld Minutes

President Schulz noted there is none to be released.

### Intergovernmental Agreement Authorizing the Transfer of Certain Real Property between the Village of New Lenox and the New Lenox Community Park District

President Schulz noted this too will be tabled until we have more information.

## Questions/ Comments from The Floor

Ms. Susan Eisenbrandt commented she and her family have been a Lincolnway Area resident since 1992 and LWSRA is very valuable to her son. Ms. Eisenbrandt's concern is at the LWSRA monthly board meetings there are no questions pertaining to the Treasurer's report; are the funds from taxpayers even being looked at by the board members, and why is a personal project called TEAM USA which is not affiliated with LWSRA being able to use the corporate credit card.

Ms. Belinda Olszewski noted she has been attending the LWSRA board meetings and is questioning whether or not the board is even looking at the Payment of Bills and questioned why funds were not being spent on residences of LWSRA. Ms. Olszewski noted she is not trying to eliminate the adaptive sports but is watching where the taxpayer's money is going; shame on me for not being involved sooner. We have a packet outlining all of this information how the money is not being spent equally and why is it acceptable to purchase airline tickets and food for an affiliation that's not even apart of LWSRA.

Mr. Scott Lorenz has been a parent involved with LWSRA for the past 16 years; he wants the agency to survive, I need it to survive for my child but why have the

financials been looked at closely enough. Mr. Lorenz is beginning to question the long-term success of LWSRA. Mr. Lorenz noted without Lana Grazer the building wouldn't have come true; she was able to save a 1M when she was the Executive Director. Mr. Lorenz noted all the programs are equally important.

Ms. Carol Hillman is a New Lenox resident and has been involved with LWSRA since 2002; she has seen this agency grow into a bigger organization which would not have been possible without Keith Wallace. Ms. Hillman noted her son became involved with adaptive sports because of Mr. Wallace's intervention and finally felt as though he belonged. Ms. Hillman continued to go on and explain how Mr. Wallace's influence, guidance, and encouragement helped her son Josh Hillman to go away to college and graduate with highest of honors. Ms. Hillman also noted he works for LWSRA. Ms. Hillman noted without Mr. Wallace this would not have happened and is a perfect example. Ms. Hillman noted comment since everything has come to light things have changed; we need to move forward. Ms. Hillman noted if she were Mr. Wallace, I may consider my options with what is currently going on.

Mr. Justin Hillman spoke how grateful he is for LWSRA but mostly for Keith Wallace. Mr. Hillman noted this group of people have been after Mr. Keith for two years now. Mr. Hillman would like to know what the end game is? Mr. Hillman noted LWSRA has given them everything they have requested. Mr. Hillman commented the agency already has an account and auditor review the financials but yet they continue to push and doesn't know what the end game is or what they are looking for. Mr. Hillman noted he is afraid Keith Wallace will quit and the adaptive programs will go with him. Thank you for allowing me to talk tonight.

Executive Director Lewis read out loud an email from Ms. Tessa Quinlan for the public to hear regarding LWSRA.

Ms. Peggy Marks commented she is a New Lenox resident and has used LWSRA for her son Aaron who is now 29 years old. Ms. Marks asked why the financials were not looked over. Ms. Marks noted Ms. Karen Reczek was in charge of fundraiser for LWSRA for the past 7 years and every year tripled the sponsorship. Ms. Marks commented there were 4 whistle blowers that brought attention to the mismanagement of funds to the Director but the Director never talked to them individually; she noted there is more to the story to tell. Ms. Marks noted to the board that New Lenox Community Park District is the largest contributed to the LWSRA at 264K; wouldn't you as a board want to see what the whistle blower has that was brought forth. Ms. Marks noted according to the LWSRA board this evidence doesn't hold merit – how can LWSRA allow outside of the district participants to use these funds. Ms. Marks noted Ms. Olszewski has packets that can be given out and commented how sad it is for us to have to come to each individual board meeting to discuss this. Ms. Marks noted Ms. Karen Reczek and Ms. Lynn Annerino were two of the four whistle blowers and all they want is to be heard. Ms. Marks noted just look at what we have; there's 10's of thousands of dollars that were mismanaged and wouldn't you as a board want to know, just talk them and address their concerns.

Commissioner Thomson asked Ms. Marks what do you want out of this?

Ms. Marks noted they want transparency and accountability; we don't trust what the board is doing and the evidence is coming out, we want the Park District Boards to review what has been given to the LWSRA Board and make sure there is no oversight.

President Schulz noted we will look into this concern.

Executive Director Lewis noted these comments are directed at him because he is a LWSRA board member; we receive the board packet ahead of time and review it and discuss in committee so the board meetings run efficiently. Executive Director Lewis explained to the public and those sitting the attendance the history of how LWSRA got to where it is currently; and why the Directors became board members. Elected officials brought to their boards what was happening with the building was starting and promises were being made that would put us down the road of legal issues. We are one of kind in the State of Illinois and I hold everyone at LWSRA to a higher standard; and take these comments personally. I review the board packets and financials thoroughly; he went into explaining that if the two employees where such good employees then they should know how a LWSRA journal entry looks. He continued to point out in 2016 the three transactions/invoicing summing approximately 9K were reimbursed in July National Wheelchair Sports Club; so, no money came out of LWSRA. He went on and noted should a corporate credit card being used for these transactions is questionable but there where no polices in place. As Justin pointed out polices have been put in place. When I became a board member both accounting firm and audit firm were the same company; since then we have separated this and now have brought on a part time account on my direction; I have a whole department to keep track of our books; and an independent audit firm; we have had two separate firms Knutte and now Skich. Mismanagement funds should have been discovered by the account and auditors; Keith should have, yes.

Ms. Marks commented maybe I'm not using the term correctly of mismanagement of funds; what I am talking about is funds being taken from taxpayer's money to pay for those on a wheelchair basketball/softball teams who live out state.

Executive Director Lewis noted all the allegations shows that LWSRA has been reimbursed.

Ms. Marks noted maybe this should have been addressed at the board level.

Executive Director Lewis noted all of Karen Reczek's questions point blank have been addressed.

Ms. Marks commented you can watch video from the last LWSRA board meeting as Gina comments about this having no merit and make your own decision.

**Community  
Events**

President Schulz reported there was information regarding the Village of New Lenox's events in the Common Area for the upcoming months.

**Adjournment**

At approximately 7:07 p.m., President Schulz requested a motion to adjourn the July 15, 2020, Regular Board Meeting of the New Lenox Community Park District Board of Commissioners. Motion made by Commissioner Thomson, seconded by Commissioner Fischer. Upon a voice vote, all were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jacque Tuma  
Recording Secretary