

**LINCOLN PARK DISTRICT  
BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
OCTOBER 09, 2024**

**CALL TO ORDER** – At 6:00 PM, Don Peasley called to order the Lincoln Park District Board of Commissioners’ monthly business meeting.

**ROLL CALL** – Commissioners attending were Don Peasley, Gary Nodine, Dave Perring, and Laura Duffer. Bob Thomas was absent. Attending from the Park District were Becky Strait, Vern Haseley, Allison Baker, Jennifer Prather, and Angie Coombs. None were absent.

**PUBLIC HEARING:** At 6:01 PM Don Peasley opened the meeting for a public hearing to discuss the Board’s intent to sell \$830,000.00 General Obligation Bonds. Seeing as Commissioners had no questions regarding the issuance, and there were no visitors present, Don asked for a motion to close the hearing. Laura Duffer made a motion to close the hearing. Gary Nodine moved to second the motion, which then passed after a unanimous roll-call vote.

**MINUTES OF MEETING** – Minutes of the September 11, 2024, meeting were presented. Don asked if there were any questions, comments, or suggested amendments. Angie informed the Board that Jennifer’s September Notes were attached as an addendum, but there was a typo in the number of August class participants. Gary Nodine made the motion to approve the minutes as presented. Dave Perring moved to second the motion, which then passed after a unanimous roll-call vote.

**VISITORS** – NONE

**ACCOUNTS PAYABLE** – The operating expenses were submitted for approval in the following funds:

<b>GENERAL</b>	-	<b>\$</b>	<b>2,175.88</b>
<b>RECREATION</b>	-	<b>\$</b>	<b>5,702.10</b>
<b>CAPITAL IMP.</b>	-	<b>\$</b>	<b>18,035.02</b>

Don inquired about the fee for Fitzpatrick Construction, which Angie verified was to repair the baseball shed doorway and install a new door. When asked if the work was part of an insurance claim, Vern explained that the damage had been done years ago, but wear and tear finally got to the point where it ceased to function. Don then asked if there were any other questions about expenses listed in the report. Gary inquired about the Aquatics Distributor expense, as it was listed as part of an insurance claim. He asked for clarification that LPD was paying the invoice but was submitting it as part of a claim to be reimbursed. Vern verified that he and Angie are still working on getting the requested documentation from all parties as part of the lightning strike related claim. Laura Duffer made the motion to approve Accounts Payable as presented, which was seconded by Dave Perring, and passed after a unanimous, roll-call vote.

**CASH FLOW** –

Don inquired about any real estate tax distribution monies, which Angie verified that a spreadsheet was included in the Board Packet, including information regarding the Personal Property Replacement Taxes received to date. Angie informed the Board that there is one

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more Real Estate payment due in November, with an interest payment. Also, Angie pointed out that the PPRT monies were approximately \$85,000 less than the same time last year, which was as expected. The State had previously notified LPD that there would be a redistribution and to expect less in 2024, but the amount was undetermined. Don asked how that affected LPD, which Angie explained that she had included only \$100,000 of anticipated PPRT monies for FY 2024's budget, which is less than the current amount received, but well below the same time the previous year.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – BECKY STRAIT**

- A Slideshow presentation was displayed:
- Upcoming events include Halloween Fun Fest, Swing Dance Fundraiser, and the Gridiron Challenge.
- Park Improvement Projects:
  - Exchange Club Park:
    - Becky and Vern met with the Contractor to verify the installment site locations.
    - Concrete is scheduled to be poured next week.
  - Lehn & Fink is next on the schedule, with the installation of a pavilion and 9-Square.
- City Parks:
  - Becky reminded the Board about the collaboration with the City for the movie on September 21<sup>st</sup>, which took place in the 8<sup>th</sup> Street park.
    - There was a fair number of attendees and only 1 small hitch when the generator kicked off due to a CO sensor.
    - Hocus Pocus is scheduled to be featured on October 18<sup>th</sup> in the same park.
    - Don asked if there was a power source in that park, which Becky verified that there is not.
    - Don then inquired about the attendance number, which Becky estimated to be around 30, which were mostly families.
    - It was pointed out that the event fell on the same weekend as the Railsplitter Festival, and that the weather had been “iffy” most of the day.
    - D.A.R.E. grilled hot dogs for the public and LPD donated chips from the leftover concession inventory.
  - Regarding the partnership with the City, Kevin contacted Becky to speak to her about a new topic and possible collaboration.
    - It is not new information that the City has been looking at the 8<sup>th</sup> Street property as a place that could suit the installation of an amphitheater for a series of concerts in the park.
      - There has been a recent debate that a larger pavilion-type structure may be better suited to the area but can also be used as an event stage.
      - The idea of a mobile stage came to mind, as it can be quite difficult to reserve one for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday's events, and other events that include performances.
      - Most event committees rent a mobile stage from surrounding park districts, which usually have a 1-year wait list and cost around \$1,700 per weekend.
    - Kevin proposed to Becky that the City and LPD partner in purchasing a mobile stage.
      - Becky displayed a few photos of stage options with prices as high as \$224,000, which would be the option that has electric controls to open and “set up” the light/sound structures.
      - She reminded the Board that they had previously discussed repurposing the driving range to install an amphitheater for similar concert series.

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- However, she also explained that such an expense would likely not fit in LPD's budget next year, nor possibly not for a few years, if the Capital Improvement plans proceed as speculated in past discussions.
- Gary pointed out that renting the stage could bring in cash flow, but Don questioned the expense of travel and the set up/tear down, and which entity would be responsible.
  - Gary inquired about staff required for the up / down process.
  - Becky verified that it would depend on the stage purchased, since the more expensive only needed 1 person to drive and push the buttons to unfold and collapse everything.
- Angie pointed out that if McLean County/Bloomington was being used as a comparison, that the economic status of the county/city is on par with a Chicago suburb, which makes it unique in this region.
- Dave stated that he was appreciative of LPD being considered, but his reply would be "no thank you" at this time.
- **Ballroom Remodel:**
  - Becky informed the Board that the new roll-up window has been installed and looks nice.
  - The lower panels were being installed that day and the project is scheduled to be completed by the end of the week.
- **Alcohol for Events:**
  - Becky explained to the Board that Heather, of Flossie & Delzena's, has been promoting LPD's ballroom after she catered the Senior Fair in August.
    - There was interest in someone having their wedding in the Ballroom and wanted the approval for alcohol in a short time.
    - The couple could not wait until after the Board meeting and found another venue.
  - Becky asked the Board if they would feel comfortable having the protocol in place, and authorizing her, as the Executive Director, to make sure that each request meets the requirements before approving, without presenting it to the Board prior.
    - Don inquired about IPARKS' recommendation, which Becky stated that she was provided with general guidelines but told that it is ultimately up to the Board.
    - Laura and Gary both agreed that LPD would likely have more rentals if people knew that alcohol could be permitted.
    - Don suggested adding the requirement of security along with the dram shop policy requirement for those wanting to serve alcohol on the premises.
      - Becky suggested parameters of either using wrist bands or designated areas during the events to help control/monitor the consumption.
      - Dave and Don both expressed concern over the issue of liability for LPD.
    - Becky relayed that Heather had informed her that the couple had no issues to add a dram shop policy to their homeowner's insurance for their event, for a reasonable price.
  - Becky will research what other park districts have in place.
- **North Parking Lot Project:**
  - Becky stated that they are waiting for Farnsworth to complete the bid docs.
  - Becky explained that during their conversation, Kevin had mentioned the City hired PH Broughton to do some road work.
    - Kevin then proposed the idea of syncing the work with LPD's project to possibly save both entities on mobilization fees.
    - Becky explained that the projects' timeframes likely would not coincide with each other, but she could include the company in the bid notification process.

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- Website: Upgrade in progress.
- Memorial Park:
  - Chinkapin Oak is not the state record holder but is a contender.
  - The State will add it to the registry, should the current tree that holds the record be damaged or die for some reason.
  - Don asked where it was located, which Vern verified that it is on the west side near the diamonds, and Becky stated that a sign is next to it.
- Budget & Appropriation: Becky and Angie have been meeting to work on the report.
- Plumbing Upgrade:
  - Becky explained that since the building was constructed in the 1960's, the plumbing was starting to have some issues that needed to be addressed soon, and that includes the Craft Room.
  - She would let Vern explain in more detail, but since the cabinet area of the Craft Room would need to be torn out to access the plumbing, it would be prudent to consider remodeling that room next.

**SUPERVISOR OF OPERATIONS - Vern Haseley**

- Vern explained that he invited 3 plumbers to inspect the Administrative Building's plumbing: Chief City Mechanical (Bloomington), Dillon (Peoria), Bryan Carroll (Lincoln)  
All agree that the valves are a concern. Vern is waiting to receive one more report but is hoping to schedule the work for January or February, if possible. Don inquired about the project price, which Vern stated that the price varies depending on speculation of what may be found once the walls are opened, or if they even need to be opened. One bid/estimate was for 2 men for a week's time and came in between \$70-73,000. Don then asked if there was an added contingency, would \$150,000-200,000 be a fair (high-end) estimate? Gary pointed out that even the parking lot project included a 25% contingency. Vern stated that there may be difficult situations that arise once the work begins, which could cause the price and time frame to increase. Dave asked how best to plan for the project without just having a "blank check" price. Becky pointed out that Contractors don't need to know the total LPD budget, and the Board can see how the Parking Lot project comes in to discuss the financial aspects as part of the promissory note conversation. Gary asked which of the 3 have already submitted their bids, which Vern stated Dillon and Mr. Carroll have so far, but he is waiting to hear back from Chief City Mechanical. Becky explained that these are not official bids, but rather part of the research needed to draft the bid documents. Angie reminded the Board that LPD needs to publicly notify the request for bids with set terms, conditions, and dates. Gary asked that the process be reviewed before proceeding.
- Vern informed the Board that Illinois American Water needs to schedule a date to shut off the water and switch out a valve. Becky added that they also recommended installing a bypass, which would prevent a complete shut off for future work on the valve.
- Don inquired if the pool was closed yet, which Vern verified that it was. Vern continued to report that the stair treads to the slide have been removed and will be cleaned and repainted. Walker Sandblasting was consulted about the treads and will be redoing the plunge pool.
- Vern and staff have been busy doing regular fall cleanup of the grounds and parks.
- Vern verified that there is still one final baseball game scheduled this year.

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**PROGRAM REPORT – ALLISON BAKER**

- Allison reported that she was notified there will be a Legion Team next summer, which brought her to ask about what the Board wants to do with the Legion field lights. It has been previously discussed that they need to be replaced, but since there was no team this year, it was put on the back burner. Vern asked the Board if they would prefer to replace the lights or upgrade to LED bulbs. Gary asked how there will be a team next year, if there was more interest locally, but Laura stated that many from the Splitters team have aged out and are old enough for Legion now. Gary inquired about fees charged if a team uses the lights when renting a field, which Allison verified that there is a fee for that. Dave asked where the teams have been the past few years, and Gary gave a brief history of Legion and travel ball. Laura stated that she is unsure if Legion will be running the team, or if they will just support and be affiliated with the older Splitters team. Gary questioned if there was room in the budget to upgrade the lights. Becky and Angie both explained that the budget title had been left vague to encompass park/grounds/building improvements next year, and the Board will need to review the details once the Parking Lot Project costs come in. Becky pointed out that the cost could also potentially be incorporated into any promissory note application later this year. Gary suggested researching any potential for Ameren grants.
- Laura and Dave both inquired as to why the concession stand was not open for the Splitter's 12-team tournament in October. Allison explained that Rob usually coordinates their own concessions, and Angie added that one year he even arranged for food trucks to be on site. Laura stated that she was asked multiple times as to why LPD didn't have it open and felt that it was a missed opportunity, even if there were limited items to sell. Vern commented that he would prefer if field rentals included the caveat that LPD staff would do the field prep between games and not left for others to do. Gary agreed that LPD needs to do field prep when diamonds are rented. Dave asked about the rental fees charged for diamond rentals. Allison explained that the fee is \$40 per day/per diamond, and an extra \$20 for prepping fields between games. Laura suggested that the rental contract be redrafted to include the mandate that LPD will be doing the field prep. Jen stated that the Board decided on the \$40 amount after the other local fields were turfed. Laura pointed out that tournaments like this are unable to use those fields for these events. Gary argued that LPD is the one that looks bad when the event organizer does not provide enough information to staff. Don agreed that the contract needs to be revamped to include the field prep mandate change. The consensus is that LPD looks bad even if the Organization renting the property chooses to do their own concessions, and that is a problem that can be resolved.
- The evening Pickleball Clinic has 7 participants. Laura asked about the ages, which Allison replied that most were in their 60s and 70s.
- Saturday with Santa is scheduled for November 30<sup>th</sup> and Allison has also reached out to see if the Grinch will make an appearance that day.
- Jr. Railer registration opened September 30<sup>th</sup>.
- Halloween Fun Fest is scheduled for October 24<sup>th</sup> and planning is in full swing. Sponsors have donated or signed up to host a booth. Allison will also be advertising online with a link for other possible businesses or organizations to sign up to host a booth. This year, we plan to offer limited VIP tickets, which will include a small meal and access to the event a little earlier than the general public's. So far, 26 out of the 50 tickets available have been sold.

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- Allison disbursed fliers to the schools, which detailed all the upcoming events. Laura asked if LJHS was included, which Allison admitted that she left that school out due to their age.

**FITNESS MANAGER: JENNIFER PRATHER**

- Group Fitness Class attendance for September was 703.
- The first week in October was a free week, which had 173 attendees.
- Dr. Frank Adubato spoke to the 7 Health & Wellness attendees about spinal health.
- The most recent Meet & Mingle had 7 attendees, where the discussion included Jr. Railers and the Halloween Fun Fest. The next event is scheduled for October 18<sup>th</sup>, from 1-3 pm.
- The annual Balloons over 66 5K run had 68 participants this year. One runner was injured from a fall on the gravel portion. Don asked if the runner was ok, which Jennifer verified that it was a bad sprain.
- The Active Agers had a potluck for which there were 15 attendees present.
- With the new circuit equipment installation, Jennifer thought to offer an orientation and 20 people registered. She handed out a coupon for a discounted personal training package, with 2 sessions for \$50, and 5 packages were purchased.
- October will offer the Spin® for a Cure, where each Saturday's class participants will donate to ride and those funds will be donated locally.
- Personal Training will have a special where patrons will get a free session with each package purchased.
- The Gridiron Challenge will be offered in November, with a Senior section this year. Halloween is the first day.
- Jennifer has been working on scheduling speakers for 2025 Health & Wellness events.
- Jennifer and Elizabeth both attended Mania in Chicago, and Mark even attended one day, too.
- So far, 6 vendors have signed up for a booth space at the Wellness Expo.
- The November/December schedule is almost complete.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

Becky informed the Board that Sally Turner and CIVC had sent thank you notes for LPD's participation in their events.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

- A. Capital Improvements:
  - 1. Park Improvement Projects: See Executive Director's Report.
  - 2. Ballroom Remodel/Cold Storage Project: See Executive Director's Report.
  - 3. North Parking Lot Improvement Project: See Executive Director's Report.
- B. Aquatic Center: See Operation Supervisor's Report.
- C. City Parks: See Executive Director's Report.
- D. Boundary Issues: See Executive Director's Report.
- E. Authorization of sale/conveyance of Park District Property: None.

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**NEW BUSINESS:**

Fiscal Year 2025 Tax Levy and Budget & Appropriation reports were included for the Board's review, however the Ordinances can not be voted on until December's meeting. Becky explained that Sally Turner had been contracted to assist with calculating the Levy, which is very helpful as she has extensive experience and knowledge.

A. Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Audit Report.

1. Reports were accidentally omitted from the packets and will be handed out at the end of the meeting for review.
2. Becky explained that she had a conversation with Dan, the Auditor, regarding the lack of qualified firms despite the demand created by the legal mandate.
  - a. Dan detailed how many firms are closing as partners retire.
  - b. This also causes the price of services to increase.
3. It has been discussed that the Audit Fund levy portion is maxed due to the cap.
  - a. The Board has previously discussed using the revenue recapture funds and interest to supplement the account to cover rising costs.
  - b. There are limited options due to the cap.
4. It was pointed out that the minimum wage increase, which was mandated annually for the past 5 years, has not helped matters concerning the budget.
5. Becky stated that IAPD had provided a graph which visually shows the percentage of the Park District's levy and funds, along with other park districts' for comparison.
  - a. Becky believes that it showed roughly two-thirds of LPD's operating expenses come from memberships and registration fees charged, whereas other park districts rely less on those funds and more on their tax levies.
  - b. Becky plans to present this next month for the Board's review.
  - c. Dave inquired about the difference in those percentages, which Becky attributed to other park districts having a higher tax base.

B. Administrative Office Water Lines: See Operation Supervisor's Report.

**Executive Session:** At 7:10 P.M., Laura Duffer made the motion to enter Executive Session to discuss employee salaries, which was seconded by Dave Perring. Executive Session ended at 7:54 PM. Laura Duffer made the motion to approve the salaries as presented, excluding bonus disbursements. Gary Nodine moved to second the motion, which then passed after a unanimous, roll-call vote.

Becky informed the Board that the annual Christmas party was scheduled for Friday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, to be held in the newly remodeled ballroom.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Seeing no further business, Laura Duffer moved to adjourn the meeting, Dave Perring moved to second the motion. Motion carried. Adjournment: 7:57 P.M.

**NEXT MEETING:** The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 13, 2024.