

**The City of Lake Forest  
Parks and Recreation Board  
Meeting Minutes  
February 13, 2024  
Municipal Services Bldg.  
800 N. Field Dr.**

**I. Call to Order**

The Parks and Recreation Board Meeting was called to order by Chairman Marc Silver at 6:32p.m. The following were present:

Board Members: Mr. Marc Silver  
Mr. Timo Berger  
Mr. Kevin Carden  
Mr. Mark Gorman  
Mr. Patrick Marshall  
Ms. Kaci Spirito

Staff: Mr. Joe Mobile, Interim Director of Recreation  
Mr. Chuck Myers, Superintendent of Parks & Forestry  
Mr. Michael Thomas, Director of Public Works  
Ms. Dani Spann, Administrative Assistant  
Mr. Jason Busdeker, Program Manager  
Mr. Will Howard, Sailing Supervisor  
Ms. Naomi Jamboretz, Sailing Assistant  
Mr. Jason Olson, Athletics Program Supervisor  
Mr. Ken Pierini, Athletics Program Supervisor

Public: Marian Barell  
Robert Barnett

**II. Approval of Minutes**

Meeting Minutes of the December 5, 2023, Parks & Recreation Board Meeting were presented and approved.

***Board member Gorman motioned for approval of the minutes and Chairman Silver seconded. The Board meeting minutes of December 5, 2023, were then unanimously approved.***

**III. Opportunities for the Public to Address the Board on Items not listed on the Agenda**

Ms. Marian Barell spoke to the Board about the Northcroft Park improvements. She talked about some concerns and shared some ideas for modest improvements. The four areas of interest she mentioned were parking, walking paths, pickleball court placement and lighting. She also said her, and Mr. Barnett were in favor of a dog park there.

#### **IV. Basketball Program Update**

Athletics Program Supervisors, Ken Pierini and Jason Olson, provided an update on the Basketball program. Mr. Pierini talked about the participation numbers from 2019-2023. In 2019 there were 309 participants. Despite having to cancel due to COVID in 2020, the numbers have gotten back to higher than pre-COVID with 414 participants in 2023.

Program Supervisor, Jason Olson, talked about the program and the collaboration with Lake Bluff Park District. The program offers basketball for Preschool through 8<sup>th</sup> grade level. The partnership with Lake Bluff Park District is for grades 1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> with management at perspective leagues. Mr. Olson talked about other offerings including a preseason clinic in the fall, and Bill Wennington runs an all day, one week camp in the summer at Deerpath Middle School.

Program Supervisor, Ken Pierini, went over enrollment numbers for the Basketball camps. In 2022 there were 57 campers, 2023 they had 46 campers. Bill Wennington's camp had 18 participants in 2021, 63 participants in 2022, and 61 participants in 2023. A Shamrock Shuffle tournament was held in March 2023. 8 teams were in each age division. It was a success and staff plan on bringing it back this year.

Chairman Silver asked what the goal is with the partnership with Lake Bluff Park District. Supervisor Olson explained the partnership brings more kids to the program, provides gym space, and helps with the managing of 3 of the leagues. Board member Marshall inquired about the gym space at the Recreation Center and Deerpath Middle School with the recent increase in players. Supervisor Olson replied the program is using all the gyms, including Deerpath Middle School. 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades are at Lake Bluff gyms as well. Board member Marshall asked what a wish list item is for Athletics. Supervisor Olson replied more courts to utilize at the Recreation Center would be nice. Board member Berger suggested having more focus on development in the higher grades for the House League program. Supervisor Olson said they are working on having more development while still having enough games through the season.

Board member Berger mentioned the summer camps for the older grades should have a different structure. Board member Spirito inquired on the parent coaches that help. Supervisor Pierini explained staff try to flex between college and high school staff for coaching. They would like to have more parent volunteers. Supervisor Olson talked about expanding the training for coaches. Chairman Silver suggested offering extra drills and skills clinics for players.

#### **V. Sailing Program Update**

Will Howard, Sailing Supervisor, updated the Board on the Sailing program. He introduced Naomi Jamboretz, the new Sailing Assistant. He presented a short video recap of the various sailing courses and events. Supervisor Howard described Lake Forest Sailing as three different buckets. They are Youth Race Teams, Community Sailing and Lake Access.

Youth Racing has coaching throughout the summer, fall and spring. Staff coach around 40 sailors each year and travel to 75 regattas across the country. The participants are from 8-18 years of age. Many of the sailors in the programs come back and work as staff throughout the year, this allows the continuity of the culture, knowledge, and success of the program. The program also drives revenue year-round. Supervisor Howard showcased some of the success of the sailors in the program.

Community Sailing includes summer sailing school, Adaptive sailing, and adult sailing. Youth summer sailing classes fill up very quickly each season. Chairman Silver asked what could be done to help with the waitlists. Supervisor Howard explained they have opened more classes for these age groups; however, assets are the biggest challenge. The program needs more Learn to Sail boats, coach boats and more storage. The Kiwanis Chapter of Lake Forest and Lake Bluff donated over \$30,000 to purchase an adaptive sailboat to be used by individuals with physical disabilities. Adult Sailing is growing as Sailing Assistant, Naomi Jamboretz is spearheading two new classes starting in the summer.

Lake Access includes maintaining and operating the venue to enable community access to the Lake. The storage areas include 8 catamaran sand spots, 18 dry-sail compound spots and doubled Kayak spots. Staff also manage the South Beach parking permits; Ramp Launch permits and basin services. Board member Gorman asked if there is an adult Learn to Sail class. Mr. Howard answered there isn't one yet, but they are hoping to offer one soon. Board member Spirito asked about the sailboat storage. Mr. Howard answered there are 18 spots for sailboats. Chairman Silver asked how the Board can help with the sailing needs. Supervisor Howard explained it's not a simple answer, but he feels they are getting a lot of support and going in the right direction. He noted they will be getting a little more space to store items.

**VI. Approval of Safety Boat Purchase**

Jason Busdeker, Program Manager, explained the need for a replacement safety boat that was damaged in June 2023. Safety boats are used daily by sailing coaches during practice and competition and allows them to respond immediately to an emergency, if necessary.

Mr. Busdeker talked about keeping the same brand of safety boat by Tornado from Professional Boats. This brand is preferred because it will keep consistency with other current boats and is built primarily for this purpose. He presented the funding source for the boat purchase.

FY2024 Funding Source	Amount Budgeted	Amount Requested	Budgeted? Y/N
FY24 CARP	\$18,000.00	\$17,497.24	Y
Insurance Claim	\$28,367.92	\$28,367.92	Y

***Board member Carden motioned for approval of the purchase of a new safety boat from Professional Boats in the amount of \$45,865.16. Board member Spirito seconded. The approval to purchase a new safety boat from Professional Boats in the amount of \$45,865.16 was unanimously approved.***

**VII. Deerpath Park Athletic Fields Project Update**

Chuck Myers, Superintendent of Parks and Forestry, updated the Board on the Deerpath Park Athletic Fields Project. The focus now is to finish the buildings. The bathrooms will be opened in the next few weeks. A few items will be finished when the weather is warmer. The field has had a lot of activity during the day and weekends. The concession stand bid is due today. A decision will be made soon, and a contract sent out. A Deerpath Park showcase event is being planned for May 4<sup>th</sup> from 10am-12:00pm. Lots of family friendly events and activities are being planned.

**VIII. Registration Comparison Presentation**

Joe Mobile, Interim Director of Recreation, shared the growth comparison on program registration-based activities, since COVID. The enrollment counts included calendar years 2021-Current Year. Mr. Mobile explained how the programs fall into the specific categories. Board member Marshall asked if we could track family growth in enrollments. Mr. Mobile replied that you can track this information. Going forward, in future meetings, he will present other comparisons on passes, memberships, and programs on a seasonal basis. Board member Marshall asked to see a report on what categories are trending or falling in registrations. Board member Carden asked about athletic programs. Mr. Mobile replied that Summer Camp numbers are up, along with League Sports, especially a rise in Football. Board member Berger asked to add to the report, year to year comparisons and a column for target budget numbers.

**IX. Chairman Comments**

Chairman Silver thanked Joe Mobile for stepping into the Interim Director role and making it as seamless as possible. He encouraged Board members to gather information and concerns they are hearing from the community.

**X. Director Comments**

Interim Director of Recreation, Joe Mobile informed Board members that Staff have started hiring for the summer positions. Mr. Mobile talked about the upcoming events in February and March.

- 24 Days for \$24- Fitness Center special, offer ends February 29<sup>th</sup>.
- Magic Class w/Magic of Gary Kantor-February 20<sup>th</sup> and April 29<sup>th</sup> 6:45pm-7:40pm at Kinderhaven Preschool Academy
- Passion to Dance- February 25<sup>th</sup> at 4:00pm at Gorton Center
- Safe Sitter Program-March 1<sup>st</sup> and March 2<sup>nd</sup>
- Summer Camp 2024 Registration Opens on March 5<sup>th</sup>.
- Flapjacks with a Firefighter- March 9<sup>th</sup> at 9:00am in CROYA
- Eggstravaganza Egg Hunt- March 23<sup>rd</sup> at 9:00am at Deerpath Middle School

**XI. Board Member Comments**

Board member Carden presented a video on Platform Tennis. He talked about why paddle should be considered in Lake Forest. It was mentioned that Northcroft Park would be a great location for this court. Discussion followed. Interim Director Mobile replied they will have staff gather more information and discuss at a future meeting. Board member Berger thanked staff on the nice job for Sally Swarthout's retirement coffee.

**XII. Adjournment**

Board member Spirito motioned for adjournment and Board member Gorman seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:40p.m.

Respectfully Submitted  
Dani Spann  
Administrative Assistant