



COLLINSVILLE AREA RECREATION DISTRICT  
www.CollinsvilleRec.com

10 Gateway Drive, Collinsville, Illinois 62234 • (618) 346-PLAY (7529) • (618) 346-7530 (fax)

## REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

OCTOBER 17, 2017

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners of the Collinsville Area Recreation District was called to order by President Ronald Jedda at 6:30 PM, October 17, 2017 at the district office, 10 Gateway Drive, Collinsville, Illinois.

The roll was called with the following commissioners answering present: Mark Achenbach, Brad Sewell, Aaron Wright and Ronald Jedda.

Staff present include: Kimberli DeRossett, Keith Grotefendt, Mark Kosmatka, Tim Childers, Mark Marcuzzo, Jill Rice and Jessica Jader.

### SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR

Jedda opened the floor for speakers from the floor.

The first speaker from the floor was Jim Grobmeier. He is very dissatisfied with the deplorable manor in which the board is operating. In the last several months the board gave Arlington Wetlands back to the county after taxpayers put money into it through CARD. There are rumors that the board is trying to lease out the golf course to an outside group to manage. Now you are getting rid of the parks and other facilities. What other facilities is not clear. It could be the activity center. You are also allowing people to get out of CARD. Yes, they are paying toward the bonds but it reduces the operating revenue needed to keep everything else operating. That is one of the reasons the parks have been suffering, the personnel has been cut so low, they didn't have enough people to do everything that is needed to maintain the parks. Decisions are being made and the public learns about it after the fact instead of announcing in advance so the public can put their comments in. That is why this is a deplorable board and he is very dissatisfied with them.

The second speaker from the floor was Scott Rayho. He is in support of the City taking the parks back because CARD has really not been supporting the leased park properties. He is hoping their goal is to do the best they can for the taxpayers while still doing the best they can for the parks. He is unhappy that so much is being handled in closed session and then the public finding out about it after. He would like a different approach to that. He is also okay with the board taking care of the facilities they have even if they find others to lease them out. He would like for the board present that to the public before discussing it. He also would like for them to avoid anything too long term so they would have options. He went on to commend the board for getting the bonds somewhat under control. Just please be careful because you may be swinging so far that you may undo some of the good work and good will that had been done. He realizes that negotiations with particular organizations has to be done in closed sessions, but before commitments are made, the public should be made aware and given the opportunity to voice opinions.

### CONSENT AGENDA

Jedda opened the floor to review and accept the consent agenda items including:

- Regular Meeting Minutes for September 19, 2017
- Special Meeting Minutes for September 26, 2017
- Closed Meeting Minutes for September 19, 2017 and September 26, 2017
- Treasurer's Report for September 2017
- Claims and Accounts List in the amount of \$267,325.61
- Budget Tracking Reports for September 2017

Achenbach noted meeting minute corrections that needed to be made in Open Session Minutes for September 19, 2017 and Closed Meeting Minutes for September 26.

A motion was made by Achenbach, seconded by Sewell, to accept the consent agenda items.

Roll was called with the following commissioners voting AYE: Achenbach, Sewell, Wright and Jedda. None voted NAY. Motion passed.

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & STAFF REPORTS**

Jedda opened the floor for executive director & staff reports.

Achenbach asked Jader about any payments for ball field rentals. Jader stated they had not collected any payments.

Achenbach went on to thank Childers for the report on Splash City season passes. He thinks we may be charging too much for season passes. Childers added that Doug Erhart has lowered prices by 25% and we are offering a holiday special as well.

A motion was made by Wright, seconded by Achenbach, to accept the Executive Director & Staff Reports.

Roll was called with the following commissioners voting AYE: Achenbach, Sewell, Wright and Jedda. None voted NAY. Motion passed.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Jedda opened the floor for old business. There was no old business to discuss.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Jedda opened the floor for new business.

The only item for New Business was discussion and potential action regarding Ordinance #17-7, an ordinance regarding petitions to disconnect certain territories from CARD. Jedda added the properties in question are for 26 parcels in Whispering Hills Estates. CARD has all the required paperwork with the petitions signed by the property owners. The information was received on September 7, 2017 and more than the required 30 days has passed for the board to address it.

A motion was made by Achenbach, seconded by Wright, to approve Ordinance #17-7, an ordinance regarding petitions to disconnect certain territories from CARD.

Roll was called with the following commissioners voting AYE: Achenbach, Wright and Jedda. Sewell voted NAY. Motion passed.

### **FOR THE GOOD OF THE DISTRICT**

Jedda opened the floor for the good of the district.

Rice addressed the room regarding the For the Good of the District portion of the meeting. She noted she was pleased to see a section on the agenda called For the Good of the District. She figured it would be a great time to highlight all of the great things in the community and the park district. She was severely disappointed. Rarely does she hear anyone speak up with encouraging words. She went on to note what she sees that is good in the district. The employees, the daily laborers, work hard to be very resourceful and use every penny wisely. Each person here takes his or her job very seriously. In fact, they all really love what they do; she hears it all the time. They take the little they are allowed to use, stretch it using old fashioned bricolage and attempt to make something great. In spite of their efforts CARD and its employees continue to get a bad rap. She added that she pays the bills for CARD, she sees what everyone makes and the hours they put in and the budgets they work with. She went on to note that yes, CARD still carries a lot of debt, a fact that we cannot escape, a debt that was

left by a previous regime. In spite of being in a financial bind, CARD is making headway. The employees are the reason CARD has made such great strides and sit in a much better financial position than five years ago. The employees are what make this district tick and work. They could have left when times got tough. They didn't have to continue to put up with the criticism, but they stayed and toughed it out. She is proud to call them her coworkers and her friends. Many of these employees are also taxpayers who live, breath, work, shop, give and help sustain this community with their hard earned dollars. She added that she may not have been happy five years ago with what was happening at CARD, but as a taxpayer and a business owner in Collinsville, she is glad to pay her taxes to support CARD and she would trust any of the CARD employees to use her money wisely. She gave kudos to the CARD employees and told them to keep up the great work no matter where life may take them.

Achenbach commended Willoughby Farm on a successful Fall Farm Day. Kosmatka noted there were record numbers.

Achenbach went on to congratulate Jader for the Giant Yard Sale that was held on September 30.

District Counsel James Craney arrived at 6:45.

Jedda commented on the points made during Speakers from the Floor regarding discussions or items taking place between CARD and other entities. He noted that when they are negotiating with other entities, they have to sign non-disclosure agreements with the people they are working with which prevents anyone from going out and talking out of turn or getting information and disclosing it to the whole world. The board is not in a position to update the public once they sign the non-disclosure agreements until the deal is done.

Grobmeier suggested that before even going into those discussions, the board put the information on the open session agenda and give the public the opportunity to know what could be going on and give them an opportunity to voice their opinion. Give the public an advanced warning of what they are thinking about doing.

Achenbach added that he has been on the board for over four years and has been very vocal about getting the City of Collinsville to take their parks back. It has not been a secret. He has talked about leasing out the golf course many times as well.

Grobmeier added that Achenbach said CARD should not have gotten involved with a golf course and that the board should have asked for the public's opinion before going into negotiations to buy it. Now the public has been finding out about the plan to lease it out after the fact?

Achenbach reiterated that people should not be shocked that the board is trying to lease out the golf course. He stated this board has been fairly open in terms of where they have been going.

Kosmatka added that making a comment and making it an agenda item are two completely different things. Making it an agenda item allows the public to know what is going on and allows them a chance to voice their opinion if they choose to.

Grobmeier reiterated that things should be put as an agenda item for the public to see before the board goes into negotiations. As a taxpayer, that is all he is asking. If the board wants to give the activity center to the City, put it in the agenda so the public is aware of what the board is thinking about discussing. Let the public put their voice in.

Achenbach noted that he understands the point, but he feels it is his duty to do the best that he can in order to manage what they have while considering what the people have to pay for it. He went on to note that Arlington Wetlands did not go away, but your tax dollars are not paying to manage it anymore. Everything there is the same, it is still Arlington Wetlands. The board wants to make sure they do the best they can for the taxpayers. They were able to convince Madison County to take the Wetlands back, to have those 7.5 acres managed with the other 188 acres, which was paid for and managed with a grant. CARD's 7.5 acres was paid for with tax dollars. He

doesn't understand the criticism because the board got them the best deal they could ever get. That is what the board is trying to do and sometimes they can't explain every detail.

Grobmeier reiterated that the public did not know about it until after the fact. He added that he agrees with Achenbach that CARD obtaining the Wetlands was a bad deal, but before handing ownership over, the board should have made the public aware that they were considering handing ownership over.

Sewell suggested not voting on items that were brought up and discussed in closed session until they are listed on the open session agenda for the following meeting.

Jedda added that he has been on the other side of the table and not known what was going on. He continued that there are things that take place and the board is a government entity that has to make decisions. They want public input, but there isn't anything that precludes anybody from coming down here at any time and expressing the same concerns that were stated. He reiterated that they are not in a position as they are entering into negotiations to open it to the public.

Grobmeier again added they should open it to the public that they are considering or contemplating the idea, then go into the discussions or negotiations. It may have been discussed in the past, but it has not been an agenda item.

Jedda again pointed out there will be situations where people will come in and ask questions the board will not be able to comment on. Once they are in a position where someone approaches the board, they can't lay it out for the public because they signed confidentiality agreements or they are dealing with parties in a particular case where they just can't do that. Then the board will be criticized by the public saying they came to the meeting and asked questions but got no comments. So it is a no win situation for the board to an extent. As a board member he is willing to take that heat because that is part of what an elected official has to do.

Rayho thanked the board for the back and forth discussion.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

A motion was made by Achenbach, seconded by Wright, to go into Closed Session for the purpose of discussing the employment, compensation, or dismissal of specific employees, purchase or sale of real property, and litigation. (5 ILCS 120/2§ 1, 5, 6, 11).

Those voting AYE were Achenbach, Sewell, Wright and Jedda. None voted NAY. Motion passed.

The Board adjourned to CLOSED SESSION at 6:57 PM.

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners of the Collinsville Area Recreation District was called to order in OPEN SESSION by Jedda, October 17, 2017 at 7:55 PM at the district office, 10 Gateway Drive, Collinsville, Illinois. Commissioners present were Achenbach, Sewell, Wright and Jedda. Staff present included DeRossett, Grotfendt, Kosmatka, Childers and Rice. District Attorney James Craney was present as well.

A motion was made by Achenbach, seconded by Sewell, to approve Ordinance #17-8, an ordinance approving the termination of the lease with the City of Collinsville for parks and other facilities.

Achenbach clarified that they have been in negotiations with the City of Collinsville to turn the parks owned by the City, back to the City. CARD is going to decrease their levy and Collinsville will raise theirs similarly to what CARD's is lowered. CARD is transferring to the City the lease payments for the cell towers in the parks, they will get the concession money from the concession stands, and they will get the money from the field rentals. From CARD's perspective, per Achenbach, CARD has the same functional relationship with the municipality of Collinsville that we do with the municipalities of Maryville, Glen Carbon and Pontoon Beach. The board thinks it is a good deal for the City and CARD.

Jedda added that CARD has an ordinance tonight that will include an agreement to terminate the lease with the City. It will also talk about PEP Grant money as well as a formula allowing part of that money to go to the City of Collinsville. Schnuck's Park and the equipment will go to the City as well.

Rayho asked if there will be an impact regarding staff or facilities. Achenbach said yes, we now have five less parks to care for. The good part in the timing is it is happening at the end of the season.

Roll was called with the following commissioners voting AYE: Achenbach, Sewell, Wright and Jedda. None voted NAY. Motion passed.

No further business coming before the commissioners, a motion was made by Sewell, seconded by Wright, the meeting be adjourned. Those voting AYE were Achenbach, Sewell, Wright and Jedda. None voted NAY. Motion passed.

The meeting stood adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Kimberli DeRossett, Recording Secretary

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Date