



COLLINSVILLE AREA RECREATION DISTRICT  
www.CollinsvilleRec.com

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## **SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

**NOVEMBER 20, 2017**

The Special 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, November 20, 2017 at the district office, 10 Gateway Drive, Collinsville, Illinois.

Following The Pledge of Allegiance, the roll was called with the following commissioners answering present: Mark Achenbach, Jeanne Lomax, Brad Sewell, Aaron Wright and Ronald Jedda.

Staff present include: Doug Erhart, Kimberli DeRossett, Jessica Jader, Keith Grotefendt, Jerri McMillan, Mark Kosmatka, Carol Frerker, Tim Childers and Jill Rice.

District attorney James Craney was present as well.

### **SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR**

Jedda opened the floor for speakers from the floor.

The first speaker from the floor was Jill Rice. She is speaking as an 18 year resident of Collinsville, a Collinsville business owner, owner of three properties in Collinsville and CARD taxpayer to express her concerns over recent events. Since May of this year she has seen a steady effort to effectively dismantle the park district from the inside. Two years ago there were a few people, now on this board, who tried to get enough signatures to dissolve the park district. That was unsuccessful. The community had spoken by not signing the petition. Since then, those people have been voted into office. Sadly it appears they have begun the process of parting out the park district, in effect, dissolving it from the inside. As a taxpayer, she wants to express her disappointment over these events. Her first point stressed that parks are a valuable asset to the community. She has spent many years using the parks and recreation programs through CARD including Totally Tot Time, purchased swimming lessons and season passes to Splash City Waterpark, spent many days on playgrounds and taken advantage of the educational programs through Willoughby Farm. She stayed home and home-schooled her children, raising four children on one income. The reduced rates and free services through CARD she has gladly paid for through her property taxes. Even though she did not use the school district for many years, she was glad to pay the school district taxes because she sees the value in educating the children in her community. She also sees the value in having parks and recreation for those same families and children. She will never be convinced parks and recreations are not an essential part of a thriving community; every bit as important as fire, police, street and water departments.

Her second point is that she does not believe the leasing of Arlington Greens Golf Course is a good deal for the taxpayers. It would save her about \$4.66 per year according to the numbers the board gave out at the last special meeting. The board stated it would save the district \$140,000 annually, totaling \$4.2 million over 30 years. Naturally, being the budget nerd she is, she did the math and concluded that the average household in CARD would save \$140 over the next 30 years. She also has some additional concerns regarding the lease. What is the lease currently costing the district in legal fees? The board acknowledged at the last meeting that the CARD attorney has put hours and hours of work in. What is it costing the district in man hours? That should also be factored in since it is likely preventing staff from focusing on their normal work. What types of investigations have been done on the credit worthiness of the new management company? Do their profit and loss statements show they can run a business in the black? It is just good business to ensure all of this has been done and as a tax payer she would expect that this board has done due diligence.

Her third point was in regards to the deeding of Pleasant Ridge Park to the Village of Maryville. It is not a fair representation of the entire park district. It is the board's responsibility to respond to the needs of all of the

residents of the park district. She raised several questions regarding the deeding of the park. What type of savings will this provide for the district in real numbers? What will it save each of the approximately 30,000 households in the CARD district? What is the appraised value of Pleasant Ridge? What did it cost the tax payers to purchase and construct the park and facilities? If Collinsville residents constitute 60% of the voters in the district, how will the residents of Collinsville be compensated for this transaction? Will Collinsville receive from Maryville 60% of what it cost to buy and build Pleasant Ridge? Can that money be applied toward bonds? If not, she would say this is not a fair representation of the people in this park district. She went on to quote a commissioner from a previous meeting in regards to individuals wanting to disconnect from the park district. She said that if you are willing to stand up for the few that want to disconnect, then it is your responsibility to stand up for the 60% of the tax payers that own Pleasant Ridge. She added that the commissioners do not own the park. The tax payers do. At the very least, something as large as Pleasant Ridge being given away should be brought to the voters; because if you don't, you are in effect saying the voices of Collinsville do not matter. This is not a Collinsville versus Maryville matter. It is about attempting to fairly represent all interested parties. We cannot go back and undo the past; however, we can move forward making the right decisions. The current circumstances will only deepen the divide that already seems to exist between us. It is not good, and certainly not in the best interest of your constituency.

She concluded by stating that when there is no vision, the people perish. People that do not know what is going on or why things are happening become discouraged and angry. She asked the board to begin thinking of the best interest of everyone. She asked the board what their vision was for CARD. What is your strategic plan? Even the smallest businesses and nonprofits cannot function without some sort of plan. She thinks it would be appropriate of the board to formulate and publish a strategic plan for the public to review, even if the vision is to dismantle the district. The public should be made aware so they can have the opportunity to process it and respond. She suggests, as a constituent, to stop all the leasing and deeding of property; formulate a plan; make it known to the public; allow them to comment.

The second speaker from the floor was Bill Dorman. He started by saying he can't really add much to what Rice said, but he does want to know how much Maryville is going to pay for the park. He went on to note he didn't know anything about the golf course until Rice mentioned it. He stated there is not any place in Collinsville to get news. He asked the board directly how much they were going to sell it for. Jedda stated that when they have a discussion later, that will come out.

The third speaker from the floor was Derrick Keith Cox. He stated that he grew up in and loves Collinsville. He added that he owns and pays lots of property tax in Collinsville, while his official residence is now in Maryville. He stated he has always been active in the community and is currently a Collinsville Township Trustee. The biggest complaint he hears about the most is the property taxes. It is why he decided to get into local politics. He believes the government should provide great services for lower taxes and should be more transparent. He presented a few simple facts. Many surrounding communities do not have a park district. They have fabulous parks and they are not \$26 million in debt. He is willing to guess that not many here would like to see Collinsville resident's tax money go to pay for an Airplane Park in Edwardsville, or Sportsmans Park in O'Fallon. Then you can see why, for so many years, Maryville residents have been frustrated when we get a large bill that is paying for parks in other towns. The single park that was located in Maryville will be run by Maryville. It seems only fair. Collinsville was given an asset they did not own from CARD just a few weeks ago.

His last point was that he sick of some of the city council who want to divide Maryville and Collinsville. He added that we can all go to the parks just like before. If Maryville ends up owning Pleasant Ridge, you can still go to Pleasant Ridge. He went on to note that if you have ever been to a Maryville park, they are awesome; you will not know the difference.

He added that he is one of the main people leading the effort to disconnect citizens from CARD. The time is now to stop the bleeding. Why should we continue to pay higher taxes when CARD won't be running anything? Once this board is replaced and if you are still in CARD, Collinsville can start funneling big spending projects through CARD once again. If you thought \$500 was high, just wait. He went on to note he will need lots of help to get

special petitions. If you decide you want to help, you will not only be helping yourself, but your neighbor to save his or her money, while giving them great parks in their area. Other areas have great parks without park districts, so can we. He went on to thank the board for seeing the writing on the wall and letting the citizens out like so many have been demanding.

The fourth speaker from the floor was Maryville Mayor Craig Short. He is here representing the Village of Maryville and as a taxpayer of CARD. He started by thanking everyone for all the comments and concurred this is not a Collinsville Maryville thing, it is a taxpayer issue and it is about responsibility. He went on to give a brief history of CARD. It was established in November of 1990. It included all of Collinsville Township, except for the boundaries of Maryville. It included all of Collinsville, including the portion in St. Clair County. It included a tract of land in Nameoki Township and part of Tri-Township Park District. When CARD was established, Maryville had 2,576 residents that did not pay taxes to CARD in 1990. He added that Maryville immediately started growing and they are the fastest growing community in Madison County. From 1990 to 2000, Maryville's population increased by 80.6%. The population was almost doubled in 10 years. Those are all CARD taxpayers that are also paying taxes to the Village of Maryville to help maintain Drost Park and continue to pay to CARD, who, at the time, only had facilities in Collinsville. By the 2010 census, Maryville grew another 61%. He can see the population going up another 8% at the next census. They are still growing and as they grow they are incorporating more and more CARD taxpayers. CARD began collecting taxes from Maryville as Maryville continued to grow. The money was spent in Collinsville; to maintain and improve Collinsville's parks.

He understands there are recreation programs. He frequents Arlington Golf Course. He added that he would have to play golf almost two times a day to basically counter what he pays in taxes to CARD. He noted that it was not until 2007, when CARD bought Arlington Greens Golf Course, that Maryville tax money was not spent in Collinsville.

The CARD board of commissioners eventually recognized the disparity. He added that he has documentation, letters that were written by previous board members and the director of CARD stating they need to do something for Maryville. They need to develop a park for Maryville. In April 2007, CARD purchased the property that is now Pleasant Ridge Park for \$1.6 million. In November 2008, they began construction on a maintenance shed, at taxpayer expense, of \$925,357. In December of 2010, the contract for phase I in the development of the park was awarded at \$929,000. The cost of Pleasant Ridge Park is \$3,454,357. Of that, \$400,000 of it was an OSLAD Grant. A grant from the State of Illinois, basically saying that we are going to give you money and you will always maintain this as a park.

He went on to say that whatever the board of commissioners has done; giving the parks back to Collinsville for their maintenance; possibly giving Pleasant Ridge Park to Maryville; there are still going to be parks. You are not losing parks.

He added that in 1989, people in Collinsville were so frustrated with the way the parks were, they said we can form a commission, a park district, to take care of Collinsville's parks. Collinsville said they were in. The parks were not being maintained, so they got everyone around to help pay for it. It was a great deal for Collinsville. He went on to note the Collinsville is paying 60% of the money into CARD. But, for example, in 2000 Maryville paid \$91,000 a year in tax dollars to CARD. In 2010, it went up to \$644,608. Since the Pleasant Ridge property was purchased in 2007, Maryville taxpayers have contributed \$5,622,870.16 to CARD.

He went on to discuss information that is floating around. CARD voted on their agreement and to get out of the lease with the City of Collinsville on October 17. Maryville was never notified. CARD and the City of Collinsville are their own taxing entities; they didn't contact Maryville, Glen Carbon, Pontoon Beach or Collinsville Township because the law allows them to do this. They are allowed to transfer properties to other municipalities if they feel it is in the best interest of both municipalities. The City of Collinsville approved the agreement on October 23. He learned of it on October 24 when he read it in the paper.

He added that he immediately sent a letter to President Ron Jedda, that if CARD is going to start vacating assets or trying to cut down on operational expenses, the Village of Maryville is interested in Pleasant Ridge Park and

they would like some of the same considerations the City of Collinsville got. They are not asking for anything more, they just want what is fair. Collinsville, in their agreement, had no problem taking 9.5 acres of Schnuck's Park, even though the residents of Maryville, Glen Carbon, Pontoon Beach and Collinsville Township have helped maintain that for all of these years. They had no problem when CARD transferred the deed for 7.5 acres of Arlington Wetlands to Madison County. He again noted he doesn't want it to be a Collinsville Maryville thing, but that is what it seems to be. CARD was not obligated to notify any other entity as far as negotiations. He sent the letter to Jedda on October 26, after the agreement with the City of Collinsville had already been approved by both boards. He added that he did not personally contact Jedda until last week. That is how fast this is going. He added there are no secrets.

He went on to note that in open sessions at his board meetings, with newspapers present, that CARD is trying to cut down on operational expenses and he is supporting that. He added that if they continue to do this, he is going to ask for Pleasant Ridge Park. Maryville has always wanted Pleasant Ridge Park. When CARD started developing the park, they were doing it to give the Village of Maryville something for all of those years of paying taxes to them and them spending the money in Collinsville. He went on to address the \$100,000 maintenance budget. He said he saw tax levies from 1988-1989, before CARD was formed, where the City of Collinsville was levying taxes for parks at over \$100,000.

Last year CARD levied \$330,000 for park maintenance. Maryville pays to the taxing district and they spend the money on the debt they have accumulated, making improvements to parks, purchasing other property; Maryville pays just like everyone else. The \$100,000 is supplemented by Park Enhancement Program Grants, which the City of Collinsville has negotiated to get a part of now that they have taken back the maintenance of their parks. It is also supplemented by two cell towers that are rented out. They also get profits from concessions stand at Woodland Park and the Sports Complex. The City of Collinsville gets all of that now. It is not \$100,000 budget.

The 60% number is very compartmentalized. Why don't they take 100% of the tax money in the City of Collinsville and Maryville will use 100% of their tax money in Maryville. Based on the \$3.5 million Pleasant Ridge Park, that Maryville paid \$5.2 million into, Maryville would like to know where their \$1.7 million is? Let's not get hung up on this and look at the big picture. The big picture is CARD is cutting operational expenses. If Pleasant Ridge Park comes to the Village of Maryville, Maryville pays to maintain that park. Collinsville is still going to have to pay the debt just like Maryville is paying the debt on a golf course, on a water park, on borrowed money used to purchase Willoughby Farm. This is why people have been talking about disconnection. Why not keep our money in our community and use it to our benefit? This has been the frustration of Maryville all this time. He again added that no matter who owns the parks, people can still go to them. Collinsville residents will be welcome in Pleasant Ridge Park just like they are in Drost Park.

The fifth speaker from the floor was Jim Grobmeier. He noted that he is very concerned about the way the board has been going. He stated they are not being forward on the agendas with what they are planning to do. They are not letting the public know what the long range goals are. He noted they are going to go into closed session to make their decisions, which he gathered they have already made, but it has not been opened to the public to get their feedback. He has suggested this two meetings in a row, so the public is aware of what the board is thinking and let them voice their concerns.

The point is there is a budget deficit that has to be paid off. All the activities last year showed a profit. The board said it was the best year we have had at CARD in years and now here you are giving stuff away or leasing it out where we are not going to get near the money back to get the deficit down. He added he is very disappointed in the board. They are not being fair to the public. They need to be more open with their goals. He does believe they are trying to dismantle CARD from within. He knows several of the board members have tried, unsuccessfully, from the outside to dismantle it. Now that they are in control of the board they are doing it. The board is representing everyone, not Maryville or Collinsville; they are representing 100% of the taxpayers in the district of CARD.

The sixth speaker from the floor was Bill Jourdain. He said the general opinion of this board is that it is secretive. You don't want to give the people of the City, the voters, time to come out to hear facts or vote on

things. This board needs to be more forward and to let people know what you are doing and what you plan on doing. "Give us a voice since it is our money."

The seventh speaker from the floor was Scott Rayho. He stated that to achieve the best solutions to the taxpayers and residents of CARD, it is important the citizens have an opportunity to engage in productive dialogue with the CARD commissioners and staff. He noted that on occasion, the board has allowed back and forth communication during meetings and it is appreciated. He has applauded the commissioners and staff on some of the great work that has been done to improve and streamline operations as well as the attempts to put the financials in order and to streamline costs and operations. He doesn't always agree with the commissioners on some of the decisions that are made, he is hopeful that thoughtful and noble deliberations will remain the order of the day. There are certain aspects of CARD meetings he wishes were handled differently. There have been conversations about having CARD business items published along with the agenda in advance so the public can have a better understanding of the information the CARD commissioners are evaluating as part of their deliberations. As things are set up now, most pertinent information is not made available until after a meeting cycle, or the speakers have to reach out to board members individually which takes up more time. He added the thing with Collinsville came up quickly as well. He understands Maryville's frustration of them not finding out. Even as a Collinsville resident, he only found out toward the end. Again, additional information would have been nice.

He went on to address other concerns like the scheduling of the special meeting. Some say this meeting was scheduled specifically in conflict with other significant government public activities, like the Collinsville Town Hall Meeting. He chooses to believe differently because he has talked to several of the commissioners and knows the circumstances and logistics. He believes the scheduling was just an unfortunate circumstance. He went on to add that it would have been nice, once it was learned there was a conflict that it was pushed to after the holiday since the meeting was already pushed out of the regular cycle. It would allow us to avoid conflicts or appearance of lack of transparency.

He went on to add that while he does not agree with the policy to not invest any more resources than were necessary in the leased parks. Under that precept, he understood and supported the transfer back of the parks to the City of Collinsville and believes the agreement reached was a creditable and will probably achieve better operations for those parks.

He also understands that the transfer of the operation and responsibility of the park to the Maryville Parks District as an effort to streamline staffing and operations. He went on to note concerns about the employees of CARD and hopes the park employees can be transferred to the City of Collinsville or the Village of Maryville.

He also noted there is a bit of a difference between Pleasant Ridge, which is currently owned by CARD and was proportionally paid for by residence in several communities and something should be worked out that is more fair.

He went on to question what the hurry is regarding the removal of the FlowRider at Splash City Waterpark. He recalls frequent users wanting to try to come up with a fundraiser or methods to help repair the FlowRider so it can become an attraction again. What's the difference if it is removed now or in late spring?

Jedda addressed concerns including the scheduling of tonight's meeting. He stated he emailed Erhart on October 31 requesting to change the meeting date since several board members were not going to be able to attend the November 21 meeting. He added he did not know about the town hall meeting until this past Thursday. He said it was unfortunate timing. He added there will be no quorum at the November 21 meeting.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

Jedda opened the floor for the following Consent Agenda items:

Regular Meeting Minutes for October 17, 2017  
Special Meeting Minutes for October 24, 2017  
Regular Closed Session Minutes for October 17, 2017  
Special Closed Meeting Minutes for October 24, 2017

Treasurer's Report for October 2017  
Claims & Accounts list in the amount of \$1,180,200.54  
Budget Tracking Reports for October 2017

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

Erhart noted changes that needed to be made to the Claims & Accounts. In Total Capital Improvement on last page it shows \$13,850. Another \$3,334 needs to be added making the new total \$17,184 and the Grand Total should read \$1,183,534.54 instead of \$1,180,200.54.

A motion was made by Achenbach, seconded by Sewell, to approve the amended amount of \$1,183,534.54.

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

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

Jedda opened the floor for the Executive Director & Staff Reports.

Erhart said this was his two year anniversary. He provided a recap of what has happened monetarily in those two years. He presented the treasurer's report for October of 2015, 2016 and 2017 to the board. When he started, in General Corps, Recreation, Golf, Aquatic and Museum Funds there was \$989,736 in the bank. October 2016 those same five funds had \$1,362,751. That is a 38% increase. At the end of October 2017, those same five accounts had \$1,876,262. Over the last two years, that is an increase of 90%. He thanks his staff for this. He did not do it, he provided direction and they followed. He is very proud of the accomplishments they have made.

He went on to note some upcoming events like Breakfast with Santa on December 9 and Christmas at Willoughby on December 3.

Achenbach added the numbers do not go unnoticed. He noted he has noticed the numbers getting better over the last two years and that "you guys do a great job." He went on to note the board gets it. He reads our reports every month and he reads the pain in the reports. He said he understands the success of CARD has come from Doug and the people that work for him. He went on to note the credit the board gets because they hired Doug. They were smart enough to hire somebody who knows how to be a manager, which is what the park district is about. It is not about having a degree in parks and recreation or a million other things people seem to focus on. It's about knowing how to manage people and stuff.

He went on to note the things going on in the park district. The board doesn't want the staff to feel like the board does not know where they are coming from. The board is always looking for ways to do things the most efficient way possible. He asked the staff to please not to take that to mean that what the staff is doing isn't good enough. There are two kinds of improvements in life, he went on. There is getting better at something and there is transitioning to a different way. One is trans-formative and one is just improving. He doesn't think the board can ask some of the staff to improve much more than they already have. So they tend to look for trans-formative things. Sometimes that might come across as if the board doesn't appreciate what the staff has done for the board and the community, but that is not true. The board wants to make the park district as efficient as possible. For example, as good of a job as the golf course was doing, when considering the employee benefits, they were in the red, yet it was the best year they ever had. When they chose to contract the golf course out to another company, it is in the best interest of the tax payers for the park district. Five years from now someone can come back and say "that golf course has just gone to hell since they contracted out" then they can come back and say we did a lousy job, we made a bad decision. But to say that now is unfair. We have someone that has a proven track record in managing golf courses and we are going to save the taxpayers money.

We are going to get other communities to run the parks. The parks are still going to be there and they are going to provide the exact same services as before, but the tax payers of CARD are going to have to pay less for the parks. If we were sub optimizing and in return we were forcing the municipalities to pay more, such that the total

tax burden for the residents was going up, we wouldn't do it. As of tonight we have an entire parks department to run one park. If we transfer the operation of that park to the Village of Maryville and they provide the same park and it's the same usage to everybody in the public, you won't see the difference. In the end, the expense to run that park is less for the Village of Maryville because they have their own parks overhead, than it is for CARD to run a single park with the associated overhead. In his opinion, he doesn't understand why anybody is upset. He lives in Maryville; his taxes are not going to go down. He is going to vote for something that will make his CARD taxes go down, but his Maryville taxes are going to go up. If you live in Collinsville, your taxes are going to go down. You are still going to be able to go to the park, still be able to use it just like you are now.

Audience member Terry Childers added that in 25 years his taxes have only gone up. He does not understand why the board wants to get rid of one of the assets. The park district is an asset to any city. Achenbach said there is a state statute that allows the transfer of assets between local governments. What the board is doing is essentially one of the reasons why the statute is out there. Why have a unit of local government pay for overhead when we can pass the asset? It doesn't change. It is not like a house. "If I gave you my house and transferred the title, you wouldn't let me live in that house. You would live in it or you would sell it." He went on to say that in this case if we deed Pleasant Ridge Park to Maryville, the function of the park remains exactly the same. It is not like private property. It is about the future costs to operate the park. He appreciates everyone that has come down here. He noted that the staff has a lot of valid points, but in the end, the board has to look at what makes the best sense in the big picture. He knows that is difficult.

Tim Childers added that the problem the staff is having is the public image issues the staff was starting to overcome. Now they are running against that difficulty again. Achenbach again said he gets it. He reads it in the staff reports. He added that the board can read between the lines and that they are not stupid. The only thing he would say to the public is that we have a very good staff. The reason the park district is successful enough that other people are interested in the assets we have is not because of the board. Sometimes you are a victim of your own success. If the park district was a mess like it was before, people would stay away from it. There are people that are unhappy with it. They are unhappy with how much taxes they pay. That is from the debt. The current board didn't do it and neither did the current staff.

Mr. Childers pointed out that Achenbach said it's in better shape than ever. Why fix something that is not broke? Achenbach said because their goal is to make it better. If they can provide the same services for less, that is an improvement. Again, it is nothing against the employees.

A motion was made by Achenbach, seconded by Sewell, to approve the Executive Director & Staff reports.

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

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Jedda opened the floor for old business.

The first item of old business was discussion and potential action regarding ordinance #17-9, an ordinance regarding petitions to disconnect from CARD. Jedda noted they have had some of these in the past. The attorney has reviewed these petitions and everything is in order. Craney added that there was an issue because certain property owners who sought to disconnect had properties that did not border on the edge of CARD. A subsequent individual made a petition and the properties are all on the border of the outskirts of CARD. These properties are at 214, 218 and 222 Edwards Street in Glen Carbon, Illinois.

A motion was made by Wright, seconded by Achenbach, to approve Ordinance #17-9, an ordinance regarding petitions to disconnect from CARD.

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

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Jedda opened the floor for new business.

The first item of new business was discussion and potential action regarding the payment of not more than \$3,712, for payment of Vernon Van Hoy's life insurance policy. Jedda noted this is in relation to the Arlington Greens lease CARD has entered into. In part of that lease agreement CARD had the major owners of the lease company get life insurance in case something were to happen to one of them. CARD will get back a half million dollar life insurance policy on each individual. The individuals are the sole owners of this particular LLC corporation. The board felt it was important that if something happened to one, there is dollars there to protect CARD's interest. CARD has a ten year, \$500,000 term policy they have taken out on Mr. Van Hoy and will have another policy coming in December. The reason for the \$3,712 is because CARD has two options for payment. It can be paid annually for \$3,555 or on a monthly auto pay which would be \$3,711.48 annually.

Erhart asked if this premium was for both principals. Jedda said this is for one individual. Erhart asked if we are going to have this again. Achenbach said we do not know, it depends on their health and age. Sewell asked if a physical was still needed for the other individual. Jedda said the other individual is in the process of getting underwritten. Jedda added that by paying monthly, you will pay 9.5% more than annually.

A motion was made by Sewell, seconded by Achenbach, to approve the payment of not more than the amended amount of \$3,555, for an annual payment of Vernon Van Hoy's life insurance policy.

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

The second item of new business was discussion and potential action regarding authorization to contract for removal of the FlowRider from Splash City Waterpark. Sewell said if it is not done now, we won't have time to put something else in there before the park opens in the spring. He asked if that is part of the reason we want to get it out now. Erhart said if we are determined to get rid of it, the possibility of not replacing it with something else is high. He went on to note that he has some individuals that are working on pumps in the park that are willing to buy and totally dismantle FlowRider. They will be here in December to put some pumps in and will make an offer to purchase FlowRider. Achenbach asked if they were essentially buying the pumps for parts and scraps. Erhart said they work on other FlowRiders and have maintenance agreements with other parks for FlowRider. Achenbach asked if there was going to be cash flow back to CARD. Erhart said yes. Achenbach asked if we were at the mercy of their schedule since they are doing work for us. Erhart said they will be here in December. Jedda said we know we will be able to get rid of it and bring cash in. Achenbach asked what would happen with the concrete pool. Erhart does not know. He went on to explain the parts of the FlowRider. There are two turbines under the tarp and one pump in the back. Everything is in one area.

Sewell asked about getting an upgraded system since one of the issues with the current FlowRider was the incorrect electrical system. Erhart explained it is a three phase, which is no longer made. Sewell asked about putting a new FlowRider in the place of the old one that works at a lower cost to CARD. Achenbach said, we could but he is not going to vote for it because it used too much energy. Sewell asked if the FlowRider ever made itself profitable. DeRossett said it was never really given a chance. She noted the public had been surveyed and many were willing to pay more to keep the FlowRider and willing to pay extra just to use that one attraction. Achenbach said the original study that CARD paid for in regards to FlowRider recommended it not be purchased. They went against the original recommendations saying it would only be done because you wanted to do it, not because it was going to make money. Sewell added that was the same logic for buying a golf course and paying too much for it.

Lomax asked about the costs to run it. Erhart said it was \$5,000 a month for electricity, plus staffing and water. The board noted that it was an item that would draw a few people in, but not enough to make an incremental cost.

Childers added that our 13-18 demographics have dropped significantly. Rice added that it is the only one for 400 miles, so it is a draw for the community. Achenbach understands that, but the economic draw for the community

of Collinsville, it helps the City of Collinsville. They don't pay CARD anything to run it. If the City of Collinsville ran Splash City and it brought a lot of people from out of town that would be great, he would support that. Unfortunately, the economics are not aligned.

Wright asked what it would cost to get this thing running. Erhart said it would be \$35,000 to get the one motor rebuilt. If you do one, you might as well do both since they are the same age, so both for \$50,000 and they would be good for eight years. Achenbach said we do not make more incremental money coming in than it costs to run it, so we would pay \$50,000 to fix it, then on top of that, we make less money because it costs more to run it than we are bringing in with additional revenue. Erhart added there would have to be a surcharge for individuals to use it. Achenbach noted that we didn't have it last year and we made \$200,000.

McMillan said that each year there is going to be less and less people coming. The public has been very patient in trying to find out what is going to be done with the FlowRider. She went on to note the large numbers of teenagers once at our waterpark because they had something to do. They do not now. Hanging a sign and making it a sunbathing area is not a reason people are going to want to support Splash City. She feels very strongly that the FlowRider needs to be repaired so Splash City has a big attraction. She noted there used to be competitions.

Frerker asked if there was an organization that could take control and do fundraising for FlowRider. Sewell noted that everyone wants them to do it, but no one wants to pay for it. McMillan added that we used to offer surfing lessons. Jader noted that without the FlowRider or a wave pool, we are basically a glorified splash pad, which are growing immensely and people make no money on. With Edwardsville and the growing competition, why should people come here to spend money? She added that we have slides and Monsoon Mountain. Jedda said the numbers do not seem to support that. The numbers support that there is revenue and more profit. DeRossett added that we dropped the prices, we have dropped the prices across the board, and there have been more marketing efforts online plus reaching out more into the community. She noted that for several years people didn't go out and promote anything in the community. In the last three years the staff has spent a lot of time in the community rebuilding the image and getting people to come to the waterpark. Promoting lower prices, offering contests and interacting with people and none of that has been taken into consideration. She added that the board looks at it like it does not make money so we don't want it, we are not going to fix it. Achenbach said lowering the prices was a good thing. DeRossett pointed out what a difference it would make if we had the FlowRider and lower prices.

Jader said it's great that we are saving all this money, but at what point do we put tax payers money back into things and actually start building, improving and maintaining. Instead it's just cut, cut, cut and things are getting worse. It's great that we are saving but we have no goals, no vision, we have no mission. As a staff person, she is not sure what her goal is other than make as much money as you possibly can so it can sit there. She doesn't know how much money she needs to save before she can start putting money back into things. She went on to say that is how the staff feels; they feel like they are lacking a goal, they are lacking a mission. We don't know what our vision statement is. The last one we had is from at least a decade ago. It's a mess and we don't know what we are trying to do. With Splash City, you say they made this much money. She noted we had fantastic weather last year. That helped a ton because groups and things did not have to be cancelled. She went on noting that knowing what we are trying to do would help the staff a lot so they can move in whatever direction that is.

Jedda said he has been on the board for just over six months, but has come to meetings for the vast number of years and knows there has been ongoing discussion regarding the FlowRider and getting rid of it. It is not something that has just come up tonight. There has been a lot of discussion with people that have been on the board and the feeling has been that even though it may bring in some additional people, the incremental cost will not be covered by the cost that has to be spent. He noted that we are a public entity and we have to look at what it does for the public taxpayers as a whole. A private entity can put something in and if it doesn't work, it doesn't work. As a public entity you can't do things just for a small incremental group of people, we are doing it for a large number of people. The FlowRider just isn't justifiable to spend the dollars to fix it, plus the additional operating costs. Even if you charge a surcharge, you are still not going to cover the costs, which mean the tax payers have to go out and fund the shortfall. If we do the FlowRider, then someone will say let's do a simulator at the golf course because a few golfers like that, and pretty soon you have a lot of items that are not making money

and a lot of people that do not use those having to foot the bill. Jader said that was kind of an avalanche, just because you do one thing does not mean you have to do everything. She added that it is the overall lack of vision and goal.

Achenbach asked where the closest water park was with a FlowRider. DeRossett stated Republic, MO or Chicago would have the closest. He asked that because if other people don't have one it is either a lousy idea and no one likes it or because of the costs associated with it. If the incremental revenue is less than the incremental cost, it's a no. Jader understands that, but if we get rid of it, we need to change the view of what the entire water park is. It is no longer really a water park. When you have two slides and Monsoon Mountain as the attractions, we are moving closer to a splash pad. There needs to be a strategic plan. Grotefendt questioned what we put in the place of FlowRider if we get rid of it. Jedda added that part of that process is that the board has to make a decision about what impact it has and the director of the district will have to sit down with staff and determine what can be put in that place. Grotefendt asked if things keep breaking are we just not going to fix them. Achenbach said each and every item is an individual decision by itself. We have to apply some logic.

A motion was made by Achenbach, seconded by Sewell, authorizing Erhart to seek contracting for the removal of FlowRider at no expense to the district.

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

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

Jedda opened the floor for the good of the district.

Erhart gave kudos to Willoughby Farm and University of Illinois Master Gardeners. They donated over 1,600 pounds of fresh produce to local food pantries this season.

Jedda commented that he is not one to make excuses, but the reality is there is a humongous amount of debt. There was a lot of deferred maintenance that wasn't done and it wasn't anything to do with the staff. Previous boards bought things without worrying about the maintenance. Now the board is faced with a situation where Erhart has done a good job of doing some of the maintenance, but there is still a tremendous amount of deferred maintenance that should have been done, but wasn't. The board is not up here trying to be the lump of coal in your stocking, but the reality is we have been dealt a poor hand and are trying to work through it the best they can.

Frerker noted that turning stuff around has been great and the staff is one of the best staffs she has ever worked with. She added that we all need to come together, get rid of the egos, and do what is right for the kids, the elderly and the families. That does involve change and she added that going to the City could be a great thing, but we all need to come together and have a purpose because that is why we are here. We don't want the residents to suffer for it. The staff deserves a strategic plan. She said this job is purposeful and asked the board to not take that away. Maybe not years ago, but this staff wants to serve and they feel good about what they do. Let us know. Let us plan ahead with you, not just behind. Let the staff know so they can plan to do their job for the community.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

A motion was made by Wright, seconded by Lomax, 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, Lomax, Sewell, Wright and Jedda. None voted NAY. Motion passed.

The Board adjourned to CLOSED SESSION at 7:53 PM.

The Special Meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners of the Collinsville Area Recreation District was called to order in OPEN SESSION by Jedda, November 20, 2017 at 8:48 PM at the district office, 10 Gateway Drive,

Collinsville, Illinois. Commissioners present were Achenbach, Lomax, Sewell, Wright and Jedda. Staff present included Erhart, DeRossett, Childers, Grotefendt and Jader. District Attorney James Craney was present as well.

A motion was made by Achenbach, seconded by Wright, to approve the deeding of Pleasant Ridge Park and certain equipment to the Village of Maryville.

Jedda said the CARD board of commissioners has been discussing and will be voting on transferring of Pleasant Ridge Park to Maryville. The Village of Maryville sent a letter to him, as president of the board, on October 26, 2017. He didn't actually get anything until November 3, 2017. Craney has reviewed the transfer of the property and it is legal by state statute. Craney noted that state statute allows CARD to transfer the deed to Maryville.

He went on to note the special meeting was set for tonight because they would not have a quorum at the regular scheduled meeting tomorrow night. He said this meeting was set on October 31, 2017, so there was no discussion about trying to derail the town hall meeting next door.

He went on to review some information regarding the transfer of Pleasant Ridge Park by CARD. He also wants to bring to everyone's attention some of the prior transfers that have taken place and some expenditures. Over the years, this is prior to him becoming a board member; CARD donated \$40,000 of tax payer money for the Collinsville Historical Museum located in the City of Collinsville. CARD also transferred the Miner's Theater to the Miner's Foundation after the prior board spent \$1.5 million on the Miner's Theater with no real financial plan in place to finish the project. A number of years ago, Collinsville built a water storage facility on part of Glidden Park. CARD received no compensation from the City of Collinsville for the use of that particular piece of land. The prior board said sure, you can build the water facility. CARD spent \$250,000 recently redoing the tennis courts at Glidden Park with the help of money from the PEP Grant. CARD recently deeded 7.5 acres of wetlands to Madison County who already has about 200 acres. Last month, CARD and the City of Collinsville each voted to terminate the lease agreement between the City and CARD. Also to transfer the ownership of the Schnuck's Park, owned by CARD, to the City of Collinsville. He brings that up because of different information being posted on social media saying this transaction might be illegal. He added that should not be an issue because the attorneys said it is legal.

Additionally there were some questions raised about some transparencies in the setting of tonight's meeting since it happened to fall on the night of the City of Collinsville's Town Hall Meeting. Jedda stated it had nothing to do with the town hall meeting. He said they knew there was one, but didn't know when it was until last week.

On Pleasant Ridge Park, the construction costs (including feasibility studies, surveys, building of a radio tower, etc.) to the tax payers was roughly \$3.1 million. Out of that, \$400,000 was an OSLAD Grant. This means if the property is deeded over to Maryville, it can only be used for park purposes unless that \$400,000 grant is paid off. The actual cost to tax payers locally was about \$2.7 million. Some on social media said the park cost \$3.6, \$3.5; it sounded to him like they were guessing and pulling numbers out of the air. With the transfer of Pleasant Ridge Park, the CARD tax payers will save about \$170,000 annually in property taxes. All residents and all tax payers in and outside of Maryville will be able to use this park. He added that we have reassurance from the Mayor of Maryville that you are welcome if you live in Collinsville or any other community. The park is not going to go away. He is confident that Mayor Short and the Village Trustees will keep the condition of the park in Maryville with the high quality standard they have maintained at their other parks. He went on to thank former Mayor Gullede and the Village Trustees for the many years they maintained a quality and standard of parks. Lastly, he added, that the residence of Collinsville will save roughly part of that \$170,000 annually in taxes. It's a win, win for the tax payers. Everyone gets to use the facilities. The facilities are not going to go away. He doesn't understand why everyone wouldn't view that as a winner.

Wright added that the \$3.3 million was the focus of a lot of the opposition to deeding Pleasant Ridge over. This is money that is spent and it will be extremely difficult to recover even half of that. He added the property is most likely not worth the \$1.6 million that was paid for the land. He went on to note there are significant barriers to improving it further. At this point, either we put more money into it to improve it, or we can save \$170,000 by deeding it to Maryville, who already has a parks department. He can't see a negative to this.

Sewell brought up Mayor Short stating that an excess of \$5 million has been paid by the Village of Maryville to this board over the years. So, it is not like they haven't paid. But people do want to get something out of it for their money. That is \$140,000 to \$170,000 annually the board will be able to not tax people. That is not a small amount. He added that he and Achenbach discussed how difficult it would be to provide a sewer system at Pleasant Ridge. You would either have to go with septic or invest a tremendous amount of money for the implementation of a sewer system. He added that if Maryville is going to put it on their taxing levy, they need to know now; otherwise the entire thing will have to wait until next year. He would like to see more time for discussion allowing everyone time to present their sides, but there is a sense of urgency. CARD may not be able to take that off this year's levy, but we certainly will be able to next year. If we don't do it now, Maryville does not have time to get their levy passed. He added the board is not just making a snap decision and it is not simply about giving away a park because someone asked for it.

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

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

The meeting stood adjourned at 9:02 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Kimberli DeRossett, Recording Secretary

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Date