

SOUTH EAST ASSOCIATION FOR SPECIAL PARKS AND RECREATION

Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting Held
September 17, 2024, at the SEASPAR Office
4500 Belmont Road, Downers Grove, IL 60515

Call to Order: Louise Egofske called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m.

Roll Call:

Present:	Village of Brookfield	Luke Gundersen
	Clarendon Hills Park District	Katie Gock
	Darien Park District	Stephanie Gurgone
	Village of Indian Head Park	Amy Eckert
	Community Park District of La Grange Park	Sara Earhart
	Lemont Park District	Louise Egofske
	Lisle Park District	Dan Garvy
	Village of Western Springs	Aleks Briedis
	Westmont Park District	Bob Fleck
	Village of Willowbrook	Dustin Kleefisch
	Woodridge Park District	Jenny Knitter
	Executive Director	Matt Corso
	Superintendent	Dawn Krawiec
	Superintendent	Karen Lesniak
	Marketing Coordinator	Laura Pulido
	Recording Secretary	Morgan Mason
Absent:	Downers Grove Park District	Bill McAdam
	Park District of La Grange	Jenny Bechtold
Visitors:	None	

Public Comment and Correspondence:

Louise Egofske welcomed Dustin Kleefisch as the Board representative for new member, the Village of Willowbrook. Louise also welcomed the new Board representative for Clarendon Hills Park District, Katie Gock, and the new alternate for the Community Park District of La Grange Park, Sara Earhart.

Approval of Consent Agenda:

Jenny Knitter moved to approve the Minutes from the July 16, 2024, Board Meeting; Payment of Bills in the amount of \$208,549.21; the Bank Reconciliation ending August 31, 2024; the Income Statement from August 2024; and Current Investments for August 2024 as presented. Dan Garvy seconded the motion.

Voting Aye:	Woodridge, Lisle, Brookfield, Clarendon Hills, Darien, Indian Head Park, La Grange Park, Lemont, Western Springs, Westmont
Voting Nay:	None
Absent, Not Voting:	La Grange, Downers Grove

Motion Carried Unanimously

Recreation Report:

Dawn added to her report that it was a busy summer for Special Olympics competitions and provided highlights from the sports of Golf, Bowling, Softball, Flag Football, and Bocce. Dawn also added that the seasonal in-service would be held the next day, with approximately 75 staff attending.

Administrative Services Report:

Karen Lesniak noted from her report that the agency has made great strides in its PDRMA Risk Management Review, and only a few action items remain to be completed. The Driver Manual was just updated to align with the SMART Goal of performing driver training and skill testing, especially with regard to backing up vehicles. Karen also noted that plans are underway for health insurance open enrollment and visits from an AFLAC representative in November. She also noted that the timeline for year-end performance evaluations has been completed. Karen added to her report that Business Manager Morgan Mason celebrated her 9th anniversary at SEASPAR on July 20.

Marketing Report:

Laura Pulido had nothing to add to her report.

Executive Director's Report:

Matt Corso noted from his report that the summer participation data reflects a 9% increase in service hours over the summer of 2023. This growth is a trend, as the winter/spring service hours saw a 7.7% increase from the previous year.

Matt added to his report that Dawn Krawiec attended the Morton Arboretum Gala in September, where the partnership with SEASPAR was recognized.

Matt added to his report that the Willowbrook Wiffleball Classic held on Saturday, September 14, was a success. Fifteen athletes took to the field with volunteers from Benet Academy. Spectators in attendance included the mayor of Willowbrook, who threw the first pitch, as well as village staff.

Matt added to his report that the second Sips for SEASPAR event held on Monday, September 16, was a success, with participant families, staff, and member entity Boards and staff in attendance. The next event is being planned for Pollyanna Brewing Company of Lemont in November.

Matt added to his report that the SEASPAR Aktion Club is hosting a Dine to Donate event at the Culver's in Downers Grove on October 10. Flyers were distributed to Board members and Matt agreed to email them as well for forwarding.

Matt added to his report that Jerry Fratto, a lifelong participant from Downers Grove, recently passed away. Jerry was a great guy and will be missed.

Matt added to his report that the anniversary of the EAGLES Adult Day Program is September 22. He thanked the Board members for their support of the program and noted that staff are looking at opportunities for expansion. Jenny Knitter inquired about criteria for program space, and staff indicated that a kitchen, room for a computer lab, and ideally a dedicated space would be preferred. Stephanie Gurgone noted that dedicated space also can be used for other

SEASPAR programs, reducing the reliance on member entity facilities. Dan Garvy inquired as to whether fees would be increased in 2025 and whether that had proven a barrier to participation. Staff noted that the fees undergo a small cost of living increase each year, and no participants have left due to these increases; participants with financial difficulties are assisted with a \$10,000 grant funded by a donor to provide scholarships. Matt Corso noted that EAGLES is one of the cheapest day programs in the area, primarily because it is privately funded, as are the day programs of most SRAs. Matt noted that the program's revenue covers its direct expenses and part of its administrative expenses due to the participant criteria, which minimizes staff costs. The EAGLES program now constitutes half of SEASPAR's program revenue and expenses. Jenny Knitter inquired about participants aging out of the program, and staff acknowledged that a different program for older adults is in consideration. Staff noted that EAGLES is available for participants up to the age of 50, and many begin leaving SEASPAR at this age for group homes. Katie Glock inquired as to whether families would travel to other communities for the program, and staff responded that yes, that was proven with the Lemont site.

Louise Egofske thanked Matt Corso for visiting a Lemont Park Board meeting, noting that it is good for Board members and especially new members to hear about SEASPAR. Matt noted that he would be happy to speak at any upcoming member Board meetings.

Unfinished Business:

None.

New Business:

FY2025 Budget and Levy Discussion

Matt Corso introduced the proposed FY2025 budget and levy, which would be discussed at this meeting, adjusted accordingly, and presented for approval at the October Board meeting.

Matt provided an overview of the current year's revenue and expenses, noting that unexpected grant revenue and lower than expected expenses are resulting in a projected loss of \$23,000, or \$323,000 when including the capital projects transfer. A deficit budget has been planned the last few years to reduce the fund balance to policy levels.

Matt discussed the levy rate, which remained flat for several years before increasing in 2024. A consideration for 2025 is that Cook County saw a large increase in EAVs. Compared with other SRAs, SEASPAR's levy rate has remained on the low end for decades.

Matt presented the budget for 2025 with several levy rate options to show how the rate selection would impact upcoming years' fund balances. Matt noted that he did not include a potential grant in the 2025 revenue, and he had not shared information on the funds set aside for PLAWA compliance for inclusion aides as the summer inclusion season had just been billed. Matt noted that the winter-spring season resulted in a negative balance in the pool of funds for PLAWA, but summer resulted in a positive balance of \$6,454, with a liability of \$2,724 in paid time off owed to date. Matt noted that he would project out to next year to determine the 2025 inclusion rate.

Matt presented the capital budget, noting that 2025 would be a light year for capital projects as no vehicles are planned for purchase. He noted that he would confirm with the Downers Grove Park District whether the projects they have planned for the main office facility will be proceeding. Matt thanked all of the member entities who provide dedicated space for keeping SEASPAR's facility expenses to a minimum. Matt noted that staff are working with the Downers

Grove Park District on a plan for additional office space at 4500 Fitness, which may incur significant expenses in 2026/2027 if the project proceeds.

Discussion ensued. Board members acknowledged the need to consider SEASPAR first when applying special recreation levy funds, and that SEASPAR's rate remains low compared to other SRAs. Board members considered the need for future funding for office space and recommended asking the Downers Grove Park District to finance any improvements up front with SEASPAR paying back the balance over several years. Board members from Cook County indicated their discomfort with increasing the levy rate as they already need to address the sharp increase in EAVs for 2025. The consensus was to maintain the levy rate at .0165% for 2025 with a plan to increase the rate in 2026. The Board recommended that staff prepare a memo for Board members to provide the narrative that although the rate would remain steady for 2025 to accommodate the Cook County communities, increasing service needs and additional office space would require an increase in 2026.

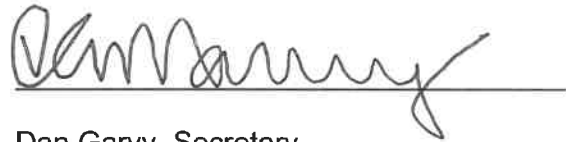
Member Entity Projects and Events:

Board members discussed current projects and planned improvements.

Adjournment

Aleks Briedis moved to adjourn the regularly scheduled Board Meeting of September 17, 2024, at 4:40 p.m. Bob Fleck seconded the motion. Upon voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Dan Garvy, Secretary
South East Association for
Special Parks And Recreation


Morgan Mason, Recording Secretary