

**WESTERN SPRINGS PARK BOARD MEETING**  
**August 9, 2011 (Board Approved on 9/13/11)**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Bob Daman  
Damian Marshall  
Dominic Arquilla  
Jennifer Dunleavy  
Jennifer Cromheecke  
Damian Marshall

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT**

Mike Stibich  
Walter Knake

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Robert Ekroth, Park District Attorney  
Tracy Alden, Recreation Director  
Craig Himmelmann, Director of Parks  
Maribeth Newell, Park Board Secretary  
  
Pete Hoffman, Western Springs Resident  
Laura Hoffman, Western Springs Resident  
Janice Wilcer, Western Springs Resident  
Chuck Lichtenmier, Western Springs Resident

President Bob Daman called the August 9, 2011 Western Springs Park Board Meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Vice President Cromheecke moved with a second by Commissioner Arquilla to approve the July 11, 2011 minutes, with corrections as noted, which motion was carried by all on voice vote.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS AND PERSONS TO BE HEARD FROM THE**

**FLOOR** : Residents, Mr. & Mrs. Hoffman, Mrs. Wilcer, and Mr. Lichtenmier came before the Board regarding traffic flow related to football practices in Springdale Park. President Daman explained that he has been in contact with Mr. Hoffman as well as representatives from Western Springs Football. Several traffic solutions were discussed, however, only one is feasible. In summary, Deputy Chief Budz has agreed to have a police presence, when possible, to direct traffic when football leagues are in the park. Of course, emergency situations would take precedence over assigning an officer to traffic duty. Parking will not be allowed on Johnson Avenue before 7 p.m. on the East side of the street. The police will be enforcing parking and illegal driving violations with tickets. Mr. Tom Kelly stated that he also met with Deputy Chief Budz. The police department will issue a letter to all of the parents informing them that if they are driving or parked illegally, they will be ticketed. Resident Pete Hoffman asked if the football coaches would assume responsibility for directing traffic when the police cannot be present. Mr. Kelly replied that it is illegal for civilians to direct traffic. However, they will make their presence known, without directing traffic, in the absence of police. Mr. Kelly also noted that there are only 20 practices per season. Resident Hoffman stated that having access to your neighborhood and driveway obstructed 20 nights per year is a very serious nuisance. Don't denigrate the issue by stating that it is only 20 nights per year. Mr. Kelly assured him that they are taking the situation seriously and will be implementing every possible solution. Director Himmelmann agreed that these are significant first steps to alleviating the problem. The Board will monitor the safety and effectiveness of the plan once it is in place and make adjustments as

needed. Resident Laura Hoffmann asked for clarification on how adjustments will be made. President Daman explained that, as a Board, we will observe progress and make changes if necessary. He thanked everyone for their participation in the process and encouraged them all to keep him informed of any future concerns.

### **TRUSTEE REPORT**

Recreation Department Director Alden explained that neither Trustee Hansen or Lyons were able to attend the meeting. He was asked to report in their absence. The Safe-T-Lu project is moving ahead. The Village will be meeting with IDOT on Thursday. The downtown redevelopment plan is on track to be approved in the next 2 weeks. The plan is available for viewing on the Village's website. The deadline for the September/October issue of the Tower Topics is next week. In conclusion, the Village approved the extension of a downtown businesses liquor license from 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. on weekdays.

### **RECREATION DEPARTMENT REPORT**

Director Alden reported that, due to the summer schedule, the Recreation Department Commissioners did not hold a meeting in July, 2011. The next meeting will be held on August 29, 2011. The summer programs are winding down. The Tennis program won the Trident League in addition to some other conferences this season. The Fall book is at the post office today and every home should be receiving them in the next few days.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

President Daman reported on behalf of Commissioner Stibich who was absent. A general discussion ensued regarding the cost of storm clean-up in the parks. Director Himmelmann explained that the \$8,900.00 expenditure may cover the cost of clean-up for the first and second storms. However, if the cost exceeds this amount we may have to defer the washroom rehab and bench replacement to next year's budget. It was decided that Attachment "B" of the August, 2011 packet would be carried over for discussion at the September, 2011 meeting under Old Business. The August, 2011 Financial\_Report will be approved at the September, 2011 Board meeting. Director Himmelmann will have proposals for the washroom rehab available at the next meeting. We will also discuss bench replacements at that time. If benches are purchased, installation will be handled in-house.

### **COMMUNICATIONS/DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

President Daman explained that Director Himmelmann will be presenting his updates on communications and his Director's Report before Old Business at this meeting and all future meetings.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

Director Himmelmann reported that there were a total of 5 communications received this month. Attachment "C" gives a brief summary on each of them. A summary of both meetings regarding traffic control during football, and RACE for ACES neighbor letter is also included. The American Cancer Society has withdrawn their request to hold an event in Spring Rock Park. It is due to staffing cuts on their end.

### **DIRECTORS REPORT**

Director Himmelmann submitted the Director's report as written. He also stated that he held a pre-construction meeting regarding the Laidlaw tennis courts. Pro Fence will begin work after

August 22<sup>nd</sup>. Then the painting of the tennis courts will follow. We are in the process of installing the Northeast drinking fountain and we have ordered a new dump truck. We received a check in the amount of \$38.76 from Coca-Cola for the vending machine sales. We have already discussed the American Cancer Society Relay for Life permit request which is under old business. They have cancelled the event. In conclusion, Director Himmelmann informed the Commissioners that he will be on vacation from August 18<sup>th</sup> through the 29<sup>th</sup>. Dennis Conway will be on duty in his absence. Director Himmelmann will also have his work cell phone and computer with him in the event he needs to be contacted.

President Daman asked for an update on Messrs. Jankowski and Gorman and Mrs. Tolby regarding their water issues. Director Himmelmann reported that Jeff Zeigler reviewed the work done in Mr. Jankowski's yard. Mr. Zeigler thought that it would go a long way toward alleviating the problem. He also reviewed Mr. Gorman's plans and gave his input. Mr. Zeigler feels that the work being done in Mr. Gorman's yard will additionally benefit Mr. Jankowski. Mrs. Tolby is more complicated because her yard is flat. Mr. Zeigler also commented that contrary to Benice and Associates assessment, he believes the park elevation does have an impact on the water problem. Mr. Zeigler suggested that a study be conducted to determine what percentage of the water is due to that elevation. President Daman suggested that Director Himmelmann ask Mr. Zeigler to speak some of the businesses in the area, i.e., Maas Auto, Honeybee Restaurant, and PNC Bank as the slope of their properties and amount of concrete may also have an impact.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **IPM PLAN**

Commissioner Marshall reported that he will have a copy of the IPM plan for next month's packet. He asked that everyone review it and be ready for discussion and approval at the September, 2011 meeting. Director Himmelmann stated that we will move forward with True Green applications. Vice President Cromheecke agreed that we should move forward with the fertilization applications and that they should be done prior to the beginning of the school year.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

President Daman suggested that the Board should begin to be more proactive and arrange meetings prior to encouraging people to attend a monthly Board meeting. Residents should be directed to whichever Commissioner is assigned to the committee/group under which their problem would be handled. Vice President Cromheecke agreed that the frustration level can increase significantly when there is an issue and a resident is asked to wait a month for the next scheduled meeting. President Daman noted we should work on getting a list of the committees and the assigned Commissioners on the website. Director Himmelmann will act as the point man and address concerns himself, or he will defer the issue to the appropriate Commissioner.

### **FIELD USE AGREEMENT ORDINANCE**

Attorney Ekroth informed the Commissioners that the 1<sup>st</sup> draft of an ordinance adopting a Field Use Agreement was included in their packets. He asked that all Commissioners review the document and contact him with their input. President Daman will extend an invitation to meet with the largest user groups, including Directors Alden and Himmelmann to review the proposed ordinance and ask for input from the user groups.

### **NEW FULL-TIME EMPLOYEE**

Director Himmelmann explained that the Park District operates with four full-time employees. We are trying to accomplish a higher level of maintenance and grooming as well as the addition of a new park, without an increase in staff. When Timber Trails was added to the park roster, the Board at that time wanted to hire a new full-time employee. However the budget and economy caused them to table the issue. The new user group agreements will also impact the demands on manpower. Director Himmelmann also commented that with a staff of only 4 people to maintain the parks in the district, a significant percentage of staff is “out” whenever someone calls in sick or has a vacation day. In the event that 2 employees are out on the same day, we are essentially down 50% of our staff. President Daman agreed that an additional employee is needed. When the new user group agreements are in effect, we will need a presence in the parks on weekends. That cannot be accomplished with a staff of four. However, an additional employee would allow Director Himmelmann to implement flex scheduling in order to have coverage in the parks on weekends and during significant events. We would have to budget this for next year, but it is a good time to start thinking about it. He further noted that the Western Springs Park District has not had a tax levy increase in 64 years. The District receives less than 2% of the tax levy. We have a reserve account with \$1 million due to some bond issues and strict budgeting. That \$1 million has to last the Park District until the year 2026. This Board and previous Boards have done an amazing job on a very tight budget.

### **COMMISSIONER’S REPORTS**

**KNAKE:** absent

**STIBICH:** absent

**ARQUILLA:** nothing further to report

**DUNLEAVY:** movie night was well attended with over 200 people. She thanked Director Himmelmann and his staff for set-up and clean-up and Little League for lending us their popcorn machine. She gave director Himmelmann approximately \$38.00 from the concession sales.

**CROMHEECKE:** met with Commissioner Dunleavy and Director Himmelmann regarding a new tot lot playground in Forest Hills. We are hoping to make it happen sometime in October, 2011.

**DAMAN:** nothing further to report

**MARSHALL:** nothing further to report

**HIMMELMANN:** gave Lyons Township Little League a list of costs for Ridgewood and Timber Trails field repairs. He is in the process of assembling a more comprehensive list of user group board members. Director Himmelmann also contacted WT Engineering regarding the IDOT project in Spring Rock Park. Apparently, the local IDOT office approved the invoices, but Springfield has rejected them. The project was approved for a total of 45 work days and they

tracked calendar days rather than actual work days. The project took 57.5 work days. WT explained that we started in the fall, there was no work on rain days or over the winter. IDOT in Springfield is calculating completion of the project at 390 days from letting because they are counting each calendar day from project start to completion, including winter and rain days. He will keep the Board informed regarding any progress on when IDOT expects payment of our portion of the project.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:** Commissioner Marshall moved with a second by Vice President Cromheecke to adjourn the August 9, 2011 Western Springs Park Board meeting at 8:13 p.m., which motion was carried by all on voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Maribeth Newell  
Park Board Secretary