

**Bensenville Park District  
Board of Park Commissioners  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, May 18, 2022**

1. Call to Order

President Johnson called the Meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

Roll call was taken:

	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Gibbs	X	
Johnson	X	
Linder	X	
Karg	X	
Snyder	X	

Staff in attendance: Joe Vallez, Executive Director, Andrew Godfrey, Head Golf Professional; Phyllis Schmidt, Manager of Special Projects, Evelyn Struck, Superintendent of Finance and Human Resources; Mike Hayes, Superintendent of Recreation, Louis Aguinaga, Superintendent of Building and Grounds, Laura Borshell, Front Desk Manager, Paul Palin, Jason Linder, Larry Krawtze, and Mary Dickson, Park District Attorney.

2. Approval of Agenda

It was moved by Commissioner Snyder, seconded by Commissioner Karg to approve the Agenda, as presented.

On a roll call vote:

<u>ROLL CALL</u>	<u>Ayes</u>	<u>Nays</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Johnson	X		
Karg	X		
Gibbs	X		
Linder	X		
Snyder	X		

Motion carried.

3. Approval of Minutes

It was moved by Commissioner Snyder, seconded by Commissioner Linder to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of April 20, 2022.

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On a roll call vote:

<u>ROLL CALL</u>	<u>Ayes</u>	<u>Nays</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Johnson	X		
Karg	X		
Gibbs			X
Linder	X		
Snyder	X		

Motion carried.

It was moved by Commissioner Gibbs, seconded by Commissioner Karg to approve the minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting of May 4, 2022 as presented.

Commissioner Karg pointed out that the minutes need to be corrected where Commissioner Linder was absent, but included as a “yes” vote in a roll call.

On a roll call vote:

<u>ROLL CALL</u>	<u>Ayes</u>	<u>Nays</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Johnson	X		
Karg	X		
Gibbs	X		
Linder			X
Snyder	X		

Motion carried.

4. Approval of Accounts Payable and Payroll

It was moved by Commissioner Linder, seconded by Commissioner Gibbs, to approve Accounts Payable dated 4/28/22 of \$165,063.14 Payroll dated 4/22/22 of \$113,417.26 for a Grand Total of \$278,480.40, Accounts Payable dated 5/12/22 of \$259,408.95 Payroll dated 5/6/22 of \$123,211.38 for a Grand Total of \$382,620.33.

In discussion, President Johnson questioned the number of refunds from the fish boil. Director Vallez stated he would verify, but it was mostly likely because the event was canceled.

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On a roll call vote:

<u>ROLL CALL</u>	<u>Ayes</u>	<u>Nays</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Johnson	X		
Karg	X		
Gibbs	X		
Linder	X		
Snyder	X		

Motion carried.

President Johnson read a statement to the members of the audience relative to the potential sale of a portion of the White Pines property. Among other comment, he stated the idea of the potential sale is no new, but has been part of lengthy process. Getting legislation to allow the sale was a part of the process. At present the District does not know how much the property is worth, but has received a number of unsolicited offers to acquire the property. The Board of Commissioners is listening to residents, and no decision has been made. An informational meeting is scheduled for 6 p.m. May 25, 2022, for which postcards were sent to all residents.

Commissioner Linder stated he has worked with the Park District on running programs for 17 years, particularly with pool programs. The pool is the jewel of the area. The District is looking into the potential sale to provide funds to improve parks without raising property taxes. If the District did not investigate the possible sale of property, people would be angry. The District has been working on the golf course as if it is keeping it; this is evidence no decision has been made. He asked that the rhetoric be toned down.

In response to a citizen inquiry, it was stated that the May 25 meeting will be in question/answer format.

5. Recognition of Visitors/Public Comment

Residents spoke in opposition to the sale of any White Pines property:

- Henry Wessler, former Park Board Commissioner, stated that White Pines is the jewel of the community, and read the plaque which is posted on the door, which states “White Pines Golf Course purchaser October 16, 1967 by the residents of the Bensenville Park District from the Branigar Organization to preserve 257 acres of open space and to maintain a major recreational activity for the community.” He encouraged the Board to go to referendum on the potential sale.

In response, President Johnson stated the issue of a referendum has come up, and there is no need to do a referendum if the Board votes against the sale. As the consideration moves forward, a referendum in November may be considered.

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- Janell Taraszka commented on Director Vallez comment that the five commissioners are residents who have been elected to represent the community. She stated that no one wants the sale to go forward and was disappointed in comments made by Superintendent Joe Ortega in support of the sale, predicated on a promise from the Park District for new fields and a pool.
- Bill Hibner stated he attended the recent Village Board meeting at which the Mayor stated he has directed the Village attorney to send a letter to the Park District to request a referendum on the sale of White Pines property. He opposes the sale and believes it should be subject to a vote. If, as reported, the Park District needs \$7 million in capital improvements, it does not require the sale to net \$125 million. He has reviewed potential plans calling for development of the property, which should be shared with the public. The residents should decide on the sale of property, no five commissioners.
- Mary Ann Medina commented she had spoken to an aid of Kathleen Willis, and was told the legislation was approved to allow the Park District to sell land for industrial or residential development. The legislation has been extended to January 2024. This is the first she has heard about the potential sale for residential development, and she wondered if it was because the Village wants to get to 25,000 residents so that it could be a home rule community, a concept she opposes. She urges consideration of a referendum.
- Valerie Special questioned President Johnson relative to the statement the District has been considering the sale of property since 2018, but now wants to make a decision in a few months. She is opposed to the sale as she supports green space.
- Chuck Rizzo questioned the identity of Flavian Desuza, who from social media appears to be an accountant, collecting money for the golf course.

Director Vallez stated he is an employee of the Park District, commonly referred to as “Gerald,” and is the business manager at White Pines.

- Robert Special commented that he thinks the District is making promises to Fenton High School and using the kids is a cheap way to build support for the sale of White Pines property. Rather than giving them additional sports opportunities, they should be given additional tools to study by.
- Ryan \_\_\_\_\_(last name inaudible), stated when he heard of the potential sale, he believed it inconceivable. The District should be protecting the course, there is a need for open land.
- Peter Georglades and Lorretta Slowik asked a number of questions involving the potential sale of White Pines, and suggested additions to the District offerings. They are opposed to the sale of property.

General discussion between those in attendance and the Board commenced with questions and answers being made.

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6. Communications and Correspondence

No communications were distributed.

7. Board Liaison Reports

- A. NEDSRA – Ms. Schmidt reported on NEDSRA activities.
- B. Bensenville Community Foundation – Commissioner Karg reported the Foundation received \$65,000 from Subaru, and suggested the Park District apply for a grant. next meeting is March 24. Mark Guido has submitted a grant request.
- C. BBAA – Mr. Aguinaga reported that the BBAA met on May 16 and everything is going well.
- D. Chamber of Commerce – Commissioner Karg reported that she and Ms. Schmidt attended the last meeting. The Chamber is looking for a location for Business After Hours. The golf outing is scheduled for 7/12.

8. Staff Reports

A. Executive Director

Mr. Vallez discussed items set forth in his report, including:

- The Park District is working on IGAs with School District 2 relative to BlackHawk and Mohawk and with Fenton on use of fields. It is working with the Forest Preserve District on an IGA for the acquisition of Fischer Farm.
- Plans for the dog park at Veteran’s Park are near finalization
- A Community Meeting on White Pines is scheduled for May 25, 2022
- The District is securing proposals for residential development of 1/3, ½ and 100% of the White Pines property being considered for sale
- The planned sports marketing assessment is being recommended to be placed on hold

Building and Grounds – Louis Aquinaga

Mr. Aquinaga discussed items set forth in his report.

Facilities Management - Todd Linder

Mr. Linder discussed items set forth in his report.

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Recreation – Mike Hayes

Mr. Hayes discussed items set forth in his report.

Finance – Evelyn Struck

Ms. Struck discussed items set forth in her report.

Special Projects - Phyllis Schmidt

Ms. Schmidt discussed items set forth in her report.

Discussion ensued relative to use of the tent to be erected at White Pines; it will only be used for golf outings.

Front Desk – Laura Borshell

Ms. Borshell discussed items set forth in her report.

Communications & Marketing – Paul Palin

Mr. Palin discussed items set forth in his report.

White Pines – Andrew Godfrey

Mr. Godfrey discussed items set forth in his report.

**Board Comments:**

President John asked whether the District had a staff member actively selling the golf course for golf outings. Mr. Godfrey responded that the course is well booked with outings, and the District is running out of days to be made available.

President Johnson also enquired as to golf simulators. Staff reported they are not used during the golf season, but in winter are used. Staff has to determine where to locate them.

Commissioner Linder questioned the timing of repair of the cart paths. Director Vallez responded that the work is weather dependent.

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9. Action Items

**A. Election of Officers**

Commissioner Snyder moved, seconded by Commissioner Karg to approve, by acclamation the appointment of the current officers for another one year term: Richard Johnson, President; Val Karg, Vice President; Greg Linder, Treasurer and Nancy Gibbs, Secretary.

On a roll call vote:

<u>ROLL CALL</u>	<u>Ayes</u>	<u>Nays</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Johnson	X		
Karg	X		
Gibbs	X		
Linder	X		
Snyder	X		

Motion carried.

**B. Rescission of Johnson Consulting Agreement**

Commissioner Snyder moved, seconded by Commissioner Karg to rescind approval of the Johnson Consulting Agreement.

In discussion, Director Vallez stated the work has been put on hold pending further discussions relative to the sale of any part of the White Pines property.

On a roll call vote:

<u>ROLL CALL</u>	<u>Ayes</u>	<u>Nays</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Johnson	X		
Karg	X		
Gibbs	X		
Linder	X		
Snyder	X		

Motion carried.

**C. Approval of Contract with JSD Architects to conduct an Infrastructure Assessment  
Not to Exceed \$50,000**

Commissioner Snyder moved, seconded by Commissioner Gibbs to approve the contract with JSD Architects to conduct an infrastructure assessment in an amount not to exceed \$50,000.

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In discussion, Director Vallez commented that the assessment will include buildings and parks for capital improvements needed. Commissioner Linder commented that the analysis has to be on-going, with the District being responsive to the items as listed in the assessment. Commissioner Snyder stated he believes this information is needed to determine whether the District should have a referendum on the potential sale of White Pines property. He also commented that the District should reconsider the issue of video gaming and sponsorship opportunities for things in the District, as a means of providing programming without increases in property taxes.

On a roll call vote:

<u>ROLL CALL</u>	<u>Ayes</u>	<u>Nays</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Johnson	X		
Karg	X		
Gibbs	X		
Linder	X		
Snyder	X		

Motion carried.

10. New Business

There was no New Business.

11. Old Business

There was no Old Business.

12. Closed Session

It was moved by Commissioner Snyder, seconded by Commissioner Linder, to adjourn into Closed Session at 8:38 p.m., called for the purposes of discussion of personnel, pending or probable litigation, and acquisition of land, pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c) 1, 11, 5, respectively.

On a roll call vote:

<u>ROLL CALL</u>	<u>Ayes</u>	<u>Nays</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Johnson	X		
Karg	X		
Gibbs	X		
Linder	X		
Snyder	X		

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Motion carried.

The meeting stands adjourned.

Approved:

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President Rich Johnson

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Secretary