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NORTHERN SUBURBAN SPECIAL RECREATION ASSOCIATION

Board of Directors Meeting April 20, 2023 at 10:00 am Minutes (Approved on June 15, 2023)

MEMBERS PRESENT

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am by **Lisa Sheppard**. Those present included: **Jeff Nehila**, Deerfield; **Lisa Sheppard**, Glencoe; **Michael McCarty**, Glenview; **Johnathan Kiwala**, Kenilworth; **John Bealer**, Lake Bluff; **Chris Leiner**, Northbrook; **Kris Ford**, Riverwoods; and **Steve Wilson**, Wilmette.

Those absent included **Jim Hospodarsky**, Highwood; **Brian Romes**, Highland Park; **Sally Swarthout**, Lake Forest; **Bill Byron**, Northfield; and **John Peterson**, Winnetka.

Chris Leiner attended as a representative to Molly Hamer of Northbrook.

STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT

NSSRA staff present included **Craig Culp**, Executive Director; **Candice Cunningham**, Superintendent; **George Pappas**, Superintendent; **Mel Robson**, Superintendent; **Cathy Splett**, Executive Assistant; **Meggan Davies**, Recreation Manager; **Catie Brand**, Recreation Manager; **Erin White**, Recreation Manager; **Nick Falter**, Recreation Specialist; **Lacey Allen**, Recreation Specialist; **Koren Sharrar**, Recreation Specialist; and **Stephany Mendoza**, Recreation Specialist.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am.

A roll call was taken. **YES**: Deerfield, Glencoe, Glenview, Kenilworth, Lake Bluff, Northbrook, Riverwoods, and Wilmette. **NO**: None. **ABSENT**: Highwood, Highland Park, Lake Forest, Northfield, and Winnetka.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Wilson moved, and McCarthy seconded to approve the agenda of the April 20, 2023 Board of Directors meeting. A voice vote showed unanimous approval.

MATTERS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no matters from the public at this meeting.

NSSRA PROGRAM PRESENTATION

Robson and **Sharrar** gave a PowerPoint Presentation on Youth Programming.

CONSENT AGENDA

Wilson moved, and Ford seconded to approve the following consent agenda items:

- A. Minutes of February 9, 2023 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
- B. January – February 2023 NSSRA and ELA Invoices and Reimbursements Paid

A voice vote showed unanimous approval.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Pappas reviewed the finances.

January – February 2023 NSSRA Financial Status

Through February 28, 2023, NSSRA received \$1,153,416 (31%) of budgeted \$3,723,420. NSSRA expended \$401,386 (10%) of budgeted \$3,854,681 through February 28. As of February 28, NSSRA has a net operating surplus of \$752,030.

Pappas highlighted that the professional development and membership line items are above a percentage basis due to the IPRA conference and memberships paid at the beginning of the year.

January – February 2023 ELA Financial Status

Through February 28, 2023, ELA received \$79,170 (15%) of budgeted \$539,330. ELA expended \$65,029 (12%) of budgeted \$522,615 through February 28. As of February 28, ELA has a net operating surplus of \$14,141.

2022 Audit

Pappas shared that Lauterbach & Amen completed the fieldwork for the 2022 audit for NSSRA on March 3rd. We are on schedule to bring the 2022 audit proposal to the Finance Committee and Board in June.

NSSRA Board of Directors Meeting
April 20, 2023 - APPROVED
Page 3

Pappas shared an update to the NSSRA Fund Balance. The NSSRA Operating General Fund is at \$539,000, and the Capital Reserve Fund is approximately \$962,000, giving NSSRA a Fund Balance of over \$1.5 million.

ACTION ITEMS

Review of Closed Session Minutes and Audio Recordings

In accordance with the Open Meetings Act, NSSRA conducted a review of closed session minutes and audio recordings. The closed session minutes indicated below were available for the board's review at the meeting.

Wilson moved, and McCarty seconded to approve making public the minutes of the following closed meetings: February 4, 2021 regular meeting; October 21, 2021 regular meeting; and October 27, 2022 regular meeting. A roll call was taken. **YES:** Deerfield, Glencoe, Glenview, Kenilworth, Lake Bluff, Northbrook, Riverwoods, and Wilmette. **NO:** None. **ABSENT:** Highwood, Highland Park, Lake Forest, Northfield, and Winnetka.

Wilson moved, and McCarty seconded to approve that the following closed meeting minutes continue to require confidentiality and not be released at this time: April 23, 2015 regular meeting; December 7, 2017 regular meeting; December 13, 2018 regular meeting; September 12, 2019 regular meeting; and December 19, 2019 regular meeting; June 7, 2021 personnel meeting; December 9, 2021 regular meeting; and December 8, 2022 regular meeting. A roll call was taken. **YES:** Deerfield, Glencoe, Glenview, Kenilworth, Lake Bluff, Northbrook, Riverwoods, and Wilmette. **NO:** None. **ABSENT:** Highwood, Highland Park, Lake Forest, Northfield, and Winnetka.

Wilson moved, and McCarty seconded to authorize the destruction, on or after April 20, 2023, of audio recordings of its closed meetings held on the following dates as to which closed meeting official minutes have been approved and no litigation under the Open Meetings Act is pending: February 6, 2020 program/facility meeting; July 8, 2020 program/facility meeting; September 8, 2020 finance meeting; November 9, 2020 program/facility meeting; November 16, 2020 regular meeting; January 26, 2021 program/facility meeting; April 8, 2021 program/facility meeting; June 7, 2021 personnel meeting; and July 21, 2021 personnel meeting. A roll call was taken. **YES:** Deerfield, Glencoe, Glenview, Kenilworth, Lake Bluff, Northbrook, Riverwoods, and Wilmette. **NO:** None. **ABSENT:** Highwood, Highland Park, Lake Forest, Northfield, and Winnetka.

McCarty moved, and Wilson seconded to approve that audio recordings made of other closed meetings of the NSSRA Board of Directors require continued confidentiality and should be maintained as non-public at this time. A roll call was taken. **YES:** Deerfield, Glencoe, Glenview, Kenilworth, Lake Bluff, Northbrook, Riverwoods, and

NSSRA Board of Directors Meeting
April 20, 2023 - APPROVED
Page 4

Wilmette. **NO:** None. **ABSENT:** Highwood, Highland Park, Lake Forest, Northfield, and Winnetka.

Winnetka Park District 5-8 Levy Request

Winnetka Park District submitted a request for expenditures of 5-8 levy funds for the fiscal year 2023.

Wilson moved, and McCarty seconded to approve Winnetka Park District's 5-8 Levy request pursuant to Article IV.D of the Amended Articles of Agreement. A roll call was taken. **YES:** Deerfield, Glencoe, Glenview, Kenilworth, Lake Bluff, Northbrook, Riverwoods, and Wilmette. **NO:** None. **ABSENT:** Highwood, Highland Park, Lake Forest, Northfield, and Winnetka.

Park District of Highland Park 5-8 Levy Request

Park District of Highland Park submitted a request for expenditures of 5-8 levy funds for the fiscal year 2023.

Wilson moved, and McCarty seconded to approve Park District of Highland Park's 5-8 Levy request pursuant to Article IV.D of the Amended Articles of Agreement. A roll call was taken. **YES:** Deerfield, Glencoe, Glenview, Kenilworth, Lake Bluff, Northbrook, Riverwoods, and Wilmette. **NO:** None. **ABSENT:** Highwood, Highland Park, Lake Forest, Northfield, and Winnetka.

Northfield Park District 5-8 Levy Request

Northfield Park District submitted a request for expenditures of 5-8 levy funds for the fiscal year 2023.

Wilson moved, and McCarty seconded to approve Northfield Park District's 5-8 Levy request pursuant to Article IV.D of the Amended Articles of Agreement. A roll call was taken. **YES:** Deerfield, Glencoe, Glenview, Kenilworth, Lake Bluff, Northbrook, Riverwoods, and Wilmette. **NO:** None. **ABSENT:** Highwood, Highland Park, Lake Forest, Northfield, and Winnetka.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Recruitment and Outreach Report

Culp reviewed the recruitment and outreach report detailing the NSSRA Team recruitment efforts. The recruitment team, George and Jessica, have been hard at work recruiting and onboarding summer part-time staff.

State Grant Funding

Culp shared that on March 16 NSSRA received a positive IDNR Impact Assessment review letter for our grant application/project. NSSRA recently received an email from DCEO with updates regarding the release of the bonding and the notice of state award will be arriving within the next two to four months.

McCarty recommended contacting our legislator regarding which fiscal year the annual appropriation process was budgeted.

Staffing Update

Culp welcomed Catie Brand, Recreation Manager, and Lacy Allen, Recreation Specialist. **Culp** shared that Christian Guenther has accepted the remaining NSSRA Recreation Specialist position and will be introduced at the next board meeting.

Springfield Visit

Culp shared that on March 23rd, he and Alex Engelhard, Executive Director of Fox Valley Special Recreation Association, presented about Special Recreation Associations to a group of nine legislators. The Legislator's group interested in the presentation was led by Senator Julie Morrison.

IAPD Legislative Conference

The 2023 IAPD Legislative Conference will be held in Springfield on May 2nd and 3rd. Staff are continuing to work with park districts of Lake County to ensure that NSSRA's tables at the reception will be next to each other so that shared legislators may interact with everyone.

NSSRA 2022-2023 Goals

Culp shared the 2022 and 2023 strategic goals document. He highlighted that NSSRA will be resending the Participant and Family Survey after the summer due to receiving poor participation in the first survey.

The committee to define NSSRA's values met on March 3 and will be meeting over the summer to finalize the goal for a fall presentation to the Board for approval.

The staff engagement committee continues to meet monthly. They have been focusing on how to assist the staff with feeling stressed out due to the current understaffed environment. The committee discussed solutions and strategies that would lessen the

NSSRA Board of Directors Meeting
April 20, 2023 - APPROVED
Page 6

stress level on staff while still providing as many programs and services as possible to our residents. The committee's work resulted in the development of a method to adjust program offerings in relation to staff acquisition or resignation.

Leiner exited at 10:27 am and returned at 10:29 am.

Cunningham reviewed the staff's audit system to adjust programs in relation to staffing. The NSSRA mission is always at the forefront of staff's minds when deciding on programs; it is imperative that we provide quality and safe programs. All Recreation Therapists lead traditional programs as well as coordinate an area, such as inclusion, day camps, special events, athletics, and youth and adult programming. With the decrease in part-time staff, more responsibilities were added to the full-time staff's already full plate.

The committee discussed program offerings and the non-negotiables: quality programs, safety in programs, and a positive work-life balance for staff. NSSRA has control over its program offerings but doesn't have control over the inclusion requests. The committee wanted to create an audit process that would balance the needs of all its constituents. The committee, superintendents, and managers met to evaluate its spring programs with their current resources: staffing availability consisting of program leaders, part-time staff, and full-time staff. After much discussion, the staff decided they needed to cancel some spring programs.

To the best of their ability, the NSSRA staff will continue to forecast staffing availability through this auditing process and how they will provide quality and safe programs for NSSRA participants, including inclusion requests.

Ford applauded the staff for this effort. **Culp** shared that this has been an amazing experience and understands that the program auditing process will continue to evolve. **Sheppard** appreciates the holistic approach of the program review by balancing the staff's work-life balance and the needs of the participants.

McCarty requested that staff report seasonally on program cancellation rationale based on the auditing process. This can be used as a historical record and explanation to the board. **Culp** stated that the staff will continue to share seasonal reports in the board packets.

Robson shared how the registration and waitlist process works including the intentionality of assuring participants are registered in at least one program that they requested. NSSRA uses a quasi-lottery system because it is equitable for all participants. Once the new staff is secured and NSSRA can provide safe and quality programs, participants from the wait list will be added to the program.

Upon a question from the board, **Culp** explained that the lottery system correlates to the budget and no participant is turned away due to financial constraints of the agency.

SUPERINTENDENTS REPORT

Cunningham and **Robson** presented a report on 2023 Winter Programs.

Robson shared that the Big Top Boogie returned this year as participants enjoyed dancing and carnival games at the Park Center in Glenview. The participants enjoyed the evening, whether they were getting their fortune told, dancing, playing carnival games, or getting their faces painted. Volunteers from the Stevenson High School Key Club volunteered for the event.

The Bright Star Theatre Company hosted their performance of "Alice in Wonderland" on Saturday, April 15, and Sunday, April 16 at the Northbrook Leisure Center. Our other cooperative program, SPICE will be performing in the Northbrook-On-Ice Show from Friday, May 12 through Sunday, May 14.

Six camps will be offered during the first session, and three weeks of Post Camp to close the summer. The Summer Program held cooperatively with TrueNorth (formerly NSSD), will host three sites, with camps also offered in conjunction with New Trier and Lake Forest high schools.

Cunningham reported on the Adaptive Sports Center trip to Colorado with eight participants.

ELA has created two new classes. One class, The ELA Times, learned about magazine creation and enjoyed creating their magazine cover pages. Each participant was proud of who they were and showcased this in their designs. The second new class focused on learning about different cultures each week. The class concluded with a culture fair during the last week of the session where information and food were shared with the full group.

Cunningham clarified that the athletic numbers are skewed due to an input error. Staff will work on correcting this going forward.

A total of 111 inclusion requests were received for winter programs, NSSRA provided 32 Inclusion Companions providing support for 72 placements. The Inclusion team continues to work closely with park district staff to prepare for the upcoming summer camp session. There are currently 240 inclusion requests for inclusion support for summer, with 115 part-time staff secured through NSSRA.

NSSRA will be hosting Camp Director Training for our Partner Agency Camp Directors and Inclusion Contacts again this summer. This training will be offered at NSSRA on May 23 and June 5 at the Slotnick Center.

Cunningham shared that in 2022, NSSRA held 539 hours of Seasonal Programming and 2,039 hours of ELA Programming at the Slotnick Center.

FOUNDATION REPORT

Culp shared that Chris Latta, from Wintrust Bank, was voted in as the newest NSSRA Foundation Board of Directors at the Monday, April 17, 2023 meeting. There are currently 13 NSSRA Foundation Board of Directors.

Culp reviewed the Foundation's financial status highlighting their Fund Balance is approximately \$800,000, two \$10,000 grants that were received, and memorial donations.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Sheppard thanked Nehila for his outstanding service to NSSRA from 2017 – 2023.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, ***Nehila moved, and Bealer seconded*** to adjourn the meeting at 11:02 am. A voice vote showed unanimous approval.



Submitted by Craig Culp, Secretary