

FRANKFORT SQUARE PARK DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
July 21, 2022

The following are Minutes of a meeting of the Frankfort Square Park District Board of Commissioners held at the Square Links Golf Course Clubhouse, 7861W. St. Francis Road, Frankfort, Illinois.

I. Call to Order

The Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Roll Call

Present were: Ken Blackburn, Phil Cherry, Frank Florentine, Dave Macek, Denis Moore, and Joe Vlosak.

Absent was: Craig Maksymiak

Also present were: Audrey Marcquenski, Executive Director/Board Secretary, Linda Mitchell, Recording Secretary, and Campfire Consultants Team, Jessie Scheunemann, Marketing Director, and Consultants, Chuck Szoke, and Kristina Nemetz.

IV. Public Input

Audrey Marcquenski introduced the marketing team from Campfire Concepts, noting they have many skills and talents that will be shared with the Board Members this evening.

Jessie noted the team will present a high-level view of the 100-page document and will answer any questions. The goal of the master plan is to maintain the success of Square Links, and the comprehensive plan will provide the Board and staff with a resource to utilize over the next three years.

The new logo that will be unveiled in the 2023 golf season, along with a new name, Square Links Golf Course & Practice Center, will preserve the longtime equity of the course and more fully describe all the golf course has to offer, including an expansive putting green and Toptracer technology.

The marketing plan includes the following six objectives:

1. Establish principles and tools that share a clear and consistent message from the parent brand, the Frankfort Square Park District.
2. Build the identity, ownership, and awareness of the Square Links Golf Course & Practice Center.
3. Build community awareness of the Square Links Golf Course & Practice Center with brand awareness statements, i.e. “fits in a golfer’s everyday life” and “fits in an afternoon”.
4. Generate a strategy to increase use by golfers living in a 20-mile radius.
5. Intentionally invite golfers to learn the game or come back to play.
6. Provide promotional ideas to be implemented in the 2023 season.

Chuck Szoke noted White Mountain, a 9 hole course, is the closest competitor to Square Links, however Square Links practice facilities are exceptional and more attractive to beginner/first time golfers.

Kristina Nemetz pulled together a greater market, noting golfers like to travel and try out new courses. Square Links is easily accessible from I-80 and Route 45.

Kristina recommended marketing goals that would be easy to implement, i.e. building community awareness by enhancing external branding, replacing the old logo with the new logo. The direct goal to build off the strategy, focus on trends and course amenities, reach out to youth, juniors, millennials, and seniors/active adults will be a focus.

Staff should also focus on developing a robust list of golfers that can be reached through direct messaging in an effort to launch the new branding of Square Links.

The Board can make priority decisions based on a calendar and budget and can decide where to move in each section of the 3-year marketing plan.

Jessie noted that the Campfire Concepts team will be available at any time, and they already have established an open line of communication with staff.

Commissioner, Denis Moore asked how the District should determine marketing costs. Jessie noted that traditionally, 7%-14% is a good place to start.

Vice President, Dave Macek believes we can consider billboard advertising, and he likes the idea of rebranding as a practice center. Kristina noted we can utilize the front of the building for billboard space as an internal cross-promotional tool that would not be costly.

Commissioner, Frank Florentine, feels we have a great course, and his children and their teenage friends enjoy golfing at Square Links. Chuck Szoke noted that growth comes from these young golfers.

Commissioner, Phil Cherry feels the addition of “practice center” appeals to patrons, as they don’t have to simply golf, but can practice putting and improving their game through Toptracer tracking technology. Mr. Cherry is in favor of sending information through USPS and inquired what should be included in a mailing. Kristina stated a mailing can be sent at the beginning of the season and include coupons such as buy one/get one round of golf and/or kids play free with an adult on Sundays. Patrons can also bring in the mailing for a free sleeve of golf balls. A post card in the door is also a great option.

There was a discussion about offering coupons for the new restaurant and golf course, and the cost of marketing can be split between both businesses as it would serve to enhance the golf course and restaurant. Kristina noted most courses provide restaurant incentives in the fall and spring, i.e. a price for a round that would include a brat and soda as a good way to bring people in and introduce the restaurant.

Audrey Marcquenski thanked the marketing team and stated it is always a pleasure working with Campfire Concepts.

Denis Moore asked if indoor golf simulators are still under consideration, since the clubhouse will now be open year-round, due to the addition of the restaurant. Audrey stated that the District is working with an architect and will decide whether it will rebuild or renovate the existing clubhouse. She further noted that Jimbooo's closed his restaurant in Thornton and is only providing catering and plans to move to Square Links in mid to late August.

Phil Cherry asked if the clubhouse is occupied during the winter months, and Audrey reported that normally it is not, but the Reliable Superintendent asked if he could occupy the facility during the winter months to work on equipment and on the course, as weather permits.

V. Correspondence

A. Appreciation

A thank you note was received from the parent of an Early Childhood Day Camp participant, expressing appreciation to staff for the care provided to her child following a bee sting.

B. Informative

The District received an email from Old Plank Trail Community Bank, confirming that they will again generously support our College Scholarship Golf Classic on September 24, with a \$1,000 corporate sponsorship.

VI. Presentation of the June 16, 2022 Board Meeting Minutes.

Denis Moore made Motion 22-1765 to accept the June 16, 2022, Board Meeting Minutes as presented. Frank Florentine seconded.

Vote on Motion: Ayes: Phil Cherry, Frank Florentine, Denis Moore, Joe Vlosak, Dave Macek, and Ken Blackburn. Nays: None. Motion passed.

VII. Legal Report

Audrey Marcquenski read by title and requested consideration of the Phone Policy Update, a copy of which was provided to each member of the Board of Park Commissioners prior to said meeting.

Dave Macek made Motion 22-1766 to adopt the Phone Policy Update as presented. Denis Moore seconded.

Ms. Marcquenski reported that the updated policy was drafted with assistance from PDRMA and Park Counsel, and that the new policy includes safety objectives. A full review of the District's Personnel Handbook/Policies and Procedures will be completed by Legal Counsel in the next fiscal year.

Vote on Motion: Ayes: Phil Cherry, Frank Florentine, Denis Moore, Joe Vlosak, Dave Macek, and Ken Blackburn. Nays: None. Motion passed.

VIII. Treasurer's Report

On behalf of the Board of Commissioners, President, Ken Blackburn accepted the June Treasurer's Report, pending audit.

Dave Macek made Motion 22-1767 to accept the Accounts Payable Listing. Joe Vlosak seconded.

Vote on Motion: Ayes: Phil Cherry, Frank Florentine, Denis Moore, Joe Vlosak, Dave Macek, and Ken Blackburn. Nays: None. Motion passed.

IX. Executive Director's Report

Audrey reported that the Park District received a property tax distribution from Will County this morning in the amount of \$23,619.22, and remains in good financial position during this busy season.

Ms. Marcquenski added that the District will pay off the TAW on its August 30, 2022 due date and that the general obligation and refunding bond interest payments were paid to Amalgamated Bank on July 1, 2022, totaling \$59,46.88.

Audrey reported that she will approve a request from Wildcats Football to hang 3' x 5' sponsor banners from the concession stand overhang at Union Creek Park that include Dick's Sporting Goods, Bite Size Pediatric Dentistry, and Old Plank Trail Community Bank.

X. Committee Reports

A. Maintenance

Maintenance staff worked at Rogus, removing and spraying weeds, and installed 80 yard of new playground surfacing.

Joe Vlosak noted that the school generally does not utilize the playground due to the presence of bees and asked if the Park District could address the problem. Ms. Marcquenski stated that if maintenance staff identify a nest, they will spray and knock it down in support of the School District staff, however, when recently working at this school site, no bees or nests were sighted. Garbage cans in the area may contribute to the problem, and Park District staff will keep an open line of communication with School District staff regarding this matter.

Phil Cherry asked whom he should contact if seeing something that requires maintenance attention, and Audrey informed Phil that he can contact her directly and she will forward the information to Ed Reidy, Superintendent of Parks.

Ed Reidy has been working on pond fountain issues, with the goal to get through the remainder of the season and explore a replacement plan for the next fiscal year. The majority of fountains are 12-15 years old and new units, along with a jon boat for easier fountain access will be included in the 2023/2024 budget. Frank Florentine believes the low water levels may contribute to the issues, and Audrey also noted that beavers have been chewing through wires, and the Community Park fountain trips the breaker.

Dave Macek asked if Community Park pond was stocked with fish. Audrey reported that grass eating carp were added and Clarke Environmental is treating the pond, however conditions this year were unique, with hot, August-like temperatures in July. All efforts are in place to keep the pond free from algae and plant growth, and Frank commented that we have a healthy ecosystem in our ponds.

Frank asked Audrey to investigate adding LED lights to the pond fountains to create a focal point.

B. Recreation

A 3-year-old participant in the Early Childhood Summer Camp program was stung by a bee on Tuesday morning and exhibited signs of an allergic reaction. Day Camp, office, and maintenance staff came together to keep the child engaged with toys and a popsicle until the paramedics arrived. The child recovered and returned to Day Camp the next day. Audrey appreciated how well the staff worked together to handle the situation.

Summer concerts returned this year, and it has been nice to see new people discovering the Island Park bandshell. Summer concerts historically rank high on surveys, and staff are looking for ways to get the word out about these popular free offerings. Audrey noted that many neighbors enjoy listening to the concerts from the comfort of their own homes.

C. Information Technology

The migration to Office 365 is now complete, and if Board Members have any issues with their email, they can contact Dave Gorka, the District's IT Contractor, directly.

D. Special Recreation

Audrey attended the monthly LWSRA Board Meeting on Tuesday. The agency continues to introduce quality new staff, not an easy task during these challenging times. Audrey noted that other SRAs have had to cancel summer day camp and youth programming due to lack of staff, but LWSRA continues to expand their offerings.

Dave Macek, President of the LWSR Foundation reported that the August 12 golf outing has filled, but there are openings in the September 17 at the Links at Carillon. The Foundation is also accepting gift baskets and/or gift basket donations. American Sale and Body Tech Fitness are sponsoring the event, and Mr. Macek noted that every dollar counts.

E. Finance and Planning

Sufficient information was provided in the above Treasurer's Report and Executive Director's Report.

F. Golf Course

Audrey Marcquenski introduced Dan Coughlin, Athletic Supervisor and Square Links Manager, and also welcomed John Keenan, Superintendent of Recreation to the meeting.

Dan has taken the lead on programming the new golf carts with the geofencing feature, that is designed to keep them off the greens and out of the ponds. Dan reported that one program is entered for all 20 carts, but they can be turned off incrementally, for instance, when an individual may have mobility issues and needs to get closer to the green. John noted that the program also enables staff to track the location of all carts.

Dave Macek reported that he only hears positive comments about the golf course, and Frank added that neighbors speak highly about the course and the friendly staff.

Phil Cherry asked if Ladies League is still offered on Wednesdays. Dan responded that the League is still active and just recently finished their season.

John reported that Golf Pro, Ken Buss is doing well. Previously, only 10-12 people participated in the free lessons, but now Ken has approximately 45 people show up for the lessons.

Dave Macek asked if the Demo Day event is still scheduled annually. John stated that vendors prefer to hold this type of event at 18-hole golf courses. The last Demo Day was held right before Covid, and after some discussion, it is currently not being offered.

G. Office

The monthly summary included with the Executive Director's Report contained sufficient information.

H. Risk Management

The District continues to work with PDRMA on cyber liability requirements.

PDRMA staff will be on-site on July 27 to observe maintenance staff in the field and a discussion related to injury prevention efforts will be included.

Maintenance staff participated in an engaging meeting last week that featured Jeopardy-style safety challenges, with bonus points awarded for “Name that Park” contest.

I. Community Updates

No report

J. Freedom of Information

No FOIA requests were received over the past month.

XI. Old Business

No old business was discussed.

XII. New Business

No new business was discussed.

A. Commissioner’s Comments

Denis Moore expressed appreciation for following-up on his request to resurface the playground at Rogus School.

Dave Macek enjoyed the Campfire Concepts marketing plan presentation, and he looks forward to enhancing golf operations at Square Links.

Phil Cherry noted the golf course marketing plan will be a good step forward.

XIII. Executive Session

No business came before the Board that required an executive session.

XIV. Adjournment

Dave Macek made Motion 22-1768 to adjourn the meeting at 8:14 p.m. Frank Florentine seconded. Motion carried in a vote by voice.

Respectfully submitted:
Linda Mitchell