

SOUTHWEST SPECIAL RECREATION ASSOCIATION  
12521 SOUTH KOSTNER  
ALSIP, IL 60803

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING September 12, 2007
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CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of South West Special Recreation Association (SWSRA) was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Director Gleason. The meeting was held at the Merrionette Park, Merrionette Park, Illinois

ROLL CALL

Present at roll call were:

MIDLOTHIAN PARK DISTRICT	EVELYN GLEASON
ALSIP PARK DISTRICT	JEANNETTE HUBER
JUSTICE PARK DISTRICT	CALI DEBELLA
PALOS HEIGHTS RECREATION DEPT.	MIKE LEONARD
VILLAGE OF MERRIONETTE PARK	BRENDA DZIALLO
BLUE ISLAND PARK DISTRICT	DOMINIC COGAN

SWSRA STAFF PRESENT:

LORI CHESNA	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
MARGE COZZONE	BUSINESS MANAGER
ERIN LYNCH	SUPERINTENDENT OF RECREATION

ABSENT

POSEN PARK DISTRICT	REPRESENTATIVE
SUMMIT PARK DISTRICT	TOM SUHS

ADDITIONS OR REVISIONS TO THE AGENDA:

Executive Director Chesna added the following:

- L. REQUEST FOR NIGHTLY BOARD MEETINGS
- M. IRS & SWSRA

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

Executive Director Chesna introduced the new Director of Blue Island Park District, Dominic Cogan, to the Board, and each member introduced themselves.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF AUGUST 8, 2007

Motion made by Director DeBella to approve Minutes of Regular Meeting held on August 8, 2007. Motion was seconded by Director Huber. All Directors were in favor; none opposed.

APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer's Report was presented by Director DeBella. Director Leonard made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report with a combined ending balance of \$92,363.32. Director Huber seconded the motion. Roll was called with all Directors voting yes. The motion carried, 6—0.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- A. **AUGUST HIGHLIGHTS**  
Executive Director Chesna reported that the Splash Party and Concert in the Park took place. Erin Lynch reported that the trip to King's Island had three clients and everyone had a great time. SWSRA almost broke even on this trip. Erin also said that she is looking into a trip to Hawaii. An Alsip employee has a relative there who rents affordable housing, and some clients seem to be interested. Erin will research the cost to see if it would be feasible.
- B. **EMPLOYEE/VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH**  
Executive Director Chesna announced that Ryan Cortez has been named Employee of the Month. Ryan is our Recreation Specialist and has offered some good suggestions. She suggested that we get lane sponsorships for the Candlelight Bowl, and we're proceeding with that idea. We're asking that a business donate \$25 per lane, and we've received a good response.
- C. **INTESTMENT POLICY**  
Executive Director Chesna stated that she has gathered various investment policies to review. Lori stated that she is not comfortable with handling this kind of money. She is meeting with different banks and our attorney to gather and compare investment policies.
- D. **5-YEAR PLAN**  
Lori met with Tod Stanton and gave him the changes to the 5-Year Plan that had been initiated. Lori will pass out the revised plan at the next meeting
- E. **SALARY SURVEY**  
Executive Director Chesna said that the SRA directors did a survey in 2005. It is very competitive. We will be interpreting that data and I will be preparing recommendations for the 2008-2009 budget year.
- F. **HEALTH INSURANCE BENEFIT**  
Our new Recreation Specialist asked about health insurance for her spouse. This question has never come up before. When Lori was hired, she was offered it, but at the time she didn't need it because she was on her husband's plan. Then she took the individual health care here because it was a better plan. Lori told the employee "no," but after reading the policy, thought maybe it wouldn't hurt to ask. Director Leonard asked if the employee would pay the difference, and Lori responded that they would, but it would be around \$500. The employee decided to go elsewhere. Lori suggested that when we look at salaries, we may want to look at this. Director Huber said that this might not be a problem as long as there was a "buy in" where the employee pays the difference. Director Leonard mentioned that the Channahon Park District has a sliding payment scale based on longevity for their spouse/dependent insurance. He will try and get a copy of this policy.
- G. **PACE DRIVERS' UPDATE**  
Executive Director Chesna informed the board that due to HIPPA regulations, she will not be specific with the medical aspects. Lori proceeded to say that we sent 11 employees, both full time and part time, for the test and several didn't pass due to medical issues. We had to get them done by the 15<sup>th</sup>. Lori said that we may need to amend the drug and alcohol policy that we just passed at the last meeting. Lori used herself as an example and said that she was not approved initially. Lori had to go to her own doctor and provide documentation back to Advocate on a couple of health issues. This happened with some of the part time drivers also stating "needs stress test" etc. SWSRA is not paying for this. Lori

met with our attorney, Steve Bloomberg, in his office. After discussing the situation, it was agreed that SWSRA would have to approve any testing of these employees based on whether we wanted them to drive. Then it would be pending turning in their test results like Lori had to. The one employee happens to be a full time employee who has to drive as part of their job. They should be able to get the testing that needs to be done. However, my question is if they haven't met their deductible yet, would SWSRA be responsible for it? Lori said that we would need to collect the billing from the employee. If there is any residual amount from the deductible, we would have to pay it. Director Huber said that we may need to alter some of this if the cost is \$132.50 per person. Director Leonard said that he doesn't understand the relevancy of these tests. Lori responded that people lives are in your hands. Maybe \$132.50 isn't that bad. Director Gleason asked how often you need to have this done. If it's only initially and your medical condition changes, that would be irrelevant—that's the part that I think is wrong. Lori said that this would apply to new hires. \$132.50 is an investment, but it's a protection also. Before we hire them, we would be sure that they are fit. For me, as the Director, this is an insurance policy.

Executive Director Chesna reported that we have one vehicle paid for but have still not received the title. Jim and Lori were the last two to be approved in writing. We wouldn't drive until we have the approval from Pace. We need to use the other two vehicles that we lease from Pace. These new regulations would stop the member districts from borrowing the vehicles. A board member asked if once we factor in the cost of maintaining this new PACE program, will it really be cheaper to lease a PACE vehicle than going another route. Director Leonard said that we should do a cost analysis. Director Gleason asked how difficult it was to find seasonal drivers. Can we afford to say "We'll take you, but not you"? Lori agreed that it was a good suggestion to compare what leasing a vehicle costs compared to contracting out. Director Gleason said that we should look at our hiring policy to define the PACE policy. Director Leonard said that we should get some other quotes besides Advocate, but Lori said that no one wants to deal with PACE. It was difficult to find a place that will do the testing. Director Gleason said that their physical is based on the job description.

#### H. PACE MONTHLY FARE INCREASE

Pace increased our lease payment by ten percent. The increase will amount to approximately \$55 per month.

#### I. SEARCH FOR NEW SWSRA FACILITY TO BEGIN

Executive Director Chesna requested that the board members please talk to their boards about partnering with SWSRA to build a new building. Lori has gotten some estimates from moving companies to start researching some of the costs involved. Director Gleason asked if we are looking for office space or both. Lori responded that we are looking for office space and some recreation space where we could set up some tables, etc. Director Leonard said that Tri-County SRA would be a very good example. They are able to have some of their programs there. They got a good deal, but they got it with another government entity. Lori said being at Alsip has been great, but you have priority with your own facility. Now we get what is left over. This happens with our programs also—at Summit for example, our swim program isn't until 7:30 p.m. to 8:15 p.m. and who wants that. Now somehow or other we lost that because the request for that time slot didn't get put through, and they gave it away to their own swim team. We can't come up with another time.

The board discussed some potential locations including St. Stanislaus in Posen on 144<sup>th</sup> Street, Pie School at 107<sup>th</sup> Kilpatrick (this school has a gym), etc. Director Leonard stated that if we are looking to add members, our offices should be more centralized to the members. Find a location that when you

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draw the borders, it will touch each of our districts. This might also increase participants. Lori said that we had talked about satellite offices, and wondered if Tom could give us an office space. It was also suggested that SWSRA might want to consider hiring someone who is bi-lingual. Director Huber said that has heard talk that Alsip's library is looking to do something. Lori told the board that she needs their eyes and ears to get this going. Director Leonard said that the best thing would be to go with another government agency.

J. KING'S ISLAND TRIP BUDGET SUMMARY

Erin Lynch reviewed the budget from this trip that took place in August. The expenses do not reflect staff costs since the trip was staffed by a full-time employee.

K. 2007 RISK MANAGEMENT GRANT PROGRAM

Lori has an idea that she will submit this year. At the start of Day camp, we take a digital close up photo of each child. We run it over to Walgreen's and have a sheet filled out with height, weight, hair color, eye color, etc. If someone gets lost, out comes the photo.

L. REQUEST FOR NIGHT BOARD MEETINGS

A request came in recently for an evening board meeting. It came from the guardian of one of our clients. He wanted to come to a board meeting to make comments. Because we host them in the daytime, he couldn't come. Lori asked him what his comments were. He was upset with the basketball banquet we had. It had a low attendance, and he said that in the past we gave out special awards, but that wasn't true. We always gave everyone the same award. Lori explained this to him. He also wanted to know why the survey went to the general population and not to the group we serve. Lori explained that we did a random group of people we serve. Lori told him that she would take it up with the board to have an evening meeting a couple of times a year. Lori said that this is a start of communication, and she would hate to have it fall on deaf ears. Director Huber said that maybe one meeting a year might be okay—perhaps when the officers switch over. Director Leonard said that we could create an annual meeting. Lori said that she had Erin call this gentleman about being on the advisory committee. He hasn't called her back. Director Dziallo stated that she had gotten feed back about the fee increase in some of the programs. She said that in the past we have told non-members to go and pressure their district to pay the out-of-district rate. Three people going to the mayor isn't going to do anything. Lori said that she called Crestwood Mayor Chester Stranczek recently and had a conversation with him. He said that he was retiring in ten days and to call the new guy. One women in Crestwood was wondering Why we went from one cost to another. Director Gleason said we should ask her why do you get your property taxes back and we don't. Lori explained that we rolled back our prices for the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Director Dziallo said that she doesn't think people understand. She does the best she can and goes to the programs. She talks to these people and tries to explain to them. She tries to bring their concerns back to the board. They ask me questions sometimes I don't have the answers. Erin Lynch said that this is what the advisory group was set up for. Bowling I at 4: 00 p.m. was cancelled one time; and when one participant was switched to the 5:00 p.m. program, she was disappointed because the time wasn't as convenient. Director Huber said that whether anyone comes or not, it's not a bad idea. Director Leonard said that they have that right, but it should follow the chain of command. Director Gleason said that they have citizen's complaint forms that go to the board every month. Director Huber said that they have a little box to put the citizen's comment forms. Director Dziallo said that another one of their concerns is that none of them got that survey from Tod. I know what a random sample is, but why didn't he contact people who participated in the programs. Lori said that all active participants were given to the company. Rich was told that it was the general public, but that was not true. The survey went to a random sample of SWSRA's current participants. A board member asked if SWSRA does a program

evaluation for each program. Lori said the answer was no, but we are creating it now. We don't think the group home staff will sit down and fill it out. Lori said that it has been frustrating for us. We are trying to find out why some of the group homes aren't coming. They are telling us that it is budget driven. These individuals don't have the money. Lori said that staff costs have to be worked in. We could slash our costs way down, but if you look at any of the other SRAs, they charge much more than we do.

Special Olympics Basketball was an \$80 program that was a \$25 special for our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. This year it's less than half of what South Suburban charges, but the group home leader refused to bring them. We offered the ability to fundraise, but they don't have anyone to sell items to. Do we waive these fees? Director Dziallo said she didn't understand why our out-of-district fees are double. Lori explained that our districts pay huge amounts of their tax dollars to become members. This pays for resident rates, inclusion and other administrative rights. Some SRAs discontinued out-of-district participation. Director Gleason asked why they should get the same rate if they don't pay taxes to the park district. Lori added that without the non-residents we would be hurting. We could cut our nose off to spite our face. Director Leonard suggested that if a new mayor is coming to Crestwood in ten days, this would be a good time to have a lunch meeting with him.

Lori said that it has been an on-going battle to find the right times for programs. Director Dziallo said that she understands it and she talks to the people and tries to keep them happy. Director Dziallo said that she also talks to Carol from Merrionette Park a lot about it. She detects a frustration level with some of the people. Lori said that she will be happy to talk to them, or have Erin talk to them. Maybe things are festering with this group. Director Dziallo said that they just don't understand. Director Gleason asked if we could get a business to sponsor a group home. If we take non-residents, are we going to get a local business to sponsor such and such a group home? Erin Lynch said that if they don't have the funding and if they have staff who can work the program, we can discount the fee. Director Huber said that's why sponsorship would work. Lori commented that if you're going to have a sponsor for a Special Olympic program, they don't allow any names on the clothing. Director Huber said there are options out there, but you're not going to make them all happy.

#### M. IRS & SWSRA

Marge Cozzone informed the board that SWSRA had received a notice recently regarding a discrepancy on the tax return for the year ending December, 2005. The IRS claimed that our 941 and our W-2s didn't match and that we owed a couple of thousand dollars in taxes. After looking at our records and double checking with the auditor, Marge disputed their claim in writing and sent them supporting documents. After some correspondence back and forth, they reversed their decision.

Director Huber made a motion to accept the Executive Director's Report; seconded by Director DeBella. All Directors were in favor; none opposed.

#### ATTORNEY'S REPORT –

Lori reiterated that our attorney is reviewing the financial investment plan that she mentioned earlier.

#### CORRESPONDENCE –

Director Gleason advised the board that Will Davis and Al Riley are having a budget meeting at Homewood/Flossmoor on September 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. If anyone is interested, Director Gleason will email the details.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. RECREATION - No report.

B. FINANCE

1. Approval of Bills & Payroll

Motion made by Director Dziallo to approve bills for the month of September, 2007 in the amount of \$13,481.35. Motion was seconded by Director Leonard. Roll was called with all Directors voting yes. Motion carried, 6—0.

C. PLANNING & POLICY – No report

D. PUBLIC RELATIONS - No report

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS –

Lori told the board members to check out our web site if they haven't done so recently. It has changed quite a bit, and we now upload photos to Flickr and soon we will be doing videos also.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC - None

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Director Leonard to adjourn the meeting. Motion was seconded by Director Dziallo. All Directors were in favor, none opposed. Meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

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Marge Cozzone, Corresponding Secretary

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Mike Leonard, Corporate Secretary