



Wilmette Park District **Board Brief**

Updates of interest from your Wilmette Park District Board of Park Commissioners

Public Comment

Members of the public spoke at the February 14 Regular Park Board Meeting. Discussion focused on the West Park playground renovation and plans to develop West Park.

Brief updates from the Lakefront Committee

Vice President Goebel reported at the February 14 meeting that the Lakefront team has begun hiring for summer positions and will be attending the Summer Job Fair on February 26.

“We have an exciting event in partnership with the police department as a special Olympics fundraiser,” explained Goebel. The Polar Plunge will take place at Gillson Swimming Beach on March 20.

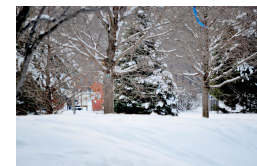
Contracts for all watercraft at the Sailing beach have been distributed and staff excitedly report a 90% return rate on contracts.

Wilmette Golf Club is keeping busy in the off-season

At the February 14 meeting Commissioner Anderson reported several updates from the Club. Off-season maintenance has been busy ensuring the course is ready for patrons to return in the spring. “We heard about all of the activity on the course with the cross-country skiers,” commented Anderson, “it’s great to hear that we’ve had a lot of activity and great conditions on the groomed paths.” Finally, staff are working hard behind the scenes to ensure a restaurant vendor will be in place at the start of the season.

Parks and Recreation Committee reaches a milestone with Community Playfield bathrooms

Commissioner Duffy proudly reported that the Parks and Recreation Committee received an update on the bids for the new Community Playfield bathroom construction. “It is great to hear that the project is starting to move forward again,” said Duffy.



Wilmette Board of Park Commissioners

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Toward the end of the February 14 meeting, Director Wilson presented new business including the recommended bid for the Community Playfields bathrooms. The bid put forth by Kandu Construction in Skokie was reviewed and endorsed by project engineers. Superintendent Solberg explained that the project is estimated to begin by early April. The bid was approved by the park board.

Centennial to celebrate 50th anniversary and other announcements

President Murdock reported at the February 14 meeting on the latest discussions of the Centennial Committee. Staff have been preparing a series of events to celebrate the 50th anniversary for Centennial Recreation Complex, including summertime disco on the pool deck, revitalizing the annual tennis open, a local music festival, and a Labor Day luau. Details on these fun events will be announced in the near future.

The Spring Ice Show is coming up in May, and will be much more like the traditional performance of previous years. More information can be found on our [Centennial Ice Rinks](#) webpage.

President Murdock also reported that since the initial public meeting about the West Park Playground on February 9, the community survey has received approximately 250 responses. Feedback will be reviewed by the designers and will guide the next level of concepts to be presented for feedback at a public meeting on March 8.

Progress and good news from the Financial Planning & Policy Committee

Positive updates from the Financial Planning & Policy Committee were shared at the February 14 meeting. Commissioner Clarke touched upon progress of the solar panels for the Community Recreation Center roof. “An RFP has been drafted, though not yet approved,” said Clarke. The panels are anticipated being installation in the fall while repairs are being completed to the Center’s roof.

Revisions have been received for the Board Operating Manual from the attorney. “The issues we had discussed here as a board were included and we will be bringing that to the full board for a vote in the near future,” explained Clarke.

Wrapping up the report, Clarke reported that an updated financial status as of the end of 2021 showed an operating surplus even higher than originally projected. “The difference was due to the need to put off capital projects into 2022,” she explained, “all of those funds are earmarked and will be spent in 2022.”

Executive Director’s Report and Ordinance Approvals

Director Wilson reported on several topics at the February 14 meeting. Friday,

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February 11 was the submission deadline for consulting services for a comprehensive plan for the district. “We received 3 proposals ranging greatly in services and cost, and staff are currently reviewing to provide a summary to the board,” said Wilson.

Wilson provided a brief summary of the district’s credit rating history and was pleased to report that Moody’s Investor Service recently reissued Wilmette Park District as a AAA agency. “This rating gives us the lowest possible interest rate which is a good thing given the period of inflation we are entering into,” he commented.

As the Wilmette Golf Club kicks off the 100th anniversary of the golf course, the park district is preparing a series of events to celebrate this milestone. The St. Pathy’s Stroll will begin the festivities on March 12 with a ribbon cutting ceremony followed by a casual walk/run event and refreshments. The laid-back, family event will be completely free for attendees. Learn more and register on the [Eventbrite](#) page.

Closely following the St. Pathy’s Stroll will be the Special Olympics Polar Plunge on March 20. “The park district is hosting the event at Gillson Beach, and we are working with our local police department to raise funds for the event,” explained Wilson. Anyone interested in supporting the Wilmette Police can click [here](#) to donate.

Director Wilson also took a moment to address the presence of union protestors with a large inflatable rat in front of the Community Recreation Center. “A company we hired to do the path at Community Playfields and the playgrounds at Maple Park is in a contentious situation with one of the unions,” he explained. Wilson went on to say, “the union is onsite in a parcel of property which they have every right to be in and exercising their first amendment right... we don’t have the right to remove them per our law enforcement and legal counsel.”

The meeting closed with approval of two ordinances, 2022-O-3 and 2022-O-4.

To read the full minutes from our past Board meetings, click [here](#). Minutes are posted after they are approved at a subsequent meeting.

Next Board meeting: **Monday, March 14** at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Village Hall at 1200 Wilmette Avenue, Wilmette. All meetings are open to the public. Details will be posted on the [Park Board](#) page on our website.

Meetings will be available on Channel 6 locally for Comcast subscribers. View a live meeting online [here](#), or view previous meeting recordings [here](#). *Please check our [website](#) for updates.*

