

**SOUTH EAST ASSOCIATION FOR  
SPECIAL PARKS AND RECREATION**  
Minutes of the Regularly Scheduled Board Meeting  
held October 20, 2009, in Darien, Illinois

**Call to Order:** Mike Adams called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

**Roll Call:**

Present:	Village of Brookfield	Rick Ginex
	Clarendon Hills Park District	Steve Thomas
	Darien Park District/Treasurer	Stephanie Gurgone
	*Downers Grove Park District	Janet Barr
	Village of Indian Head Park	Joan Pieri
	*Park District of LaGrange	Dean Bissias
	Community Park District of LaGrange Park	Roy Cripe
	Village of Western Springs	Ray Jasica
	Westmont Park District	Ron Gunter
	Woodridge Park District	Mike Adams
	Lisle Park District	Mike Toohey
	Director	Susan Friend
	Superintendent	Catherine A. Morava
	Superintendent	Matthew Corso
	Coordinator	Lisa Rasin
	SEASPAR Recording Secretary	Georgia Weber
Absent:	None	
Visitors:	Coordinator	Laura Christensen

**Open Forum and Correspondence:**

Mike Adams thanked the Darien Park District for hosting the SEASPAR Board meeting at the Sportsplex.

Laura Christensen reported that within the first year of the EAGLES program, participation has tripled. The program can currently accommodate 12, and will soon have 15 participants per day with the new space and when the new accessible vehicle arrives.

\*Dean Bissias entered the meeting at 3:32 p.m.

Laura Christensen reported that the EAGLES program takes place from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. daily. Participants may register for two, three, or five days per week. If participants arrive before 9:00 a.m. they may watch the news on television. Each participant has their own cubby to hold personal items including their fitness clothes, shoes, and their hygiene bags. Participants discuss news items either from television or from reading the newspapers that are delivered daily. The participants also engage in morning stretches that take place daily in the exercise area.

If the group remains at the Sportsplex for the day, participants assist with planning lunches, making purchases, and preparing their lunch. After lunch, the group does stretching exercises in

the workout area.

Laura Christensen reported that she often sits in on prospective participants' IEPs and one main concern is that they learn how to use their leisure time.

The EAGLES have the opportunity to plan for, shop for, and make their lunches with the kitchen space in the new facilities at the Darien Sportsplex. They go in small groups to shop, have their own individual lists, and make selections before purchasing. The group is now learning how to maintain the starter to make Amish Friendship Bread.

Laura Christensen stated that the EAGLES have gained a lot of independence in one short year since the program began. Participants can now make their own phone calls to make their own reservations for transportation to and from the EAGLES program. They have learned how to pay for their transportation. Some participants are now looking into applying for jobs since they have acquired some experience through volunteering at various outings with the EAGLES. Laura Christensen is planning at least one intergenerational project per month for the EAGLES such as assisting at senior facilities at Bingo games and also hopes to soon volunteer with younger populations.

Laura Christensen invited the Board and their staff to come join the EAGLES for lunch, brunch, or a snack at some time within the year. Laura Christensen routed a sign-up sheet for Board members to select a convenient time to visit.

Laura Christensen reported that they are currently practicing having the participants learn to answer the telephone. The participants do not have adequate phone skills. Parents have stated a concern that it would be good to be able to call home and have their participants actually pick up the phone.

\*Janet Barr entered the meeting at 3:40 p.m.

Joan Pieri stated that it is a huge asset to have their child learn how to answer the telephone and to make transportation arrangements.

Laura Christensen requested the Board members keep the EAGLES in mind when they are looking for volunteers. Currently volunteering takes place within the hours of the program, but they hope to eventually be able to volunteer on an evening or on weekends.

Laura Christensen showed a four minute video of EAGLES activities during the past year. Laura Christensen reported that copies of the DVD are available to all Board members.

Mike Adams inquired as to how the EAGLES reacted when a new participant joined the group. Laura Christensen stated that they have always been very welcoming.

Susan Friend reported that regarding a participants' growth, it has always been known that they learn better when they are having fun. Many parents stated that they have seen so much growth in such a short time.

Dean Bissias inquired if there was a waiting list. Laura Christensen explained that the current participants have until the first of 2010 to decide if they wish to return. There is a current waiting list of eight participants.

Ray Jasica inquired if the program could accommodate a person in a wheelchair. Laura Christensen stated that there would be the routine assessment as to whether the participant was independent and had daily living skills to maintain the current 6:1 ratio.

Laura Christensen reported that they would like to create a program for a lower functioning group and for a group of participants ages 35 and older. The considerations include program space, staffing, and financing.

Matt Corso reported that, in the State of Illinois, funding is difficult to obtain right now; therefore many programs like this have been cut.

Susan Friend reported that when considering seeking medical approval, the cost of meeting their requirements drastically increased costs, making it not cost-effective. It has been learned that the current government billing period is from fourteen to sixteen weeks before any bills are being paid.

Mike Adams commended Laura Christensen and SEASPAR for their creativity and courage to implement such a program as EAGLES.

Susan Friend distributed information on the September 19, 2009, US Paralympic Academy hosted at the Darien Sportsplex. Susan Friend stated that while attending the recent NRPA Conference in Utah, they were discussing current concepts and opportunities and they were shown a video on Paralympics, and the video was of the current SEASPAR event hosted in Darien.

Cathy Morava reported that World Sports Chicago called SEASPAR to host the event. Matt Corso suggested the events for the day. Participants from Chicagoland and beyond came by bus to the Sportsplex. Cathy Morava stated she saw many familiar faces of former SEASPAR participants. There were five Paralympic athletes at the event who were "coaches" for the day. They provided many photograph opportunities because they all had brought their medals to the event.

Cathy Morava reported that Greg Pavesich is currently working on creating opportunities for persons with physical handicaps in the SEASPAR area.

**Approval of Consent Agenda:**

Roy Cripe moved to approve the minutes of the regularly scheduled September 15, 2009, SEASPAR Board Meeting; Bank Reconciliation for September; and Cash Disbursements for October in the amount \$43,978.11, as presented. Joan Pieri seconded the motion.

Voting Aye: LaGrange Park, Indian Head Park, Brookfield, Clarendon Hills, Darien, Downers Grove, LaGrange, Lisle, Western Springs, Westmont, Woodridge

Voting Nay: None

Absent, Not Voting: None  
Motion Carried Unanimously

**Recreation Reports:**

Cathy Morava reported that three SEASPAR participants are taking SCUBA lessons on Tuesdays at the Downers Grove South High School pool with Jim Elliot of the DIVEHEART Foundation. Brian Houzenga is coordinating and Joe Zarek, part-time staff, is assisting at the program. SEASPAR anticipates more will register for this long-awaited program.

Cathy Morava reported that a current new program is Yoga for the less active older teen and adult participants which is being taught at the Darien Community Center by a Certified Yoga Alliance Instructor.

Cathy Morava reported that she, Brian Houzenga, and Theresa Waite, along with local legislators, 100 participants and 60 staff, attended the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Giant Steps facility in Lisle. The Giant Steps Board, staff, and families have created an outstanding 72,000 square foot facility specifically designed for students with Autism. SEASPAR plans to meet with the Giant Steps staff in the near future to discuss programming opportunities as well as use of the facility for SEASPAR participants.

Cathy Morava reported that SEASPAR is providing a Fit and Fun Play Day for children between the ages of two and four at the Indian Boundary YMCA in Downers Grove this season. SEASPAR uses the children's gym which offers endless challenges to a child's sensory motor skills by providing activities customized to fit the participant's needs. This program provides an excellent nurturing environment to work toward developmental goals.

Cathy Morava reported that Theresa Waite supervised her second over-night program since she joined SEASPAR the first week of September. The group of 16 participants and two staff went to Kalamazoo, Michigan the weekend of October 24, 2009. The group went to the Kalamazoo Aire Zoo and visited the Husted Farm and Cider Mill where participants picked apples and sampled freshly squeezed hot cider.

Cathy Morava reported that in fall 2008, SEASPAR registered 737 participants and provided 9,866.75 service hours. This current season shows 639 participants registered. This does not include approximately 30 to 60 registering for Youth at Risk programming at the Downers Grove and Woodridge Recreation facilities, two workshop programs, three nursing home monthly programs in LaGrange, Indian Head Park, and Lisle. The Stroke Support Group monthly meetings should increase these numbers by approximately 200. SEASPAR will not know the number of service hours until after the conclusion of the season. SEASPAR plans a holiday program at the Clarendon Hills Park District and an after-the-holidays program at the Park District of LaGrange.

Cathy Morava reported that in fall 2008, 631 participants registered for special events and received 2,919 hours of programming. Thirty-five teens and adults received 590 hours of

service. Children had 14 events for 41 participants, and two programs with 20 registered had to be cancelled due to weather. This season, SEASPAR has 13 participants on waiting lists; some have selected other programs if they were unable to attend the program of their first choice.

Matt Corso reported that David Svitak of Downers Grove has been selected to be on the Basketball Team representing Team Illinois at the Special Olympics USA National Games scheduled for July 2010. David Svitak is the eighth SEASPAR athlete selected for either National or International Games. SEASPAR plans to have David Svitak attend an upcoming SEASPAR Board meeting.

Matt Corso reported that each SRA is required to host an ITRS tournament every few years. This year, SEASPAR is responsible to host the Junior Basketball Tournament in February 2010. Thanks to Tracy Alden of the Western Springs Recreation Department, SEASPAR has secured three basketball courts at Lyons Township High School for the event. Locating basketball courts during the extremely popular basketball season is a very arduous task. Matt Corso thanked all of the member entities for their efforts in trying to locate basketball courts. Matt Corso invited and encouraged the Board and their staff and families to attend the tournament on Saturday, February 13, 2010, from approximately 12:00 – 6:00 p.m. Matt Corso reported that it is a most delightful, low-keyed tournament which is attended by enthusiastic parents, participants, and coaches.

### **Fund Development**

Lisa Rasin reported that she and Susan Friend attended a meeting with Laura Nyberg at Good Samaritan Hospital's Wellness Center. Lisa Rasin reported that their first goal is to develop a relationship with the Wellness Center and then pursue financial assistance.

Lisa Rasin reported that she and Susan Friend have a meeting set up with Dave McGowan of the DuPage Community Foundation and Arlene Kowalczyk from the Downers Grove National Bank to discuss how the bank can support SEASPAR's fund development efforts.

Lisa Rasin reported that she has secured the return of Johnny Rogers to the Tivoli Theatre in Downers Grove for Wednesday, April 28, 2010. Information regarding the event will be available in early 2010.

Lisa Rasin reported that the SEASPAR Golf Classic will be held on Friday, July 23, 2010, at the Woodridge Park District's Village Greens Golf Course.

Lisa Rasin reported that SEASPAR has not made a general request for funds since the building of the SEASPAR offices. Lisa Rasin is working on an Annual Campaign focusing on community leaders, participants, and organizations.

Mike Adams inquired as to the goal of the campaign. Lisa Rasin reported that she hopes to raise \$20,000 to \$30,000 from the annual appeal.

**Director's Report:**

Susan Friend reported that she and Stephanie Gurgone spoke with Dave McGowan of the DuPage Community Foundation to discuss investment possibilities through the Foundation. Susan Friend reported that she discussed the matter with Rick Tarulis who found no reason not to participate as long as they respond in writing that SEASPAR funds are invested in accordance with SEASPAR's Investment Policy and the Illinois Public Funds Investment Act.

Susan Friend reported that the returns through the Foundation are double to triple what SEASPAR is getting now.

Susan Friend reported that she attended the SRA Webinar with Stephanie Gurgone and Dan Garvy which was basically an introduction to SRA funding pointing out typical use of the SRA tax, as well as other potential uses. The most important use is to meet the obligations to the SRA and its financial stability. Member entities may levy up to the full 4% as long as they fulfill their SRA obligation.

Mike Adams reminded the Board that the legislature can take away this taxing opportunity as fast as it gave it.

Susan Friend reported that Access Audits are under way and that Downers Grove is in progress. Darien and Lisle are done. Woodridge said they are in process and are close to being completed.

Susan Friend reported that Representative Patty Bellock was enamored with Darien and the EAGLES space when she attended the dedication ceremony. Representative Patty Bellock wants to make EAGLES a model for the state. Representative Patty Bellock would like to host a meeting for park district and SRA directors at EAGLES for others to see what has been done and to learn how the Darien Board decided to provide the long-term program space. Representative Patty Bellock serves on many Health and Human Services Committees and is encouraging local communities to participate.

Susan Friend thanked all Board members who attended the EAGLES dedication. Susan Friend read the inscription on the plaque given to Darien which hangs in the EAGLES program space.

Susan Friend reported that there is no new significant IMRF update.

**Unfinished Business:**

None

**New Business:**

Susan Friend reviewed the SEASPAR FY2010-2011 Levy Request.

Susan Friend reviewed the current request which is still in need of accurate EAV input for various Cook County member entities. Discussion ensued.

The Board decided to tentatively recommend a .01494% levy rate to their boards. The final decision will be made at the November 17, 2009, meeting after all Cook County EAV figures are finalized.

**Member Entity Projects and Events**

Nothing at the present time.

**Adjournment:**

Stephanie Gurgone moved to adjourn the regularly scheduled October 20, 2009, SEASPAR Board meeting at 5:05 p.m. Dean Bissias seconded the motion.

Voting Aye: Darien, LaGrange, Brookfield, Clarendon Hills, Downers Grove,  
LaGrange, LaGrange Park, Lisle, Western Springs, Westmont, Woodridge  
Voting Nay: None  
Absent, Not Voting: None  
Motion Carried Unanimously

Respectfully submitted,

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Joan Pieri, Secretary

South East Association for  
Special Parks And Recreation

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Georgia Weber, Recording Secretary