

## SOUTH EAST ASSOCIATION FOR SPECIAL PARKS AND RECREATION

Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting Held  
September 13, 2022, at the SEASPAR Office  
4500 Belmont Road, Downers Grove, IL 60515

**Call to Order:** Bill McAdam called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

**Roll Call:**

Present:

Clarendon Hills Park District	Valerie Louthan
Darien Park District	Stephanie Gurgone
Downers Grove Park District	Bill McAdam
Lemont Park District	Louise Egofske
Lisle Park District	Dan Garvy
Village of Western Springs	Aleks Briedis
Westmont Park District	Bob Fleck
Woodridge Park District	Jenny Knitter

Executive Director	Matt Corso
Superintendent	Dawn Krawiec
Superintendent	Karen Lesniak
Marketing Coordinator	William Cazares
Recording Secretary	Morgan Mason

Absent:	Village of Brookfield	Stevie Ferrari
	Village of Indian Head Park	Rita Farrell Mayer
	Park District of La Grange	Jenny Bechtold
	Community Park District of La Grange Park	Jessica Cannaday

Visitors:	Inclusion Manager	Bethany Pastrana
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### **Public Comment and Correspondence:**

#### ***Introduction of Inclusion Manager Bethany Pastrana***

Matt Corso introduced Bethany Pastrana, SEASPAR's new Inclusion Manager. Bethany provided her background, including her work as the Inclusion Coordinator for WSSRA. She expressed her excitement to work with the member entity staff. The Board welcomed her.

#### ***Recognition of Superintendent of Administrative Services Karen Lesniak for 5 Years of Service***

Matt Corso congratulated Superintendent of Administrative Services Karen Lesniak for completing five years of service to SEASPAR on August 14. Karen began her career with SEASPAR as an intern and returned after a number of years of various experiences to fill the Superintendent position. Matt expressed his appreciation for Karen's thoughtfulness and adaptability to a variety of work functions. Matt presented Karen with a token of appreciation. Karen added that it has been an honor and privilege to return to SEASPAR. The Board congratulated her.

**Approval of Consent Agenda:**

Bob Fleck moved to approve the Minutes from the July 19, 2022, Board Meeting; Minutes from the July 19, 2022, Executive Board Meeting; Payment of Bills in the amount of \$132,460.61; the Bank Reconciliation ending August 31, 2022; the Income Statement from August 2022; and Current Investments for August 2022 as presented. Dan Garvy seconded the motion.

Voting Aye: Westmont, Lisle, Clarendon Hills, Darien, Lemont, Western Springs,  
Woodridge, Downers Grove

Voting Nay: None

Absent, Not Voting: Brookfield, Indian Head Park, La Grange, La Grange Park

Motion Carried Unanimously

**Recreation Report:**

Dawn Krawiec noted from her report that SEASPAR is picking up from COVID and expanding services. Plans are underway to specifically expand the summer day camp program to sites in the east and west for both Kids and Teen & Adult Camps. This will result in increased facility needs, and staff may lean on member entities and their partners for space.

**Administrative Services Report:**

Karen Lesniak had nothing to add to her report.

**Marketing Report:**

William Cazares had nothing to add to his report.

**Executive Director's Report:**

Matt Corso added to his report that the EAGLES program is partnering with the Downers Grove Park District and Morton Arboretum to plant trees in the community.

Matt introduced Jenny Knitter, Director of Parks, Planning, and Development for the Woodridge Park District, as the district's new Board alternate. Jenny noted that Mike Adams was unable to attend the meeting as he had just become a new grandfather.

Matt Corso noted that Greg Petry, the facilitator for SEASPAR's strategic plan, extended an offer to the SEASPAR Board members to fill two open spots in his foursome for the IPRF Golf Outing on September 16.

**Unfinished Business:**

None.

**New Business:**

***FY2023 Budget and Levy Discussion***

Matt Corso noted that the budget and levy are presented for discussion this month, with approval at the October meeting. He is recommending that the EAV rate be kept flat for 2023, although another option including a CPI adjustment was provided in the packet. EAVs for Cook County communities have not yet been released, so the exact dollar amount of those member contributions may fluctuate in 2023. In terms of revenue for 2022, Matt noted that traditional programs and day camp revenue was less than budgeted while EAGLES revenue surpassed expectations. While expenses are generally down, some costs such as computer software are rising. In 2023, Matt plans to bring back the Trivia Challenge event to raise funds for the fee assistance program, which was included in the strategic plan. Matt noted the aggressive plan for

summer day camp expansion and how it may reduce inclusion needs if SEASPAR camps are more convenient for families. The Employee Retention Credit of more than \$120,000 has been included in revenue for 2023. In terms of expenses, a salary pool increase of 6% is being requested to include a cost-of-living adjustment of 3% in addition to a merit increase of up to 3%. A comprehensive salary survey is currently being completed, and Matt noted that he suspects SEASPAR's salary ranges are lower than average. He also noted that SEASPAR competes for employees with agencies outside of the recreation and special recreation fields; the last six full-time staff who left SEASPAR did not pursue work at another special recreation association or park district. Matt noted that a new full-time EAGLES Coordinator position is also included in the 2023 budget. The EAGLES program has grown exponentially since its inception, and this additional support will set the program up for additional growth (a component of the strategic plan) and ensure program quality while easing some of the responsibilities of the part-time site directors. Matt noted that half of all program revenue comes from EAGLES. In addition, Matt noted that the IMRF contribution rate is trending down. Addressing the Capital Plan, Matt noted that two new vehicles are budgeted for replacement in 2023, along with \$22,000 for roof replacement. This amount was reduced from an initial estimate of \$50,000. Matt thanked all of the member entities for their generosity that reduces SEASPAR's expenses.

Bob Fleck inquired about the new coordinator position's impact on the budget in future years, since 2023 is planned with a deficit budget. Matt Corso offered to extrapolate the budget a few more years out.

Dan Garvy expressed concern over SEASPAR's inability to spend down the fund balance to the amount dictated by policy. Discussion ensued, and the consensus was for Matt Corso to begin investigating new office space solutions, which is a strategic plan goal for 2024.

#### ***Potential Membership with the Village of Willowbrook Discussion***

Matt Corso noted that the Village of Willowbrook has expressed interest in joining SEASPAR, and while no decision would be made at this time, he requested consensus on what the Board would plan to do if the Village were to approve a resolution to join SEASPAR. He noted that the change has support from key Willowbrook staff and officials, including the mayor and several trustees. SEASPAR would have 15 months to prepare, and Willowbrook's contribution would be approximately \$70,000 at the current rate. Matt expressed concern over the size of Willowbrook's recreation department and how changing staff could impact the relationship with SEASPAR, as well as the potential for a domino effect with other Gateway SRA communities looking to join other SRAs. Matt was unaware of any public meetings or needs assessments.

Discussion ensued, including the Board's desire for Willowbrook to have a public meeting on the topic, as well as concerns over the potential for Willowbrook to leave after joining and long-term concerns about SEASPAR getting too large. The Board concurred that Willowbrook would be a sensible addition, and the consensus was to continue with planning for the potential addition.

#### ***Approval of SEASPAR ADA Transition Plan***

Matt Corso noted that Mark Trieglaff provided ADA recommendations for SEASPAR's office and public areas, and the public area improvements are planned for 2023 with office improvements to follow. The largest investment is an assisted listening device for the multi-purpose room. Alex Briedis moved to approve the ADA Transition Plan for public areas. Dan Garvy seconded the motion.

Voting Aye: Western Springs, Lisle, Clarendon Hills, Darien, Lemont, Westmont,  
Woodridge, Downers Grove

Voting Nay: None  
Absent, Not Voting: Brookfield, Indian Head Park, La Grange, La Grange Park  
Motion Carried Unanimously

**Member Entity Projects and Events:**

Bob Fleck reported that the Westmont Park District is demolishing its oldest garage and replacing it with a new building. Plans are also underway for a multipurpose building near Veterans Memorial Park.

Matt Corso reported that SEASPAR's Swim Meet will be held at the FMC Natatorium in Westmont in December.

Dan Garvy reported that the Lisle Park District had been contacted by Inspired by Ability, a job placement agency for individuals with disabilities. Individuals are placed into unpaid internships with a job coach. He will forward the agency's information to the Board.

Louise Egofske reported that the Lemont Park District recently purchased 10 acres of open space. Plans are also underway for an outdoor athletic center in downtown Lemont.

Bill McAdam reported that the Downers Grove Park District is moving forward with renovations at McCollum Park, including pickleball and tennis courts, a new path, and a spray park.

**Adjournment:**

Alex Briedis moved to adjourn the regularly scheduled Board Meeting of September 13, 2022, at 4:09 p.m. Dan Garvy seconded the motion. Upon voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Dan Garvy, Secretary  
South East Association for  
Special Parks And Recreation



Morgan Mason, Recording Secretary