

# SOUTH EAST ASSOCIATION FOR SPECIAL PARKS AND RECREATION

Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting Held  
October 21, 2025, 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:

Village of Brookfield	Stevie Ferrari
Clarendon Hills Park District	Katie Gock
Darien Park District	Stephanie Gurgone
Downers Grove Park District	Bill McAdam
Village of Indian Head Park	Amy Eckert
Park District of La Grange	Jenny Bechtold
Lemont Park District*	Greg Hooper
Lisle Park District	Jon Pratcher
Village of Western Springs	Ellen Baer
Westmont Park District	Bob Fleck
Village of Willowbrook	Dustin Kleefisch
Woodridge Park District	Jenny Knitter

Executive Director	Matt Corso
Superintendent	Dawn Krawiec
Superintendent	Karen Lesniak
Marketing Coordinator	Laura Pulido
Recording Secretary	Morgan Mason

Absent: Community Park District of La Grange Park Jessica Cannaday

Visitors: Inclusion Manager Bethany Juhasz  
Recreation Coordinator Ashley Sinio  
Finance Specialist Dawn Pope

**Public Comment and Correspondence:**

***Board Introductions***

Due to the number of alternates in attendance, Bill McAdam led the introductions of Board members and staff.

***Thank You from LaMontagna Family***

Matt Corso noted that the LaMontagna family includes two children with disabilities who have been participating with SEASPAR for a long time. The family receives fee assistance for Swim Lessons, which is a life skill training that they might not find elsewhere.

\*Greg Hooper entered the meeting at 3:03 p.m.

***Recognition of Retirement of Finance Specialist Dawn Pope***

Matt Corso recognized Finance Specialist Dawn Pope for her retirement after more than 40 years of full- and part-time employment with SEASPAR. Dawn stated that it has been an honor and privilege to serve the agency and she will miss it. The Board congratulated Dawn and thanked her for her service.

***Presentation by Recreation Coordinator Ashley Sinio, CTRS***

Matt Corso introduced Ashley Sinio, noting that she started with SEASPAR as the Recreation Specialist and was promoted to Coordinator in December of 2024. Ashley noted that she is the coordinator for Friday night programming, teen and adult special events, trips, and facilities. She provided an overview of her personal history, education, and experience. Ashley presented information regarding Friday night programs, including six Social Clubs and the Friday Night Fun Club, which served 84 participants with 4,500 service hours in 2025. She noted that her focus has been on introducing volunteer opportunities to the programming, partnering with local high schools to enjoy sporting events, and bringing the Social Club groups together. Ashley presented information regarding the summer 2025 teen and adult special events, which provided approximately 3,000 service hours. She remarked that she enjoys planning events with excitement and originality, noting that summer events included Adaptive Rock Climbing and the Waves and Wheels Bash with a temporary tattoo station. Ashley presented information regarding the fall 2025 teen and adult special events, which provided approximately 2,000 service hours. Comparing 2025 to 2024, more participants were served by special events in 2025. She noted that exciting fall events include goat yoga and indoor skydiving, among others. Ashley also provided highlights of the 2025 trips, which include the Spring Escape to St. Louis in May, Camp Timber Pointe Outdoor Center in August, Austin, Texas in August, and the Fall Escape to Eagle River, Wisconsin in September. Ashley noted that she is also in charge of securing facilities for programs, and she thanked the member entities for accommodating SEASPAR's facility needs. The Board thanked Ashley for her presentation.

**Approval of Consent Agenda:**

Bob Fleck moved to approve the Minutes from the September 9, 2025, Board Meeting; List of Disbursements in the amount of \$104,548.93; the Bank Reconciliation ending September 30, 2025; the Income Statement from September 2025; and Current Investments for September 2025 as presented. Dustin Kleefisch seconded the motion.

Voting Aye: Westmont, Willowbrook, Brookfield, Clarendon Hills, Darien, Indian Head Park, La Grange, Lemont, Lisle, Western Springs, Woodridge, Downers Grove

Voting Nay: None

Absent, Not Voting: La Grange Park

Motion Carried

**Recreation Report:**

Dawn Krawiec added to her report that the SEASPAR Kiwanis Aktion Club's Culver's fundraiser was a success with great turnout. Aktion Club members assisted with food service at the event. Dawn also noted that the EAGLES Adult Day Program 5K took place on October 15, with 70 participants from EAGLES and Awesome Life Academy. Participants received t-shirts and medals. The event was sponsored by the Duly Health and Care Charitable Fund and Downers Grove Junior Woman's Club.

**Administrative Services Report:**

Karen Lesniak noted from her report that SEASPAR has adopted four new policies as required for PDRMA's Essentials of Risk Management form. The policies primarily promote awareness

and prevention of sexual abuse. Karen noted that trainings for all levels of staff have taken place over the last month. Karen also noted from her report that the Risk Management Review Smart Goal is nearing completion with the purchase of spill cleanup kits for vehicles and dedicated spaces.

**Marketing Report:**

Laura Pulido added to her report that the monthly newsletter's "SEASPAR Spotlight" feature is a collaborative effort between her and the Recreation Coordinators, and she frequently receives notes of thanks from the families of featured participants.

**Executive Director's Report:**

Matt Corso noted from his report that the summer service hours demonstrated growth primarily in the inclusion services and day camp program areas, which was anticipated. He stated that the fall season has started strong, and 2025 should end with the highest service hours ever. Matt reminded the Board that if any members would like information specific to their community, he would be happy to provide it.

Matt Corso added to his report that SEASPAR has been awarded a \$1,000 grant from the Grove Foundation, which will be used to purchase an ID printer for the EAGLES Adult Day Program and trips.

Matt Corso added to his report that the next month's meeting would include changes to the Personnel Manual which is currently in the hands of legal counsel.

**Unfinished Business:**

***Approval of FY2026 Budget and Levy Request***

Bill McAdam invited discussion of the FY2026 budget and levy request. Discussion ensued regarding the proposed increase to health insurance costs. Board members compared their employee contribution rates to those used by SEASPAR. Matt Corso noted that his contribution rates are determined using the PDRMA cost modeling program and data from other SRAs. The Board directed staff to work on a strategic health insurance proposal for next year. Discussion also ensued regarding the addition of the EAGLES Adult Day Program site directors to the health insurance program. The Board directed staff to prepare a proposal for November with the cost of shifting these employees to full-time status.

Bob Fleck moved to approve the FY2026 levy request rate of .017% of 2024 EAVs. Stephanie Gurgone seconded the motion.

Voting Aye: Westmont, Darien, Brookfield, Clarendon Hills, Indian Head Park, La Grange, Lemont, Lisle, Western Springs, Willowbrook, Woodridge, Downers Grove

Voting Nay: None

Absent, Not Voting: La Grange Park

Motion Carried

Jenny Knitter moved to approve the FY2026 operating and capital improvement budgets. Bob Fleck seconded the motion.

Voting Aye: Woodridge, Westmont, Brookfield, Clarendon Hills, Darien, Indian Head Park, La Grange, Lemont, Lisle, Western Springs, Willowbrook, Downers Grove  
Voting Nay: None  
Absent, Not Voting: La Grange Park  
Motion Carried

**New Business:**

***FY2026 Written Budget Presentation***

Matt Corso noted that the FY2026 Budget Presentation is uploaded to the SEASPAR website following budget approval in order to provide public information and meet Distinguished Accreditation requirements. The document is presented to the Board for awareness.

***Approval of 2026 Inclusion Billing Rate***

Matt Corso noted that SEASPAR is the only SRA to utilize a standard inclusion pay rate to address paid time off for inclusion staff. The rate was first introduced in 2025. Over the last year, inclusion staff have not taken their paid time off as anticipated, leaving a balance in the PTO fund. As a result, staff propose keeping the rate at \$16.60 and seeing how the balance changes over the next year. Discussion ensued regarding the Paid Leave for All Workers Act, and Board members noted that PDRMA's philosophy is that any balance of time at termination be paid out, which is not SEASPAR's policy as approved by corporate counsel. Matt Corso agreed to look into it.

Dustin Kleefisch moved to approve the 2026 inclusion billing rate of \$16.60. Jon Pratcher seconded the motion.

Voting Aye: Willowbrook, Lisle, Brookfield, Clarendon Hills, Darien, Indian Head Park, La Grange, Lemont, Western Springs, Westmont, Woodridge, Downers Grove  
Voting Nay: None  
Absent, Not Voting: La Grange Park  
Motion Carried

***Potential Change to Joint Agreement to Adjust Which EAV to Use for Levy***

Matt Corso noted that the Joint Agreement implies that the most recent EAVs should be used for the levy request, but this has proven challenging with the delays in the release of Cook County EAVs. Because the 2024 EAVs have not been released, Cook County communities do not know their actual contribution to SEASPAR for FY2026. A change to the Joint Agreement to use the previous year's EAVs would make all budgeting easier. Although the change could not be made in time for the current budget, it could be made for FY2027 so that the 2024 EAVs would be used again, then the cycle would continue using the previous year's EAVs. Matt noted that changing the Joint Agreement is a process that requires approval by two-thirds of the member entity Boards. The consensus of the Board was for staff to proceed with a proposal to amend the Joint Agreement.

***Review of Prior Executive Session Minutes and Recordings***

Jenny Knitter moved to approve staff's recommendation to publicly release the executive session minutes from a meeting held on April 15, 2025. Bob Fleck seconded the motion.

Voting Aye: Woodridge, Westmont, Brookfield, Clarendon Hills, Darien, Indian Head Park, La Grange, Lemont, Lisle, Western Springs, Willowbrook, Downers Grove  
Voting Nay: None  
Absent, Not Voting: La Grange Park  
Motion Carried

**Member Entity Projects and Events:**

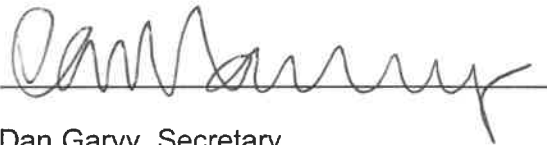
Greg Hooper reported that the Lemont Park District's Athens Park in downtown Lemont would be having a soft opening that day. A grand opening would be held in the spring.

Bob Fleck reported that he worked with the Parents Alliance Employment Project (PAEP) to fill a position at the Westmont Park District, and that employee recently received an award and the District received recognition at a PAEP event. PAEP hires adults with disabilities and trains them, then organizations hire them following the training. Bob noted that PAEP is a great program and recommended it for other agencies.

**Adjournment**

Jenny Knitter moved to adjourn the regularly scheduled Board Meeting of October 21, 2025, at 4:11 p.m. Bob Fleck 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