

# SOUTH EAST ASSOCIATION FOR SPECIAL PARKS AND RECREATION

Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting Held  
March 24, 2026, at the SEASPAR Office  
4500 Belmont Road, Downers Grove, IL 60515

**Call to Order:** Dan Garvy called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

**Roll Call:**

Present:	Village of Brookfield	Matt Odom
	Clarendon Hills Park District*	Katie Gock
	Darien Park District	Stephanie Gurgone
	Park District of La Grange	Jenny Bechtold
	Community Park District of La Grange Park	Jessica Cannaday
	Lemont Park District	Louise Egofske
	Lisle Park District	Dan Garvy
	Village of Western Springs	Casey Biernacki
	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:	Downers Grove Park District	Bill McAdam
	Village of Indian Head Park	Amy Eckert
Visitors:	Inclusion Manager	Bethany Juhasz
	Recreation Coordinator	Claire McCarthy

**Public Comment and Correspondence:**

***E-mail from Power Soccer Parent***

The Board discussed the correspondence received from the parent of an athlete in SEASPAR's Power Soccer program.

***Presentation by Inclusion Manager Bethany Juhasz, CTRS, and Recreation Coordinator Claire McCarthy, CTRS***

Matt Corso introduced Inclusion Manager Bethany Juhasz and Recreation Coordinator Claire McCarthy, who represent SEASPAR's full-time inclusion team. Bethany Juhasz presented the inclusion annual report for 2025-2026, noting that inclusion is a continually evolving process with recent growth not only in the number of participants using inclusion services but also the complexity of the disabilities being accommodated. The ultimate goal is to shift from reactive supports such as assigning inclusion aides to proactive supports that ultimately make every program inclusive to all.

Claire McCarthy shared some success stories from recent inclusion supports and noted that creative staffing solutions and training have resulted in increased confidence in behavior management for inclusion aides and member entity staff. Bethany described the growth in demand for inclusion services from 2022-2025, with 2025 seeing 15,214 service hours for inclusion, or 11% of all of SEASPAR's service hours from 2025. Non-billable service hours, which include observations, check-ins, trainings, and aide support amounted to 359 hours in 2025. The top demand for inclusion services in 2025 came from the park districts of Woodridge, Lisle, Downers Grove, and Darien, with the lowest demand coming from La Grange, Clarendon Hills, Willowbrook, and Indian Head Park.

Claire noted that the inclusion team held its fourth annual member entity training in 2025, with 9 of the 13 member entities in attendance for a training and roundtable discussion. She shared that processes are being improved for communication and training, including a shared drive with member entities to provide participant information, support, and training materials, as well as replacing the member entity meeting with an inclusion committee, and improving the intake process. Recent training improvements include a new camp director training, expanded aide training, and additional behavior management training.

Claire also provided an update on the virtual programming she oversees, noting that a new Book Club offering has been successful and will be expanded, and virtual dances have been offered during program breaks over the last year. Enrollment in virtual programs has been stable over the last year.

Bethany also provided an update on the SEASPAR Kiwanis Aktion Club for which she is an advisor. She announced that the club is receiving the Distinguished Club award at an upcoming conference, and a new "little free library" project is being planned for the Westmont Park District.

Discussion ensued regarding the types of diagnoses that inclusion services is supporting and how the needs of participants are changing over time.

\*Katie Gock entered the meeting at 3:01 p.m.

**Approval of Consent Agenda:**

Bob Fleck moved to approve the Minutes from the February 17, 2026, Board Meeting; the List of Disbursements in the amount of \$126,184.87; the Bank Reconciliation ending February 28, 2026; the Income Statement from February 2026; and Current Investments for February 2026 as presented. Jenny Knitter seconded the motion.

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

**Recreation Report:**

Dawn Krawiec noted from her report that she and Bethany Juhasz will be presenting at the 2026 NRPA Conference on inclusion, and they are currently running a survey to gather information on inclusion practices in other states. She asked that Board members refer their out-of-state contacts to the survey to assist in data collection.

Dawn added to her report that six rhythmic gymnastics athletes competed at the Special Olympics Illinois regional competition, earning seven gold medals and one silver. Five of the

athletes qualified for the State Summer Games. One of SEASPAR's basketball teams also competed at the Special Olympics Illinois State competition, earning second place in their division. SEASPAR's Special Olympics swimmers would also be participating in the regional competition that week.

**Administrative Services Report:**

Karen Lesniak noted from her report that she attended the PDRMA Legal Update and it reinforced the need to avoid or minimize losses, as there has been a societal shift toward more claims and more expensive awards. One way to do this is through risk transference with certificates of insurance and contracts, which is guiding SEASPAR's SMART Goal for the 2026 PDRMA Risk Management Review of creating facility agreements.

**Marketing Report:**

Laura Pulido had nothing to add to her report.

**Executive Director's Report:**

Matt Corso added to his report that he emailed Board members regarding the IAPD Legislative Conference and the SSPRPA dinner. He noted that the state's special recreation associations will have a combined table at the Capitol.

Matt added to his report that staff hosted Congressman Sean Casten at the Lisle site, where he visited with participants in the EAGLES Adult Day Program and toured the Wonders Multi-Sensory Room. Congressman Casten was very interactive with the participants and also visited the Lisle Park District's programs. Matt noted that they discussed ideas for SEASPAR to receive more federal funding. The Congressman also expressed interest in visiting the Darien site.

Matt added to his report that staff are working on the last draft of the audit, with IMRF data being the final component. Pending the receipt of that information, presentation of the 2025 ACFR is planned for the April 28<sup>th</sup> Board meeting.

Matt noted from his report that the next Board meeting is a week later than normally scheduled, on April 28.

Matt added to his report that a group photo of the Board would be taken at the next meeting, and Board members were asked to arrive 15 minutes early.

Matt added to his report that on March 15, Jersey Mike's would be donating 100% of proceeds to Special Olympics to support athletes in the USA Games.

**Unfinished Business:**

None.

**New Business:**

***Review of Revised Crisis Management Response Plan***

Matt Corso asked Board members to review their information in the Crisis Management Response Plan and advise of any changes. Karen Lesniak noted that the plan has been reviewed with full-time staff and will also be reviewed with EAGLES and part-time front office staff.

***Approval of Purchase of New Vehicle***

Dustin Kleefisch moved to approve the order of a 2026 Chrysler Voyager through the Sourcewell/National Auto Fleet Group cooperative purchasing program at a cost of \$44,835. Bob Fleck seconded the motion.

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

**Approval of Strategic Plan Proposal**

Matt Corso noted that Greg Petry Consulting facilitated SEASPAR's last strategic plan and has submitted a quote to reboot that plan. Cost savings will be gained by having staff perform the associated survey instead of the consultant.

Louise Egofske moved to approve the proposal from Greg Petry Consulting LLC to facilitate the development of SEASPAR's next strategic plan at a cost not to exceed \$9,500 plus travel expenses. Dustin Kleefisch seconded the motion.

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

**Member Entity Projects and Events:**

Dustin Kleefisch reported that a grand re-opening of Borse Park would be held in May. The park improvements were extensive, including pavilions, softball fields, a walking path, and much more. The park's new pickleball courts would be home to SEASPAR's upcoming pickleball program.

Dan Garvy reported that the Lisle Park District would be more than likely seeking a referendum in November for a new facility.

**Adjournment**

Bob Fleck moved to adjourn the regularly scheduled Board Meeting of March 24, 2026, at 3:41 p.m. Jenny Knitter seconded the motion. Upon voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



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Dustin Kleefisch, Secretary  
South East Association for  
Special Parks And Recreation



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Morgan Mason, Recording Secretary