

**GRAYSLAKE COMMUNITY PARK DISTRICT  
PARK BOARD MEETING**

January 21, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by President Ryan. Upon roll call the following were:

**PRESENT:** Commissioners Anderson, Deal, Kennedy, Larson, Rodas, Ryan:  
Staff: Splitt, Regnier, Muhr, Raven. (Absent: VanZant). Guests: Jim and Susan Starwalt, Kayle Vecchione, Greg Formica.

**MOTION:** by Deal that the Park Board of Commissioners approve the January 21, 2026 Park Board Meeting Agenda as presented. Second by Kennedy. Upon roll call all Park Board Members voted "aye" No nays. Motion passed.

**MOTION:** by Larson that the Park Board of Commissioners approve the Consent Agenda to include:

- The Payment of Bills and Payroll from 11-20-25 thru 01-21-26 in the amount of \$1,240,153.14
- Approval of the November 19, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes
- Approval of the IAPD Conference Travel & Training Summary.

Second by Anderson. Upon roll call all Park Board Members voted "aye" No nays. Motion passed.

Resident Greg Formica expressed interest in consideration for the position of Commissioner for the Grayslake Community Park District.

He has been a resident of Grayslake for 47 years, and has grown to have a tremendous respect for the Park District and the great value it brings to our community.

With almost 40 years of local government experience, 30 of which were the Grayslake Fire Protection District, and the last ten as Chief of the Greater Round Lake Fire Protection District, he is very familiar with the important role that board members play in meeting the service expectations of the community.

**MOTION:** by Deal that the Park Board of Commissioners appoint Greg Formica to fill the vacant Park Board position for the remainder of the 2023-2027 term, expiring in May, 2027. Second by Anderson. Upon roll call all Park Board Members voted "aye" No nays. Motion passed.

Commissioner Larson administered the Oath of Office to Greg Formica as the newly appointed Board Commissioner. Board Members congratulated him and welcomed him to the board.

The Friends of the Park Award is presented to an individual whose generosity, time, and dedication help make our community programs truly special.

This year, we are proud to present this award to Jim Starwalt.

Jim has been a longtime supporter of the George Weinert Fishing Derby, generously sponsoring the event and volunteering his time year after year. His commitment helps ensure that this event continues to be a meaningful and memorable experience for our families in our community.

Ryan stated, "On behalf of the Park District, the Friends of the Park, and everyone who has participated in the George Weinert Fishing Derby, Thank you, Jim, for your generosity, your service, and your dedication to our community. We congratulate Jim Starwalt, our Friends of the Park Award recipient.

Board Members reviewed the Park Permit Use Application from the Grayslake Lions Club to host a fundraiser consisting of food trucks, bands and a beer tent.

The event is scheduled for Saturday, August 29 from 4:00pm-10:00pm and will be taking place in Central Park around the Performance Pavilion. They are anticipating approximately 300 people in attendance. Parking will be available at Gelatin Park and the Pool. The Lions Club will be responsible for all set-up and clean-up of the event. This does not conflict with any Park District programs or events.

They are requesting to sell/serve alcohol (Beer & wine/seltzers) at this event. The district will require the Lions Club to provide us with their certificate of insurance naming the park district as an additional insured, along with proof of dram shop insurance, a special event liquor license by the State of Illinois and Village of Grayslake. In addition, the food truck that will be attending will also need to provide the district with a certificate of insurance and their food service permit.

**MOTION:** by Anderson that the Park Board of Commissioners approve the Grayslake Lions Club permit request and waive the rental fees for the use of Central Park Performance Pavilion for their fundraiser on Saturday, August 29th and approve the sale of alcohol by the Grayslake Lions Club contingent on the park district receiving the proper insurance and licenses. Second by Rodas. Upon roll call all Park Board Members voted "aye" No nays. Motion passed.

The Park District is requesting approval to enter into a governmental lease-purchase agreement for the acquisition of a 2022 Morbark 1415 Brush Chipper for the Parks Department.

The District's current chipper, more than 30 years old has reached the end of its useful life. It lacks modern safety features; experiences frequent mechanical failures, and require costly repairs multiple times throughout the year.

Alexander Equipment Company has provided the District with the opportunity to demo the Morbark chipper while approval is pending. The equipment has already proven to be a valuable asset during winter clearing operations and has significantly improved efficiency and safety for the Parks Department.

This purchase is a budgeted item in the FY 2025-2026 Capital Budget. The 2022 Morbark 1415 Brush Chipper is a lightly used demo unit with only 108 operating hours and includes all current safety features designed to protect staff. The total purchase price, including an added safety leg bump bar, is \$54,100. To better align with the Capital Budget and avoid fully depleting the equipment line item, staff recommends financing the purchase over five years at an annual cost of \$12,547.80.

**MOTION:** by Anderson that the Park Board of Commissioners adopt Resolution R26-01, and approve the governmental lease- purchase agreement with Northern Atlantic Financial for the purchase of 2022 Morbark 1415 Brush Chipper for the Parks Department. Second by Formica. Upon roll call all Park Board Members voted "aye" No nays. Motion passed.

Splitt stated the district has received an inquiry from the Village of Grayslake regarding a potential 24-unit attached single family residential development on approximate 5.4 acre property near the intersection of IL Route 83 and Shorewood Road.

The Village would like to know whether the Grayslake Park District would prefer a land donation or cash in lieu of land for this proposed residential development.

It appears the developer already has a small park and playground planned for the development. In this case, Splitt suggested that the park district take the cash in lieu of a land donation.

Splitt will update the board as more information becomes available.

Splitt stated in order to align with the update of our 10-year Comprehensive Plan the park district will be working with the University of St. Francis, Joliet to conduct a community questionnaire to solicit ideas, suggestions and feedback from community members to improve future programs, facilities and service delivery. All data will be analyzed by students at the University of St. Francis.

The questionnaire that was developed by our staff with help from Dr. Joseph Ferrallo of University of St. Francis was presented for comments. The survey will be going out to the public in late February with a deadline to fill it out by March 15<sup>th</sup>.

The questionnaire will be sent via email to a set of random residents as well as being put on our website and social media pages. Splitt is also hopeful that a QR code can be added to the survey so that it can be placed in both the Grayslake and Hainesville Village's monthly newsletters.

The board reviewed the report of the Executive Director.

The IAPD Joint Legislative Committee is hosting its annual legislative breakfast program on Friday, February 27 at 8:00am at the Mundelein Park District's Diamond Lake Recreation Center. Board Members should let Splitt know if they will attend.

Splitt stated the annual Bubbles and Brew fundraiser for the Grayslake Heritage Center Foundation will be taking place on Thursday February 26<sup>th</sup> at First Draft from 6:00-8:00pm. Rich Anderson will be awarded the 2026 History Maker Award at this event. Board Members should let Splitt know if they will attend.

Splitt and VanZant will be meeting later this month with the Department Heads to begin the development of the FY 2026-2027. Budget work will begin in February.

Splitt gave the board an update on the Avon Baseball Complex in Hainesville. It will be undergoing a few changes in the coming weeks. The current storage/concession building has been cleaned out and useable equipment/supplies have been divided between our district and the Round Lake Area Park District. The building is set to be used for training by the Greater Round Lake Fire Protection District. The baseball fencing and dugouts in the front of the park will be removed and temporary soccer fields/open play space will be created. The baseball fields in the back of the park will remain with GYBA using them this spring for practices. Splitt will be meeting in February with Katie, Executive Director from Round Lake Park District, and Michelle Bauman, Avon Township Supervisor to begin discussions about the start of a master plan and the hiring of a landscape architect/planner for that property.

The board reviewed the report of the Superintendent of Recreation.

Regnier stated the Summer Camp Program Guide is in development and will be posted online February 5 with registration beginning February 10<sup>th</sup>.

The 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Daddy Daughter Dance will be held at Parkway Banquets Facility on Saturday, January 24. At this time 253 are registered to dance the early evening away.

2026/2027 Preschool Open House and Registration for new families was on January 14<sup>th</sup>. Lottery registration for this year will be held on January 29, with priority lottery registration available for families currently enrolled in the preschool program. Alumni, resident and nonresident registration will take place February 2-6.

**2026 Special Events:**

Saturday, March 21 is our first Adult Egg Hunt at the golf course from 10-11am.  
Saturday, March 28 is our Annual Easter Egg Hunt hosted at Aquatics from 1 to 1:15pm.  
Saturday, June 6 (tentative) will be our 12 Annual George Weinert fishing Derby at Jones Island from 8:30 to 10am.  
Saturday, June 27 is the taste of Grayslake Family Picnic & Fireworks at Central Park from 3 to 10pm.  
Saturday, October 24 is planned for the Family Fun Fest.

The golf course and clubhouse are closed until March. The 2026 New Year's Season Pass Special resulted in 17 season passes, sold, generating \$7,020 in revenue.

The board reviewed the report of the Superintendent of Parks.

Muhr stated the Tooterville Bridge is completed with opening to the public beginning the first week in December. Custom Bridge and Boardwalks completed the demolition and installation of the new sixty-two-foot bridge.

On December 11<sup>th</sup>, Alexander Equipment Company dropped off the Morbark Chipper-Eagle Beaver 1415 for the district to demo while we considered purchasing this machine/work though the finance packages.

The crew has operated this machine a little over 40 hours and this is what they said about their experience and how this would be a tremendous addition to our fleet:

- Increased Efficiency and Productivity
- Increased Safety Features
- Safety Pull Cables

During the past few months, the crew has started on a few of our winter tree trimming projects.

- Jones Island
- Wetland 201

As of January 19<sup>th</sup>, the crew has completed a little more than half of the yearly winter servicing. After discussing with our team, we have developed better process for logging part numbers and when items were serviced last.

We also will work on cross training our team members. Allowing several other full-time employees, the opportunity to gain more experience on how to maintenance machinery.

Spitt reviewed the report of the Business Manager in lieu of VanZant's absence.

This reporting period is through the end of December, which is 7 months into our fiscal year or approximately 58%. Cash on hand is at its season low and is expected to increase as registration for Camp and Preschool begins next month.

President Ryan presented Commissioner Kennedy his Award celebrating his 10<sup>th</sup> year of service as being a board commissioner. Board Members and staff congratulated him.

**MOTION:** by Larson to adjourn at 8:03pm. Second by Anderson. Upon roll call all Park Board Members voted "aye" No nays. Motion passed.

Adjourned 8:03pm.

Ray Larson, Secretary  
Board of Commissioners