

Winnemac Park Advisory Council  
 Monthly Meeting Minutes  
 Tuesday September 13, 2023 – 6pm

**Members Present ✓:**

✓	Manny Vega	✓	Deb Miretzky
✓	Dave Miretzky	✓	Anne Sylvan
✓	Cathy Vega	✓	Johanna Raimond (WP Tennis)
✓	Amy Williamson (Nature Committee)	✓	Dinakar Vinnakota (Treasurer)
	Elvia Heneghan (Amundson Athletics)		Christian Blume
✓	Margaret O’Conor (TIF Committee)		Russ Klettke, (WP 4 <sup>th</sup> For All)
✓	Anne Ryane (Web Site Committee)		Claire Howard
✓	Eleanor Arnold (new member)	✓	Adam Honaker (new member)
✓	Serena Honaker (new member)	✓	David Cady Jr. (new member)
✓	Michael Pavilon (new member)	✓	Mike O’Keefe (new member)
✓	Mary O’Connor (new member)		

**Chicago Park District Representation ✓:**

✓	Lisa Ragucci (Park Supervisor - CPD)	✓	Kate Thomas (Senior Project Manager - CPD Planning & Construction)

**Guests ✓:**

✓	Cameron McConnell (Amundsen)	✓	David Chinchilla (Amundson Athletics)
✓	Jacob Shuster		
✓	Craig Newman (Amundsen)		

Manny Vega called the meeting to order at approximately 6:04pm.

**Public comment** – no one signed up to speak

Introductions were conducted (names listed above) and member applications were handed out.

Manny addressed meeting norms; the meeting follows Robert’s Rules and codes of conduct for communication/discussions were presented.

The meeting minutes for the August 15, 2023 meeting were approved unanimously by members in good standing.

The agenda for the evening was approved unanimously by members in good standing.

**Old business:**

a. Vote to elect Office: Treasurer

-Manny motioned to nominate Dinakar Vinnakato - Dave seconded and Dinakar was elected unanimously by members in good standing.

b. Approval of PAC by-laws

-Manny inquired whether 6pm or 6:15pm should be the start time for the WPAC meetings moving forward and in the bylaws. All agreed that 6:15pm would be better. Manny motioned to change that in the by-laws and it was approved unanimously by members in good standing

-Manny motioned to change some verbiage from the VP role to the Secretary role in the bylaws – Dave seconded and it was approved unanimously by members in good standing.

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-Manny moved to pass the WPAC bylaws with the two changes above - Dave seconded and it was approved unanimously by members in good standing.

- i. FOIA officer position still open – contact Manny if interested
- ii. Committee being formed and seeking members:
  - a. Communications: the communications team is looking for additional members to ensure that there is consistent communication to the community via the WPAC website, social media platforms, etc. Interested parties can reach out to Cathy Vega.
  - b. Vision – WPAC will be forming a vision committee to help shape what the Park initiatives will be going forward.
  - c. 4th for All - 4th of July committee headed by Russ Kletke
  - d. Fundraising - A fundraiser has been scheduled; more to come from this committee
  - e. Nature committee - focuses on the nature areas of the park
    - CPD pays a company (Stantech) to maintain the nature areas within the park
    - Ann saw a vine - she is going to send to Manny on a map
    - Amy would like to reach out to Stantech directly to handle issues, but she would like the contract information from Lisa to confirm exactly what's in the contract.

**New business:**

a. Vision:

- Manny advised that WPAC should have a vision statement
  - Agreed that we should establish vision and mission statements
  - Discussions around holding a separate meeting from the WPAC monthly meeting to gain input from the community
  - All agreed that the group take a month to brainstorm/compile the ideas and come together as a group to discuss
  - All ideas should be emailed to [WPAC@winnemacpac.org](mailto:WPAC@winnemacpac.org) and reach out if you would like to be on this committee
- b. Restroom petition / Public Budget
- The WPAC just recently found out that the CPD is holding the 2024 public budget hearing meeting on Wednesday, September 20, 2023 at Fosco Park (1312 S. Racine). Registration starts at 5pm and the hearing starts at 6pm.
  - The public can sign up to speak at the meeting – they get 2 minutes
  - Brief explanation around the restrooms and track that used to be open, the loss of access to those and other amenities and the IGA (Manny mentioned that the CPD is re-negotiating all their IGAs)
  - It was explained there was a discussion of a field house in Winnemac Park years ago, but due to the IGA in place and access available to the restrooms at that time, it was not deemed necessary
  - Dave noted that during the most recent stadium renovation, fencing was added to have access to restrooms while the stadium/track are still locked
  - Manny recommended that we create a petition ASAP where the community could show support for the re-opening of the restrooms. Manny and Cathy will work on this and get out to the team ASAP.
  - Manny asked that the group socialize the link for the petition wherever they can in order to get as much support as possible ahead of the public budget hearing
  - Margaret suggested that Manny include a monetary amount during the 2 minutes so that CPD will know how much WPAC is requesting within the 2024 budget and Lisa advised that she would need a second recreation leader to make this happen

**Committee Reports:**

**TIF – Progress:**– Margaret O’Conor

- Introduction of Kate Thomas as the Senior Project Manager only for the TIF improvements to the ballfield (adjacent to the soccer field), which includes a new turf infield, address drainage/repairs, new benches, ADA

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pathways, few bathing tunnel, fencing, sports lighting on the field, repair of damaged items due to the construction, etc.

- The rest of the TIF items have other project managers assigned (she does not know who they are at this time).
- Parties can pass along concerns/questions to Manny and he will bring them to Kate.
- Bids should be in and construction beginning by first quarter of 2024 (weather permitting)
- There will be interruptions to the ball field and soccer field during construction.
- Kate really wants to ensure that there is clear and consistent communication to the community members
- Kate will have the renderings from the landscape designer next month and will share with the WPAC and would like them to be shared with the community
- It was clarified that the tennis courts are being renovated using TIF funds “Pickleball Mania” program and this should be happening possibly later this year. The east and west tennis courts will be renovated with the west remaining only tennis and the east court a mixed use pickleball/tennis court.
- Kate advised that she’ll take questions after the meeting if anyone has anything to discuss

**Website Progress-** Anne Ryan of winnemacpac.org

- Anne provided those present with a tour of the future website for the WPAC
- There’s currently an event, meeting minutes and volunteer section
- Margaret mentioned that we can hyperlink to the CPD events and Dinakar mentioned adding social media links to the site.
- A donation button and added security (SSL) were also mentioned.
- Anne is also working on a WPAC logo

**Park Supervisor Report:** Lisa Ragucci

- Chappell after school program began and they are hosting 90 students
- Harvest Fest at Indian Boundary Park (2500 W. Lunt Ave) on October 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> from 10am – 2pm.
- Senior Harvest Fest at Indian Boundary Park (2500 W, Lunt Ave) on October 16th 10am – 12 pm.
- Pumpkin Patch at Hamlin Park (3035 N. Hoyne Ave.) 10am – 3pm.
- Senior Game Show and Luncheon at Warren Park (6601 N. Western Ave.) on October 26th 11am – 2pm.
- Story Time at Winnemac Park on September 18<sup>th</sup> from 10:30am – 11:00 am in the Winnemac Park Kids Garden.
- Lisa reports that she has seen dogs off leash in the park but has not received any complaints.
- The part time rec leader position has still not been filled. There have been offers made, but no candidates have accepted the position. Lisa asks that we share wherever we can to find a candidate

**Safety:** a security report was shared specific to the Park and provided by – Chicago Police, Sgt. Peter Pol #935 August 16<sup>th</sup>- September 13<sup>th</sup>.

- i. On Aug. 24th a fight was called in front of Amundsen and when police arrived, the incident was deemed not to be bona fide.
- ii. On Aug. 31st, there was a mental health disturbance in the lot of Amundsen HS. Police responded and subject was transported for services.
- iii. On Sept.9th there were several calls made for a school sporting event which led to supposed fights. Officers responded crowds dispersed.
- iv. Also, there have been daily park checks at Winnemac Park and addressing owners of unleashed pets.
- v. There have also been an almost daily police presence at school dismissal to prevent any fights or disturbances.

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**Fund raising for Winnemac Park :**

-A Chipotle dine-for fundraiser has been set up. The fundraiser will be November 18, 2023 from 4:00pm – 8:00pm. It's only at the Chipotle located at 5224 N. Broadway Ave., Chicago, IL 60640 and the flyer must be shown. Chipotle will donate 33% of those sales back to WPAC.

Adjourn: Manny Vega moved to adjourn the meeting and Dave seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried. Adjourned at approximated 7:27pm

**Announcements:**

**Next Monthly Meeting: The next WPAC meeting will be Wednesday, October 11, 2023 at 6:15pm in the Amundsen HS Rm 118 meeting room.**

**All are invited by the Chicago Park District to their Parktoberfest – Volunteer Appreciation Day on Sunday, October 1, 2023 from 12:00pm – 3:00pm • South Shore Cultural Club at 7059 S. South Shore Drive (Manny provided a flyer with a QR code for members to review/sign up**

Summary of Action Items:

1. WPAC will create a petition supporting the re-opening of the restrooms within Winnemac Park. ✓
2. WPAC gained 7 new members during the meeting. ✓
3. Amy would like to reach out to Stantech directly to handle issues, but she would like the contract information from Lisa to confirm exactly what's in the contract. ✓
4. Monetary amount for reopen of bathrooms for the 2024 budget hearing. ✓
5. Plan for community meeting to share park improvements
6. Brainstorm/compile the ideas share via email and come together as a group to discuss – to do-
7. Launch WPAC website
  - a. Post finalized PAC by-laws
  - b. Post future event in the park