

**THE PRAIRIE PARK ADVISORY COUNCIL (PAC) MEETING**  
Kennedy Park Fieldhouse, 11320 S. Western Avenue, Chicago, IL 60643  
Park Supervisor, Rebecca Medrano (312-747-6198)  
Tuesday, AUGUST 13, 2024, 6:30 PM (ZOOM ONLY)

**M I N U T E S**

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: 22**

**PAC BOARD: (4)**

|                   |                |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Charles Williams  | President      |
| Lorraine Linnerud | Vice President |
| Ivette Williams   | Secretary      |
| Milton Chandler   | Treasurer      |

**PARK SUPERVISOR: (1)**

|                 |
|-----------------|
| Rebecca Medrano |
|-----------------|

**GUESTS: (3)**

|                |
|----------------|
| Andre Taylor   |
| Sandy Morrison |
| Lola           |

**PAC Members: (14)**

|                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|
| Lisa Adams       | Birgit LaVoie    |
| JoAnn Altenbach  | Dan Niersbach    |
| Dorothy Chandler | Gregory Pitts    |
| Katrina Dillard  | Jil Ross         |
| Maryann Drake    | Charmaine Sevier |
| Mary Dunneback   | John Smith       |
| Danielle Jones   | Becky Stevens    |

**I. WELCOME & CALL TO ORDER**

Charles Williams called the PAC Meeting to order at 6:31 PM.

**II. NEW MEMBERS/GUESTS**

Ivette Williams welcomed the guests in attendance: Andre Taylor, Sandy Morrison and Lola; and two new PAC members: Katrina Dillard and Allie Dumas. The PAC membership has a total of 45 members to date.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Charles Williams asked for a Motion to accept Minutes from 7/13/2024.

Motion accepted by Maryann Drake; seconded by John Smith. All in Favor, AYE. No one opposed.

**IV. MOTION(S)**

After Mary Dunneback's presentation, Charles Williams entered the following Motion for a PAC vote on behalf of the Park Events Planning Committee:

➤ **Motion to approve a preliminary budget of \$250 for the Prairie PAC "Fall Social" event on 10/15/24 (5-8 pm) at Kennedy Park.** (Event description: Indoor mini "Meet & Greet" for adults only due to space limitations (30-35 cap.); pizza, refreshments, cookies, etc.; raffle drawing and/or split the pot if allowed by Chicago Park District; pre-registration needed; suggested donation \$7 per person. Activity request form was submitted for large meeting room at Kennedy Park to Rebecca Medrano and approved.)

**Motion accepted by Lorraine Linnerud; seconded by Dorothy Chandler.**

**All in Favor, AYE. No one opposed.**

## **V. TREASURER'S REPORT**

**Bank Statement:** Bank Statement and Treasurer's Report attached with detailed information. Milton Chandler also gave a brief verbal summary of Treasurer's report and PAC's bank monthly activities from July 1-31, 2024. Beginning Bal. \$3,087.44; Total Deposits: \$445.00 (PAC donations in SwipeSimple); (\$3,532.44); Total Expenses: \$238.49 (\$109 for liability insurance for the "Prairie Park Purge" on 8/10/24; \$84.98 for pet waste station bags donated by L. Linnerud; \$44.51 bank fees; Ending Bal. \$3,293.95. With Board approval, M. Chandler to place order for bank checks with new PAC name "The Prairie Park Advisory Council" through Costco (200 checks for \$30.04).

## **VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- **Garden Committee:** D. Jones – Full Committee Report was provided in advance of meeting, and verbal summary given at meeting. Danielle Jones thanked David Wilkerson-Lindsey and his mother for generous plant donations (bee balm, etc.) for the community garden; and Lorraine and Mark Linnerud for finding nice big tree stumps for the community garden as a seating area and beautify the garden naturally. July clean-up went smoothly, garden is looking great. Lots of native plants are thriving: bergamot, milkweed; etc. Soil testing has been completed with an "all clear" to grow edibles. Field trips: (1) Lake Katherine Outing: Members of our Garden Committee had an inspiring trip to Lake Katherine in July. We toured their grounds which contain a wild array of plants, diverse types of beds/plantings, insect habitats, and great garden decorations! We also did a short jaunt on the Cal Sag Trail which is a wonderful and accessible trail in our area. We have already started incorporating what we saw from this trip into our own garden; (2) IL Extension Field Day: Members from our Garden Committee attended the IL Extension Field Day at "It Takes a Village Farm". We toured their gorgeous farm and their farmer, Paul, was eager to answer all our questions. We also met growers and gardeners from the area & representatives from the USDA to discuss funding opportunities. There was a focus on cover crops with seeds and lots of information shared with attendees; and (3) we have a CCGA Seed Collection planned event this Friday. Garden Committee workdays: Tues. 6:30-7:30 pm; Sat. 8-9:30 am. Committee Chairs: D. Jones, D. Chandler.
- **Grant Committee:** I. Williams – \$500 Grant "Connecting Communities" received from Chicago Parks Foundation; I. Williams provided a detailed list of all purchases made with pictures, prices, and invoices of garden tools, including 2 garden hoses donated by Willa Lang, CPF; and a Keurig donation made to PAC by C. & I. Williams. All are in possession of The Chandlers for safekeeping and quick access for park cleanups, beautification & community garden maintenance. Committee Chairs: Jil Ross, Ivette Williams.
- **Marketing & Fundraising Committee:** I. Williams – Postponed report for following month. Committee Chairs: Ivette Williams, Charmaine Sevier.
- **Park Events Planning Committee:** M. Dunneback – Full Committee Report was provided in advance of meeting and verbal summary given at meeting. Mary Dunneback reported that this year there were 29 registered participants for the "Prairie Park Purge" on Sat. 8/10/24. Donations collected totaled \$525.00 (minus liability insurance -\$109), plus \$35 cash collected at the event by participants, the total profit generated was \$451.00. The weather was wonderful, and the event was well attended by participants, members, residents & community. The event was well publicized by email, Ald. O'Shea's email blast, The Villager and Beverly Review, patch.com, PAC Facebook page, Prairie PAC website, word of mouth and posting sign in park. Thank you to Jil Ross (Mother McAuley Alumni & others) and Sarah Batka (19<sup>th</sup> Ward) for publicizing event as well. Future planning: Place signage on Western with balloons to attract more people to park. We may consider moving date to coincide with sports schedule so there is more traffic, yet does not interfere with games, we will adjust location of our event to maximize use of both sides of sidewalk on Oakley using both parkway and inside of park so shoppers can walk on sidewalk to browse from both sides. Consider looking into the cost of getting a port-a-potty. Katrina Willard said she paid \$480 for two for the dance and music festival in July. Jil Ross to ask her husband, Jonathan, about the port-a-potties. Committee Chairs: Mary Dunneback, JoAnn Altenbach.
- **Park Investment Committee:** L. Linnerud – Full Committee Report was provided in advance of meeting, and verbal summary given at meeting. Lorraine Linnerud provided copy of congratulatory letter received from State Rep. Justin Slaughter; he was impressed with the dance and music festival in July and is looking forward to updates on park improvement progress at The Prairie Park provided by the \$500,000 Build

Illinois Grant. Committee member Charmaine Sevier went over our park improvement project implementation questions, including: Water fountain – Will it have a spigot? Has location been decided? Lighting – What is the schedule? On/off automatically? Controlled by park supervisor? Walking Path – 8 feet width path is requested since it can be plowed. Curbs – will the park have newly installed or repaired curbs (not included in grant); who absorbs the cost? Chicago Park District, CDOT? Committee Chairs: Lorraine Linnerud, Ken Bergeron.

➤ **Public Safety (CAPS) Committee:** M. Chandler – Full Committee Report was provided in advance of meeting, and verbal summary given at meeting. Meeting welcome by Officer Beamon & Sister Pat Facilitator, 19<sup>th</sup> Ward Representative Ruby Wilson. Calls for service 597. The higher the number of calls, the lower the crime stats. Police urge residents to keep calling in suspicious activities and reporting crimes. 7/1-31/24 crime stats for our park Beat 2212: shooting (1); criminal sexual assault (1); armed robberies (2); burglaries (3); arrests (14); thefts (37); please see report for more details for Beats 2211 & 2212. National Night Out 2024 on 8/6/24 from 5-8 pm at Beverly Park, 2460 W. 102<sup>nd</sup> St. Next CAPS Meeting is scheduled for 9/5/24 at 6 pm at 22<sup>nd</sup> District. Committee Chairs: Milton Chandler, Dorothy Chandler.

## **VII. OLD BUSINESS**

➤ **IRS PAC Name Change:** C. Williams – Sent letter on 6/12/24 to IRS with bank statement ending 5/31/24 requesting name change name of PAC non-profit at IRS with existing EIN from “PARK 581 Park Advisory Council” to “The Prairie Park Advisory Council”. EIN remains unchanged. **(Pending confirmation letter from IRS.)**

## **VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

➤ **9/10/24 BOARD ELECTIONS** – During September’s PAC Meeting, Board Elections will be held in person only at the Kennedy Park fieldhouse only. No voting by proxy, write-ins or absentee ballot is allowed; nor voting on virtual platform. If you are interested in running for a Board officer position, please let our Park Supervisor, Rebecca Medrano at [REDACTED] [@chicagoparkdistrict.com](mailto:@chicagoparkdistrict.com), know by 8/31/24. Eligibility requirements are that a candidate must be a PAC member, be a resident of Chicago, and have attended at least two PAC Meetings during the twelve (12) consecutive months (September 1st from preceding year to August 31st of current year) before the election is held. All Board members must fill out a Volunteer Application Form with the Chicago Park District and be fingerprinted (free of charge).

## **IX. PAST EVENTS**

➤ 8/10/24 “Prairie Park Purge” (Prairie PAC event hosted by Park Events Planning Committee)  
➤ 7/20/24 “Dance & Music Festival” (DCASE grant - hosted by Next Level Dance Foundation)  
➤ 7/18/24 “Jazz in the Park” (sponsored by Ald. O’Shea & other elected leaders)  
➤ 7/05/24 “Post Holiday Park Clean-up” (Pitch in for the Parks)

## **X. UPCOMING EVENTS**

➤ 8/22/24 (1 pm) “PAC Summer Challenges” by Chicago Parks Foundation Summer Roundtable Zoom.  
➤ 10/15/24 (5-8 pm) Prairie PAC “Fall Social” hosted by the Park Events Planning Committee for adults only due to limited space in large meeting room at Kennedy Park; suggested donation \$7 per person.

## **XI. PARK SUPERVISOR**

➤ **Grant Project Updates:** Rebecca received update from the project manager, Kat Katsma: “We are finalizing the request for services to send out for engineering to deal with stormwater management and will sending it out soon.”

- Park Schedule: The calendar for park events schedule will be ready when classes are in session. There are no requests yet for use of The Prairie Park. Mike Martin will be hosting flag football again in the fall. Someone contacted her about a soccer tournament, but he may have changed his mind since she has not heard back from him. Rebecca asked us to be on the look out — and let her know at once — for a camp using the park without permission (approx. 15-18 people). Kennedy Park's fall programming will begin after Labor Day. There is a waitlist for Senior Stretching classes; pickleball is available.
- Bicycle Rack Status: Five bicycle racks were installed at 116<sup>th</sup> Pl./Oakley near the little free library. We were not informed in advance by the Chicago Park District or given choice of location, but it was pending on list for a while and the bicycle racks look nice, and placement is suitable not impeding sidewalk usage (as they do not take up much space) & upcoming park improvements.

## **XII. ADDITIONAL BUSINESS**

Jil Ross shared the following community concerns:

Walgreens at 118<sup>th</sup>/Western – the most recent brazen robberies in August (which she and her husband both witnessed in broad daylight), breaking of front glass door in attempt to steal ATM (they did not succeed), lack of security, trash around the area, and people loitering outside all contribute to the high risk of the store closing its doors affecting our senior community who rely on getting their medications there. We should consider signing a petition as a community to help keep this Walgreens open and contact our Alderman for added support.

## **XIII. NEXT PAC MEETING**

The next monthly PAC Meeting is on Tuesday, September 10, 2024, at 6:30 PM. The PAC Board meets each month two Saturdays before the monthly meeting to set the Agenda for the upcoming meeting. If you would like to add an item to the Agenda, please contact one of the PAC Board Officers below:

|                |                   |                      |
|----------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| President      | Charles Williams  | [REDACTED]@aol.com   |
| Vice-President | Lorraine Linnerud | [REDACTED]@gmail.com |
| Secretary      | Ivette Williams   | [REDACTED]@aol.com   |
| Treasurer      | Milton Chandler   | [REDACTED]@gmail.com |

## **XIV. ADJOURN**

Motion to adjourn was entered by Charles Williams at 7:39 pm.

Motion was accepted by Dorothy Chandler; seconded by Mary Dunneback.

Respectfully submitted: Ivette Williams, The Prairie PAC Board Secretary