

THE PRAIRIE PARK ADVISORY COUNCIL (PAC) MEETING

Kennedy Park Fieldhouse, 11320 S. Western Avenue, Chicago, IL

Park Supervisor, Rebecca Medrano (312-747-6198)

Tuesday, MAY 13, 2025, 6:30-7:30 PM

THE PRAIRIE PARK

EST. 2016



MINUTES

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: 14

PAC BOARD: (4)

Charles Williams President

Ivette Williams Secretary

Lorraine Linnerud

Vice President

Dan Niersbach

Treasurer

PARK SUPERVISOR: (1)

Ian Morris (for Rebecca Medrano)

PAC MEMBERS: (9)

Lisa Adams

JoAnn Altenbach

Milton Chandler

Katrina Dillard

Maryann Drake

Andrienne Horton-Smith

Jil Ross

John Smith

Becky Stevens

I. WELCOME & CALL TO ORDER

Charles Williams called the PAC Meeting to order at 6:30 PM. Robert's Rules of Order were in effect.

II. NEW MEMBER(S) & GUESTS

No new members joined the PAC this month and there were no guests present. We have 45 members to date.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Charles Williams asked for a Motion to accept Minutes from 4/12/2025.

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

IV. MOTION(S)

Motion #1: Charles Williams asked for a Motion for no JULY PAC Meeting on July 8th and resuming on August 12th.

Motion accepted by JoAnn Altenbach; seconded by Maryann Drake. All in favor, AYE. No one opposed.

Motion #2: Charles Williams asked for a Motion to approve the purchase of pet waste station bags going forward (approx. \$103 for a box of 20 lasts about 4 months; divided 10 boxes for Oakley & Bell) using PAC debit card and will include all expenditures in Treasurer's Report.

Motion accepted by Maryann Drake; seconded by Lisa Adams. All in favor, AYE. No one opposed.

V. TREASURER'S REPORT

Bank Statement and Treasurer's Report attached with detailed information. PAC Treasurer, Dan Niersbach, gave a brief verbal summary of Treasurer's report and PAC's bank monthly activities from April 1-30, 2025.

“True Values” are only being included here (please refer to Treasurer’s Report for detailed report, which includes Fifth Third Bank balances with surplus (\$1,200+) of potential “fraudulent” donations under ongoing investigation):

Beginning Bal. \$2,988.05 Deposits: \$180.00 Total Expenses: \$241.39* **Ending Balance: \$2,926.66**

Deposits: \$85 SwipeSimple donations; \$95 cash donations at Kite Fly event.

*\$241.39 Expenses are being disputed with WorldPay through Chicago Parks Foundation new contact at Fifth Third Bank, Colette Gentile, Vice President, Business Accounts Manager. Investigating clarification on fee structure; chargeback fees; contract; PCI compliance, etc.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

On May 5, 2025, the PAC Board met with the Fifth Third account manager for Chicago Parks Foundation (CPF), Colette Gentile, and the CPF Community Programs Manager, Triana Callam. We provided documentation on the SwipeSimple suspected fraudulent donations, reviewed unexplained deposits to our Fifth Third Account, requested information on fees, asked for process to dispute SwipeSimple donations moving forward and the SwipeSimple “Welcome Package” which was never received. The Fifth Third account manager will research and get back to us.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Park Investment Committee: L. Linnerud – Full Committee Report was provided in advance of meeting. Committee Chair Linnerud provided the following update:
No update yet this month from Project Manager Katsma. From last month’s update, we know that the Team is working on the exact placement of south end drinking fountain – based on the existing sewer and water lines configuration. The Team has completed or is nearing completion of the required Stormwater Management analysis to ensure that the Park Improvements do not negatively impact/or will compensate for things such as increased stormwater runoff and soil erosion. Hopefully, we will receive a more current update from the Project Manager soon.
Committee Chairs: Lorraine Linnerud (chair), Milton Chandler (co-chair).
Committee Members: JoAnn Altenbach, Katrina Dillard, Charmaine Sevier, Ivette Williams.
- Park Events Planning Committee: J. Altenbach – A brief recap was given at the PAC meeting about the events that took place in late April & early May and provided final expense reports for each event. The first event was the park clean-up on Earth Day on 4/26/25 @ 8 am. We had 8 volunteers, and we were done with the clean-up in record time. It helped tremendously that Rebecca had the Chicago Park District mow the field the day before. The park was exceptionally clean with very minimal debris to pick up. We had an approved budget of \$35 and spent \$22.97 on water, fruit & protein bars. The second event held on the same day was the 3rd annual Kite Fly from 11 am-1 pm and we had 37 participants (19 children; 18 adults). We had a free raffle of two kites for children only and a little boy and little girl won. There was a suggested donation of \$5, and we collected \$95 in cash donations at the event and \$110 in SwipeSimple. We had an approved budget for \$200; donations received totaled \$205, and we spent \$171.73. The Kite Fly event event paid for itself, and the Earth Day event combined. They were both successful and fun events. We had great weather and a windy day, which made for a great recipe for kite flying. The third event on Saturday, May 3rd, “Prayer in the Prairie” at 8:00 am was a small but mighty group. We gathered in small groups, as we sang, talked, prayed in silence, aloud, and walked several times around the park and concluded with a prayer circle. It was very spiritual and no better way to start off your day than with prayer with your community in our beautiful, serene park. We plan to do this again soon. All are welcome. Next event will be the park clean-up on 5/31 “It’s Your Park Day” park clean-up and 6/21 “Meet & Greet” (alt. rain date 6/28). Thank you all for participating.
Committee Chairs: JoAnn Altenbach (chair), Andrienne Horton-Smith (co-chair).
Committee Members: Maryann Drake, Mary Dunneback, Candace Evans, John Smith, Ivette Williams.

VIII. PARK SUPERVISOR

- Calendar; Park Requests: No sports are taking place this summer at The Prairie Park. Other than the Meet & Greet on 6/21 and Jazz in the Park on 7/17, there are no other scheduled events.
- Other: Summer camp at Kennedy Park is almost filled up. We have hired a full-time instructor running summer camp. Men's softball league is starting on Tuesdays & Thursdays and Women's softball league on Wednesdays; Women's sand volleyball on Tuesdays & Thursdays and co-ed volleyball on Thursdays.

IX. UPCOMING EVENT(S)

Save the Dates:

4/26/25 – Earth Day Park Clean-Up hosted by the Chicago Park District and Friends of The Parks (8-10 am).

4/26/25 – 3rd Annual Kite Fly @ The Prairie Park (11 am-1 pm).

5/01/25 – CAPS Zoom Meeting (6-7pm) Beat 2212

5/03/25 – Prayer in The Prairie (8-9 am).

6/21/25 – Meet & Greet @ The Prairie (alt. rain date 6/28/25)

X. ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

- XI.** Project Monarch: This project was introduced by the new Chicago Park District CEO Carlos Ramirez-Rosa at the April 12th PAC Conference. It included educational resources, habitat restoration and planting events, community gatherings to learn more about and support our monarch butterflies and their habitats. See link in Agenda.

May in Motion: This initiative was announced by Maria Stone, which includes 37 free 45-minute fitness classes each Wednesday in May at 14 different parks. See link in Agenda.

Park Toy Boxes: Interesting article last week in Block Club Chicago about toy boxes returning to Parks. (We went over the updates to the PAC Guidelines at our April meeting, which included a very detailed section on these toy boxes.) In June of last year, the CPkD started enforcing their rule to remove personal property left in Parks. This upset neighbors who often leave toys no longer needed for others in the park. Jacob Ringer, president of the Bauler Park Advisory Council led an effort which resulted in PACs being allowed to install and maintain Park Toy Boxes. To make this happen, Jacob met with then CEO Rosa Escareño, testified at two Chicago Park District Board meetings, and formed a toy box working group. Power of the PAC! See link to the Block Club article in Agenda.

XII. NEXT PAC MEETING

The next PAC Meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 12, 2025, from 6:30-7:30 pm at Kennedy Park.

BOARD: The PAC Board meets on the 1st Saturday of every month 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:

President	Charles Williams	██████████@aol.com
Vice-President	Lorraine Linnerud	██████████@gmail.com
Secretary	Ivette Williams	██████████@icloud.com
Treasurer	Dan Niersbach	██████████@sbcglobal.net

XIII. ADJOURN

Meeting was adjourned by Charles Williams at 7:05 pm.

Submitted by: Ivette Williams, The Prairie PAC Board Secretary

