

**STATE OF ILLINOIS
COUNTY OF DUPAGE
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
DARIEN PARK DISTRICT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

December 8, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

President Ray Jablonski called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. at the Darien Park District Community Center, 7301 Fairview, Darien, Illinois.

ROLL CALL OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Upon roll call the following Commissioners were present:

PRESENT: Ray Jablonski, Luanne Spiros, Frank Noverini, Cathy Marchese, Steve Shanks

ABSENT: None

Staff: Stephanie Gurgone; Executive Director, Matt Henderson: Director of Parks and Facilities, Jordan Rossi; Sportsplex General Manager, Gina Madden; Attorney

PUBLIC COMMENTS & GUESTS (6:31 p.m.)

Alderman Ralph Stompanato, City of Darien was present. He stated that he and Commissioner Luanne Spiros have been working on collaboration between the City and the District and that he is very pleased.

COMMUNICATIONS (6:32 p.m.)

Commissioner Steve Shanks reported that he attended the Downers Grove Township Youth Services Advocacy Commission and that they are looking at outreach to get into various groups.

OFFICER REPORTS (6:35 p.m.)

a. President

President Ray Jablonski reported on the Community Engagement and City Collaboration Initiative meeting and summarized the ongoing efforts by city officials to improve community engagement, city services, and partnerships with the Park District, highlighting priorities such as event locations, communication improvements, and collaborative projects.

President Jablonski reported that there is continued community interest in holding Darien Fest at Darien Park, though logistical reasons currently prevent this, and the topic remains a recurring point of discussion among residents and officials. He reported that there was discussion regarding

collaboration with the real estate community to better understand why families are moving in and out of Darien, suggesting that the City could benefit from systematically collecting and analyzing this information. He further reported that there was discussion emphasizing the importance of strengthening relationships and partnerships with the Park District and Carriage Green owners, including the possibility of hosting City Council concerts at Carriage Greens.

President Jablonski reported that there was also discussion regarding enhancing the City's cable station, direct connect, and overall communication with residents as well as the need for vigilance in seeking better ways to inform the community. He reported that the City would like to see more opportunities for residents to interact through entertainment, craft fairs, and similar events, aligning with the broader objective of fostering community engagement.

b. Treasurer – Commissioner Cathy Marchese presented the Treasurer's report ending November 30, 2025.

Commissioner Noverini made a motion, duly seconded by Commissioner Shanks to approve the Treasurer's report ending November 30, 2025.

Upon roll call the following Commissioners voted:

AYES: Shanks, Noverini, Spiros, Marchese, Jablonski

NAYS: None

President Jablonski declared the motion carried.

c. Commissioner Reports

There were no Commissioner reports.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT (6:38 p.m.)

There was no Attorney report.

STAFF REPORTS (6:38p.m.)

a. Executive Director/SEASPAR

Executive Director Stephanie Gurgone reported that the next Board Meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 9, 2026 with no regular meeting scheduled for January due to a joint session with the City Council. She reported that the annual rollover bond issue will be on the February agenda for capital projects in 2026-27 and debt payments.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that the SEASPAR banquet is scheduled for Wednesday, January 14, 2026.

b. Finance Report (6:48 p.m.)

Executive Director Gurgone reported that staff are preparing for year-end financial tasks, including W-2s and 1099s, and that financials through October 31 are included in the meeting packet.

President Jablonski indicated that long-term planning discussions are slated for the April or May meeting, requesting board members to communicate any scheduling conflicts to ensure full participation.

c. Sportsplex General Manager (6:49 p.m.)

General Manager Jordan Rossi stated that he would answer any questions regarding his report.

d. Director of Parks & Facilities (6:44 p.m.)

Director Matt Henderson provided updates on recent events, winter operations, and the challenges of snow removal and path maintenance, discussing resource limitations, prioritization, and the impact of weather on park accessibility. He reported that the recent holiday celebration at Community Park was well attended despite cold weather, and that mowing operations have ceased for the season, with staff now focused on plowing and winter maintenance.

Commissioner Luanne Spiros questioned if snow removal for the paths is a consideration.

Director Henderson explained that snow removal priorities are for the main building, Sportsplex and the park parking lots. He further explained that the District is responsible for certain park paths but not city sidewalks, and that staff constraints and insurance requirements limit the ability to clear all hard surfaces promptly after snowfall.

There was some discussion regarding consideration of the possibility of engaging outside vendors for additional path maintenance, especially in larger parks, but emphasized that the current focus remains on the main Community Park and that smaller parks have limited pathways.

i. DPD Annual Report Presentation (6:52 p.m.)

Director Matt Henderson presented the annual report covering program offerings, participation statistics, event highlights, and operational details for the fiscal year, including breakdowns by session, resident status, and program type. He reported on the program offerings and participation, special events and attendance tracking, Fitness Center and class utilization, Preschool and Camp programs, Sportsplex and rental operations, capital improvements and park maintenance projects, facility and equipment upgrades, playground and park renovations, tree inventory and removal strategy and staffing and resource allocation.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS (7:22 p.m.)

There was no unfinished business report.

PUBLIC COMMENT (FOR CONSENT AGENDA) (7:22 p.m.)

There was no one wishing to present public comment.

CONSENT AGENDA (7:23 p.m.)

- a. Resolution 2025-26-09: A Resolution to approve amendments to the joint agreement for the Southeast Association For Special Parks and Recreation
- b. Approve Darien Park District Tax Levy Ordinance #2025-26-02
- c. November 10, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes
- d. Warrants

Commissioner Shanks moved, duly seconded by Commissioner Marchese to approve Resolution 2025-26-09: A Resolution to approve amendments to the joint agreement for the Southeast Association For Special Parks and Recreation, Darien Park District Tax Levy Ordinance #2025-26-02, November 10, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes and the Warrants.

Upon roll call the following Commissioners voted:

AYES: Shanks, Marchese, Noverini, Spiros, Jablonski

NAYS: None

President Jablonski declared the motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS (7:24 p.m.)

- a. DPD 2026-27 Goals & Objectives (7:24 pm)

Executive Director Stephanie Gurgone reported on the intergovernmental agreement (IGA) event listing, discussing anticipated event locations for 2026–2027, and emphasized the importance of proactive coordination with the city and other agencies amid ongoing capital projects. She reported that the IGA event listing was created to clarify which agency is responsible for each event, the expected locations for 2026 and 2027, and to facilitate planning given construction timelines and capital project impacts.

The board agreed to revisit event locations and responsibilities in late fall 2026, once construction progress is clearer, to ensure accurate planning for 2027 and beyond.

Attorney Gina Madden discussed the status of the intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with the police for ordinance enforcement in parks, outlining the review process, collaborative efforts, and the need to update ordinances to reflect current laws and enforcement practices. She reported that the District and Police Department are collaboratively reviewing the existing IGA and park ordinances to ensure they are current, enforceable, and aligned with city laws, with a focus on removing redundancies and addressing new legal requirements. She further reported that the police can enforce all applicable laws in parks, but the IGA formalizes their authority regarding specific park ordinances, and the review aims to identify which rules are practical for police enforcement.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that Attorney Madden is leading the ordinance review, with no fixed deadline, and the process will involve staff from both agencies working through the details and updating signage and public information as needed. She reported that once the ordinance review is complete, the District plans to update the rule signage, potentially adding QR codes for easy access to current regulations, and will coordinate with the police on enforcement priorities.

b. January 12, 2026, Joint Meeting Agenda for Discussion (7:38 p.m.)

Executive Director Gurgone provided an overview of the criteria used to determine which events and programs the District should hold, distinguishing between recreation and Sportsplex activities, and reviewed the draft agenda for the upcoming joint meeting.

ADJOURN

There being no further discussion, Commissioner Shanks moved, duly seconded by Commissioner Spiros that the meeting be adjourned.

Upon a roll call vote the Motion was thereby carried and the meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.



**Ray Jablonski, President
Darien Park District**



**Frank Noverini, Secretary
Darien Park District**