STATE OF ILLINOIS
COUNTY OF DUPAGE
DARIEN PARK DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
October 13, 2026

CALL TO ORDER

President Luanne Spiros called the Regular Board Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. at the Darien Park District Community Center, 7301 Fairview Avenue, Darien, Illinois.

ROLL CALL OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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

ABSENT: Steve Shanks

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 was present.

COMMUNICATIONS (6:38 p.m.)

There was no communication to report.

OFFICER REPORTS (6:39 p.m.)

a. **President** – President Luanne Spiros had no report.
b. **Treasurer** - Commissioner Cathy Marchese presented the September 30, 2026, Treasurer's Report.

Commissioner Jablonski moved, seconded by Commissioner Noverini, to approve the September 30, 2026, Treasurer's Report.

Upon roll call, the Commissioners voted as follows:
AYES: Jablonski, Noverini, Marchese, Spiros
NAYS: None
President Spiros declared the motion carried.

c. **Commissioner Reports**

Commissioner Ray Jablonski reported that he had provided his notes from the most recent Darien Action Committee Meeting. He also gave an update on the Hinsbrook Homeowners Association and the Darien Swim and Recreation Club, including the status of the property.

ATTORNEY REPORT (6:41 p.m.)

Attorney Gina Madden had no report.

STAFF REPORTS (6:41 p.m.)

a. Executive Director/SEASPAR

Executive Director Stephane Gurgone reported that the next meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 9, at 6:30 p.m.

b. Finance Report (6:42 p.m.)

Executive Director Gurgone reviewed the park district's financial reports. She reported that the district had received 96% of its property tax revenue by the end of September and that the financial statements provided activity through August. She reported that the audit for the fiscal year ending April 30 will be discussed separately.

c. Sportsplex General Manager (6:44 p.m.)

Sportsplex General Manager Jordan Rossi offered to answer any questions regarding his report.

d. Director of Parks & Facilities (6:45 p.m.)

Director Matt Henderson reported on upcoming programs and events. He reported that the Westwood project is progressing with the courts finished, and a final punch-list review scheduled. He reported that the district expects to determine the final completion timeline within the next few weeks and if the courts are ready, they may open for pickleball before every feature is finished, with a larger grand opening anticipated in the spring.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS (6:48 p.m.)

There was no unfinished business.

PUBLIC COMMENT (FOR CONSENT AGENDA) (6:48 p.m.)

There was no public comment.

CONSENT AGENDA (6:49 p.m.)

a. September 14, 2026, Regular Meeting Minutes
b. Warrants

Commissioner Marchese moved, seconded by Commissioner Jablonski, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Upon roll call, the Commissioners voted as follows:
AYES: Marchese, Jablonski, Noverini, Spiros

NAYS: None
President Spiros declared the motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS (6:51 p.m.)

a. Approval of Darien Park District Annual Financial Report for the Fiscal Year Ended April 30, 2026

Executive Director Gurgone reported that the Board had received a copy of the audit report and that the net position increased for both governmental and business-type activities. She reported that revenues and expenses both increased compared with 2025.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that expenses exclude debt principal payments and that Sportsplex paid more than $1 million in debt payments during the year. She further reported that the district transferred nearly $300,000 from the corporate and recreation funds to the capital fund and that the total outstanding debt decreased by 23.4%, or approximately $1.3 million.

President Luanne Spiros stated that she was pleased with the audit and noted that the district continues to maintain a balanced budget.

Commissioner Jablonski moved, seconded by Commissioner Marchese, to approve the Darien Park District Annual Financial Report for the Fiscal Year Ended April 30, 2026.

Upon roll call, the Commissioners voted as follows:
AYES: Jablonski, Marchese, Noverini, Spiros
NAYS: None
President Spiros declared the motion carried.

b. Approval of Annual Statement of Receipts & Disbursements (Annual Treasurer's Report)

Executive Director Stephanie Gurgone reported that the audit and Annual Treasurer's Report would be filed with the county . She reported that rather than publishing the full report in a newspaper, the district will publish a notice that the audit is available for review. She further reported that this change reflects the removal of a state-funded publication mandate and reduces publication costs.

Executive Director Gurgone also reported on Sportsplex utility costs and that they increased by $11,000 in August alone, and the increase is expected to recur monthly. She reported that the increase is primarily attributable to the new electricity contract and higher electricity rates and when the district rebid the service, it signed a three-year electricity contract, allowing the current increase to be incorporated into the budget and providing greater predictability in future years. She further reported that nuclear rebates are also helping to manage the budget.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that the district is reviewing rate increases for major user groups, including the hourly ice rate for the Hawks and that adjustments are expected across multiple groups rather than targeting a single organization, with the goal of offsetting higher electricity and facility operating costs.

Commissioner Noverini moved, seconded by Commissioner Jablonski, to approve the Annual Statement of Receipts & Disbursements (Annual Treasurer's Report).

Upon roll call, the Commissioners voted as follows:
AYES: Noverini, Jablonski, Marchese, Spiros
NAYS: None
President Spiros declared the motion carried.

c. Approval of Ordinance 2026-27-02: An Ordinance amending an Ordinance regulating the use of parks and property owned or controlled by the Darien Park District.

Executive Director Stephanie Gurgone explained that, although existing rules already prohibit motorized vehicles in parks, the district is adopting a more specific ordinance that expressly names e-bikes, e-scooters, and similar devices. She reported that the change follows risk-management recommendations from PDRMA and is intended to make the restrictions clearer and strengthen the district's position if an unauthorized device causes an injury.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that under the ordinance regular, non-electric bicycles remain allowed and an e-bike may be used if its motor is turned off. She reported that the prohibition does not apply to devices used as a reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Executive Director Gurgone further reported that the district also expects to post a speed limit, likely 10 or 15 miles per hour, with the final number still pending and that new signs will be installed, and staff may paint the restrictions on pathways near major park entrances because freestanding signs have repeatedly disappeared. She further reported that more detailed information will be posted on the website, with a link to the city's e-bike ordinance.

Attorney Gina Madden explained that the ordinance asks individuals to request permission in advance so the district can document legitimate accommodations and reduce the risk of someone later claiming an accommodation for unsafe or unauthorized use.

Commissioner Noverini moved, seconded by Commissioner Marchese, to approve Ordinance 2026-27-02: An Ordinance amending an Ordinance regulating the use of parks and property owned or controlled by the Darien Park District.

Upon roll call, the Commissioners voted as follows:

AYES: Noverini, Marchese, Jablonski, Spiros
NAYS: None
President Spiros declared the motion carried.

d. Approval of Ordinance 2026-27-03: Establishing the Designated First Amendment Forum

Executive Director Stephanie Gurgone reported that the ordinance responds to litigation and to recommendations that park districts adopt clear procedures for First Amendment activity, rather than relying on informal restrictions or a single designated space.

Attorney Gina Madden outlined how the ordinance would apply noting that Individuals may not enter a registered or paid program, such as a piano lesson or yoga class, to collect signatures or conduct advocacy, because doing so would interfere with participants who registered and paid. She reported that Individuals may attend an open, unregistered event and speak with attendees, provided their activity is not disruptive and that at events such as trunk-or-treat, a person may walk around and ask attendees to sign a document but may not set up an unregistered trunk, booth, or other event feature.

Attorney Madden reported that staff retain discretion to address conduct that interferes with scheduled programming or takes over an event and that the ordinance is intended to preserve access for protected activity while protecting scheduled programs, permitted vendors, and district operations.

Commissioner Jablonski moved, seconded by Commissioner Noverini, to approve Ordinance 2026-27-03: Establishing the Designated First Amendment Forum.

Upon roll call, the Commissioners voted as follows:
AYES: Jablonski, Noverini, Marchese, Spiros
NAYS: None
President Spiros declared the motion carried.

e. Westwood Pickleball Hours

Executive Director Stephaie Gurgone reported on the extended seasonal hours for the Westwood pickleball courts noting that court lights will be activated by a button and will turn off when not in use. She further reported that the rules and hours will be communicated through a posted sticker with a QR code linking to the rules and the district may adjust or reduce hours if noise or other operational issues develop after the courts open.

Executive Director Gurgone clarified that authorized contractors or others approved by the district may provide instruction and that individuals may not operate paid private or group lessons without district approval.

Commissioner Marchese moved, seconded by Commissioner Jablonski, to approve the Westwood Pickleball hours as presented.

Upon roll call, the Commissioners voted as follows:
AYES: Marchese, Jablonski, Noverini, Spiros
NAYS: None
President Spiros declared the motion carried.

f. Discussion of 2027-28 Summer/Fall Events

Executive Director Stephanie Gurgone reported on the 2027-28 Summer and Fall events at Westwood Park and provided information regarding surrounding towns of concerts and summarized staff research showing that park districts commonly produce concerts held in parks, while cities, chambers, business alliances, or separate organizations may sponsor concerts in downtown or business areas. She further reported that some municipalities also contribute funding to park events or coordinate fireworks.

There was discussion regarding future events and conflicts with other groups and staff reported that they would attempt to avoid conflicts between the district movies and city business concerts. Executive Director Gurgone explained that groups such as school booster clubs, Girl Scout troops, or Boy Scouts may be invited to sell items such as candy, cookies, or popcorn at district-controlled events, with proceeds supporting local organizations.

Executive Director Gurgone emphasized that Westwood was funded through taxpayers, program revenue, and grants, so events should remain low-cost or free and keep proceeds within the local community rather than prioritizing outside advertising or commercial activity.

ADJOURNMENT (7:34 p.m.)

Commissioner Jablonski moved, seconded by Commissioner Noverini, to adjourn.

The motion carried by roll call vote, and the meeting adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

Luanne Spiros

Luanne Spiros, President
Darien Park District

Frank Noverini, Secretary
Darien Park District