



Wheaton Park District

Wheaton Park District Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes Wednesday November 29, 2023, 5:00 p.m. City of Wheaton Council Chambers 303 W. Wesley Street Wheaton, Illinois

CALL TO ORDER –President Kelly called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Commissioners Barrett, Frey, Mee, Pecharich, and Vires were present.

President Kelly welcomed those in attendance and stated: *Many of you are here regarding a recent mailing regarding Cosley Zoo and related potential impact on taxes. Before opening our meeting to public comment, I ask John Vires, Park District Vice President and Finance Committee Chairman, to offer an overview of park districts taxes.*

Vice President Vires Provided the following statement:

We are aware of the mailer that was sent out citywide last week, and since then we have received a number of emails from citizens, most of whom 1) were under the impression that the Park Board was going to take action tonight to approve an expansion of Cosley Zoo that would add \$64 million in new taxes and 2) wanted us to know that they were opposed to that. Yeah, me too. Since the mailer broadly commented on Wheaton Park District's finances and taxation, I thought it might be helpful to review them.

First, our last approved tax levy for 2022 which was due and payable with this year's real estate tax bill, was \$15,437,340. This levy was subject to the property tax cap, which is set at 5% or the rate of inflation, whichever is less. Last year's cap was 5%. Last year, we elected to raise your taxes 0%. This year's cap is also 5%. Even if we wanted to add \$64 million in new taxes to this year's levy, we would not be allowed to by law. The most we could increase your taxes would be by the 5%. As an aside, (for the 2023 tax levy) we are proposing a 2% increase, not the 5% we could enact. In this high inflation era, where we could have raised your taxes 10% over the last two years, we are instead raising them 2%.

Furthermore, whereas the 2022 levy was \$15,437,340, the levy 10 years prior, from 2012, was \$16,016,493 million. You are paying less in taxes to the Wheaton Park District today than you were 10 years ago. How did this happen? We paid off referendum debt from 2005, which we refinanced in 2015. Now, this referendum debt did not expire without intention. Many municipal taxing bodies are tempted to reissue debt to the extent where they can keep taxes the same but bring in millions of additional dollars in bond proceeds, while billing the referendum as tax neutral. In essence, turning a 15-year mortgage into a 30-year mortgage, but the monthly payment stays the same. Our board had discussions on the topic in the years leading up to our paying off the referendum debt. We consciously decided to let it expire without pursuing a tax neutral referendum. We think it will be much more transparent to have future boards present referenda in a straightforward manner – hypothetically, we want to build an indoor aquatic center at Rice Lake, we will issue X million in bonds, and it will cost you Y in new taxes. Let me head off the rumor mill – there has been no

discussion of going to referendum on Cosley Zoo. If that had been our intention, we would have done it last year, when we could have raised millions in new bond revenue and sold it as tax neutral. Much more likely to pass

So, to recap on taxes, we retired the referendum debt in 2022, which meant that our 2022 tax levy declined year over year by \$3,143,812. The average resident's tax bill went down 17%. Now, foregoing 8% in allowable cost of living increases to your tax bill, during a high inflation era, and foregoing a tax neutral referendum, which would be likely to pass, are not the hallmarks of a profligate park board, looking to recklessly spend your tax dollars. This is a frugal board. This is a board aligned with the taxpayers.

It's also a board concerned with the financial soundness of the park district. During the pandemic, we were faced with the shutdown and the financial reality that we had to refund all of our programming fees. We immediately huddled with staff to plan our response. The end result is that we ended the year with a small surplus, without having to dip into reserves, and without having to lay off any full-time staff.

I acknowledge that our tax rate is amongst the highest in DuPage County. This is not a recent phenomenon. It goes back to 1985, when I was still in High School. Voters back then approved a referendum to add a 25-cent increase to the tax rate for the recreation levy, which resulted in a 64% increase in the total levy from 1985 to 1986. The increase moved the Park District's tax rate from the middle of the pack of DuPage Park Districts, to near the top. The new revenues were used to add new facilities, such as the community center and the two pools. Ultimately, the Park District grew to the point where the increased levy was needed to support operations. Basically, that increase is why you have the park district you have today. Shortly after that tax hike, we entered the tax cap era. Every DuPage County park district's levy grew at approximately the same rate, in line with inflation. Because the Wheaton Park District entered that era with a larger levy than most everybody else, we stayed in that position. We have chosen to offset this by adopting the practice of slow growth, slower growth than the rate at which your homes' assessed valuations grow. The results speak for themselves – our tax rate in 2013 was 81 cents, in 2022, it was 57 cents. I have read that we have a slush fund, out of which we will be funding the expansion. We have capital reserves of \$10,296,906. We are able to accumulate that much because our Park District is staffed by people who proceed in an entrepreneurial and business-like fashion. We fund over half of our expenses through operations, because people are willing to pay for their voluntary interactions with the Park District, such as registration fees, fitness memberships, greens fees & special events. At the end of the year, we add up our revenues and expenses, and we have money left over. In the private sector we call that profit, in government, a fund surplus. We sweep some of that surplus to our capital account to pay for our projects, and we keep enough in reserves to provide for a rainy day, such as a prolonged economic downturn, or say, a global pandemic. This is a fiscally prudent thing to do.

We create a capital expenditure budget each year, laying out our anticipated needs. We don't allocate capital funds to Arrowhead, because that facility pays virtually all of its own expenses, including capital improvements. We do allocate to Cosley in the budget, but the zoo must share with our 54 parks and our other facilities. Like I said, our current capital account is just over \$10 million. Nothing to sneeze at, but nowhere near \$64 million.

To recap, we can't just impose a \$64 million tax increase on taxpayers. We are not going to referendum to raise it, and we don't just have it lying around.

So where did that \$64 million number come from? The mailer's author applied an inflation adjustment to \$49 million in proposed new projects that was contained in a 2015 Master Plan for Cosley Zoo. The master plan was designed to be the keystone of a Cosley Foundation Fundraising Campaign, to run for two or maybe 3 decades. It is a vision of what the future MAY look like, if the Foundation is successful in raising the money they aim to, but the master plan is subject to change, in part or in full, by this board or any future board. Each project, in order to become reality, must first be fundraised for, then plans developed, and then brought before future boards for approval or rejection, and then finally sent to bid and permitted. NONE of these future projects are being approved tonight. What we may be taking action on tonight will be a resolution directing staff to seek zoning relief from the City of Wheaton, which may then lead to our building a parking lot on the east side of Gary on property we bought with that intention in mind. In the end, it's all about a parking lot.

COMMUNITY INPUT

The following Wheaton Park District residents and non-residents provided public comment concerning the proposed Cosley Zoo parking lot expansion plan:

Residents:

Katherine McKee 1050 Oakview Drive, Wheaton IL
Paula Gould 945 Wheaton Oaks Drive, Wheaton, IL
Jeff Westergaard 742 Ralph Court, Wheaton, IL
Jeff Craig, 1329 N. Carlton, Wheaton, IL
John Patterson 1849 Cherry St, Wheaton, IL read letter by Kevin Needham, 1311 N. Carlton, Wheaton, IL
Jennifer Humecke 1323 N. Carlton, Wheaton, IL
Alan Sorrill, 742 Ralph Ct, Wheaton IL
Matt Szafranski 815 W. elm St, Wheaton, IL
Peter Buckhele 1003 S. Gables Wheaton, IL
Thomas Knight 795 W. Hawthorne Blvd, Wheaton, IL
Sharon Biersdorf 766 Ralph Ct, Wheaton, IL
Yvonne Rusin 157 Danada Drive, Wheaton, IL
Silvester Bernhardt 1317 Carlton Ave, Wheaton, IL
Liz Westergaard 766 Ralph Ct, Wheaton, IL
Bruce Biersdorf, 766 Ralph Ct. Wheaton, IL read letter by Christy Needham, 1311 N. Carlton, Wheaton, IL
Marilyn Mauritz 1138 Wheaton Oaks Dr, Wheaton, IL
Phyllis Geyer 1202 Wheaton Oaks Dr, Wheaton, IL
Diane Galo, 504 W. Prairie Wheaton IL
Hope Ahlberg 1104 Gary Ct, Wheaton, IL
Glenn Cackovic 320 N. Ellis Ave, Wheaton, IL
Susan Varcak 520 N. Main St., Wheaton, IL
Paul Di Rienzo 762 W. Hawthorne, Wheaton, IL
Bendan Lee 752 Ralph Ct., Wheaton, IL

Reinhard Metz 1926 Berkshire Place, Wheaton, IL
Elizabeth Cory 925 Howard St, Wheaton, IL
Rudy Wolf 1010 Wheaton Oaks Dr, Wheaton, IL
John Patterson 1849 Cherry St, Wheaton, IL
Tim Youngren 902 W. Hawthorne Blvd., Wheaton, IL
Kay McKeen, Wheaton, IL

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of the Disbursements totaling \$1,903,591.95 for the period beginning October 18, 2023, and ending, November 14, 2023
- B. Approval of the Disbursements totaling \$414,800.23 for the period beginning October 18, 2023, and ending November 14, 2023
- C. Approval of Subcommittee Meeting September 13, 2023
- D. Approval of Subcommittee Meeting October 4, 2023
- E. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes October 25, 2023

Commissioner Mee moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Frey.

Motion passed by roll call vote.

Ayes: Barrett, Frey, Mee, Pecharich, Vires, Kelly

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

1. Parking Data Collection and Parking Expansion for Cosley Zoo – Agenda Item Requested by Steve and Angela Stephenson 1300 Champion Forest Court

Mr. Steve Stephenson stated that he and his wife Angela have been residents of Wheaton since 1999. He shared a power point presentation and stated that tonight he would like to introduce into New Business the opportunity to save cost the Wheaton Park District for the estimated \$4,300,000 in estimated cost for the proposed Cosley Zoo parking lot expansion on the east side of Gary Avenue and save the taxpayers money of the estimated \$49,000,000 for the cost quoted for the Cosley Zoo Master Expansion Plan. He requested from the board share any update to the dollar amount for the expected parking lot expenditures during this segment or during the parking lot expansion segment so that we are using actual numbers from that perspective. He and Angela greatly appreciate the zoo as a unique, quaint, not crowded small zoo that is family friendly. They believe that this wonderful accessible facility on land that was donated by Paula Jones to be a natural park for all to enjoy and don't want it to be a crowded entertainment venue based on the direction in the Master Plan. He stated that the first step of the zoo's master plan is the new separate parking lot. He placed a FOIA request with the park district requesting data on the number of cars parked in the parking lot logged hour by day. He received a

response that the park district has no records of response to this request. He thought that these were key pieces needed in making a multi-million-dollar decision on creating a new parking lot. Another FOIA request was requested regarding the Cosley Zoo visitor log. He stated that the logs the zoo provided indicated how many people were at the zoo but did not indicate the number of cars parked in the parking lot. He stated that the visitor logs were presented as justification for the new parking lot at the October 25, 2023, meeting. Stephenson gave some alternative ideas for collecting data on the parking lot. He felt that the type of data the park district was using was anecdotal and not actual data. There were no questions from the board on Stephenson's presentation.

2. Environmental Planning Impact Assessment (IDNR) and the National Environmental Policy Act Study (NEPA) – Agenda Item Requested by Chris Gould 945 Wheaton Oaks Drive

Mr. Chris Gould shared a power point presentation and stated that an environmental impact analysis is needed. He asked that park district to be transparent regarding this. President Kelly stated that these types of studies are done during the permitting process not prior to it. Shawn Benson Director of Land Development for Wight Engineering stated that they need to go through a detailed process which includes following all of DuPage County and Wheaton Ordinances and environmental processes. All these things will be done if the park district applies for permitting. Mr. Gould was pleased to hear that this will be done, but encouraged a no vote.

**3. Cosley Zoo Parking Expansion Plan –
a. Presentation by Wight Engineering – Cosley Zoo Parking Lot Concept Design Update**

Shawn Benson Director of Land Development for Wight Engineering gave the following updates to the site plan as he showed his power point.

The original plan included 258 parking spaces. The revised site plan from 10/25 board meeting reduced this number to 150 Parking Spaces, a 40% parking reduction with increased setbacks and open space along Gary for above grade detention for budget purposes.

The current updated site plan continues to have 150 parking spaces with additional setback increases and additional landscape area by shifting parking closer to Gary Avenue.

Updated Setbacks

North: 67.4' vs. 69.2'

East: 67.7' vs. 115'

South: 49.9' vs. 69.6'

Southeast: remains at 30.5'

Gary: 75.7' vs. 25.0'

Ingress/Egress of the lot will be from the signalized intersection at Gary & Prairie. The North entrance will be gated, used for maintenance and deliveries only. The South entrance will have gates to control vehicles from entering when parking lot is closed.

Pedestrian crossing will occur at the new signalized intersection of Prairie and Gary Avenues. Fencing along Gary Avenue will direct pedestrians to the south crossing. The city will install an 8' walkway along west side of Gary for access to zoo Entrance and an 8' wide multi-use pathway along the east side of Gary.

The existing watershed is 2.45 acres adjacent residential properties and the proposed will have 0.44 acres to adjacent residential properties. There is an additional 0.44 acres of off-site drainage to the north will also be collected. Overall, 84.7% reduction in area that drains to east and southern residential properties (82% from PD Site). Overall, 92% of the site will be collected via storm sewer system. Stormwater will be collected via swales and storm sewers to the proposed underground detention. We are not allowed to increase runoff or impact existing drainage. Release of water will be restricted and released slowly to the Winfield Creek watershed. Project will need to meet both the City of Wheaton and DuPage County Stormwater Ordinance.

Danial Wilson, Landscape Architect from Wight Engineering provided updates to the landscape plan. This concept plan is a visual representation of the different kinds of trees that will be installed and their location. It also shows the location of the landscape screen. We have increased the width of the buffer on the east side of the parking lot. The 15' vegetative buffer will remain along the property line. The plant material will get to a 6' – 8' mature height. We have included an evergreen hedge of arborvitae that will get 15' or taller.

The southern buffer has also been updated to include the evergreen hedge. Along the detention area in the southeast part of the site we have placed trees that will tolerate the water and wet soil. We have also updated to have the evergreen hedge continue at the top of the retaining wall to further screen the parking lot.

Within the parking lot we have added center landscape strips that will have deciduous shade trees placed in them. A landscape buffer and trees have also been included between the drive aisle and southern parking lot area. The existing west buffer will not be impacted, and the existing trees and vegetation will remain.

The landscape sections show the distance between the parking lot and the property line. Helps to illustrate how the site will look with the vegetative screening along the property line, we can also move the vegetative screening along the fence. Fence along the parking lot – 8' height. Detailed landscape plan shows the individual plants and where they are located in the site plan.

b. Review and Consideration of Resolution 2023-11 Authorizing the Filing of an Application with the City of Wheaton for Zoning Relief Related to Cosley Zoo Parking Lot

Commissioner Vires moved to approve Resolution 2023-11 Authorizing the Filing of an Application with the City of Wheaton for Zoning Relief Related to Cosley Zoo Parking Lot. Seconded by Commissioner Mee.

Discussion

President Kelly made the following statement prior to the vote.

Since the issuance of the white paper mailing last week, the emailed comments we received have been mostly about the Cosley Master Plan and its tax implications and tonight we have heard both objections to and support for both the master plan and the parking lot project. Even though the only issue before the Board tonight is should the Park District seek zoning relief to build a parking lot on former residential lots or not; I would like to offer my own personal opinion on both subjects prior to the vote.

For me, the Master Plan commissioned by the Cosley Foundation and presented to the Park Board in 2015 offers a 20 -30-year vision of what could be possible at Cosley and was always dependent on raising private funds. Since most non maintenance projects at Cosley have been funded primarily by private donations, I have and will continue to advocate using that model for any Cosley Improvement Project presented to this or any future Board. What has become clear the past few weeks is that while everybody loves the Cosley Zoo there are a wide range of opinions as to what the future for Cosley should be and that the current master plans vision may not be shared by all which is Ok. It will be the responsibility of future boards to work with the Wheaton Residents over the next few decades to determine Cosley's future.

It is because of these differing opinions that I believe all future Cosley improvement projects will be approached as individual projects constructed over time as private funds become available and as these projects are researched, proposed, shared with the public, and vetted and approved by future Boards. The last major non parking improvement project at Cosley was the Bobcat exhibit built in 2012 at a cost of \$700,000.00. This project followed that model, and its costs were paid by a combination of private funds raised by the Cosley Foundation and a matching grant. Since then, it has taken years to raise the private funds necessary to make construction of an additional parking lot even possible.

Over the past few months, opposition to the East parking lot has escalated from a not in my back yard issue, to a perceived environmental wetlands issue, and now to a Master Plan and related tax issue; but for me it is not. For me, tonight's resolution is only about solving the current parking problem at Cosley Zoo using the residential lots the Park District acquired over the past 10 years for that sole purpose. It is not a vote to destroy non-existent wetlands; or a vote to proceed with the Cosley Zoo Master Plan or any other project at Cosley Zoo for that matter. It is a vote to start addressing the real parking

problem with a solution that the Park District has been planning, communicating, and working on for years. If no other Cosley projects are ever completed, the parking problem still needs to be addressed.

Cosley currently has 80 dedicated spaces not 127 as has been suggested. The park district also owns the south office building adjacent to the Zoo parking lot and opens this lot for added Zoo Parking on weekends when the office building is closed. The Zoo's parking records over the past 6-7 years indicate that the lot reaches full capacity around 180 days and approximately 60 of those days occur on Saturday or Sunday when the extra office building spaces are also available.

Even though the proposed 150 space East lot is designed to account for all Cosley's future parking needs I support seeking zoning approval for the entire lot now and then building it in two equal size phases. Phase 1 would satisfy the immediate need and a second phase adding the remaining spaces only if the existing west lot is repurposed sometime in the future. This approach could prove to be more costly if both Phases are eventually built, but it avoids building more parking spaces than are actually needed if the west lot is never closed and repurposed. I also support keeping the existing west side lot as it allows visitors to choose the east lot when the west is full but does not force everyone visiting the zoo to use the East lot. Crossing Gary, even at a light is a concern raised by multiple residents and is also a concern of mine. I will also advocate that the start of any actual onsite construction work be contingent upon construction of the City's proposed road project which adds the stoplight as I don't think the lot works without the light.

With this, I plan to vote yes for the resolution to apply to the City for the zoning relief required to construct a parking lot on our east property as we must find out now if the property the district purchased specifically to build additional Zoo parking can actually be used for this purpose.

My position is based on the parking information supplied by staff and before I vote yes to proceed with any on-site construction; I will need to confirm that this information is accurate.

Vice President Vires made the following statement prior to the vote.

Commissioner Vires stated that he is also a yes vote, he feels that he voted yes six years ago in 2017 when we bought the Williams property. We bought the property with the intention of putting a parking lot on it to solve the parking issue. There is not much use for that green space as a whole for the park district except as a parking lot in his opinion. The Lanzerotti property was bought with funds raised from the Cosley Foundation and donated to the park district, for use for the zoo it wasn't bought for use for the park district it would improper use of Cosley donor foundation money to use this property for anything other than besides benefitting the zoo. Secondly, it's an expensive proposition to create greenspace where none heretofore existed, these were residential lots with houses on them, they're vacant now because we tore them down. If we were going to go through a program in the park district and tear down houses to create greenspace, I would pick a different

part of the city that is underserved, that need green space where there is a half mile or more walk to get to greenspace. This lot is adjacent to Northside Park which has 80 acres of green space, and the Lincoln Marsh has 150 acres of green space. That's 230 acres of open green space in this neighborhood, if we were going to spend money to create greenspace it would be in a different neighborhood. The other issue he has with creating a park in this area is we create greenspace for people to be able to recreate, toss a ball around, have a picnic, we want people in every area of the park district to be able to use it, we can't park anyone at this space, there's no access to this place. The only place they could park is at Cosley Zoo, and they already have a parking problem. So how could I fairly and equitably tell people on the south side that don't have as much green space that we're creating a park already adjacent to 230 acres and there's no way for you to get to it. For these reasons I'm a yes vote it's best use is as a parking lot and it benefits the district as a whole.

Commissioner Mee made the following statement prior to the vote.

What started as a fairly simplistic need to expand our parking availability for a very often need for more Cosley Zoo parking and a long existing plan to utilize Park District-owned and available property on the east side of Gary Ave. resulted in opposition from a few neighboring residents who were concerned about a subsequent possible exacerbation of the occasional flooding in the area of their homes, because of the lot construction; and then a refusal to believe the Park District's and Engineer's multiple presentations that any resulting flooding in the area after the lot construction would at the very least not increase on the resident properties and would likely be mitigated. That opposition has since devolved into some inaccurate and to some extent disingenuous contentions by some of those residents, who have subsequently created a firestorm of misinformation about many issues beyond the scope and intention of the parking lot plan.

What I believe to be an initial resident 'not in my backyard' issue of a parking lot has devolved into subsequent false contentions that the Park District through the parking lot plan is significantly impacting wetlands and wildlife, the water shed, and thereby eliciting significant emotional support, based on those false contentions.

Among other subsequent attacks is the attack on the Cosley Zoo Master Plan, which is simply intended as a vision for the future possible plan or plans for creation of any new exhibits; a Master Plan that, although generally supported by the Park Board and previous Boards, was not created by this Park Board and which does not create any mandates for action by this Park Board or any future ones. Any plan or plans for any type of expansion would require Board support on a case-by-case basis and necessitate fund-raising and not an increase in property taxes. Any such plan approvals, if any in the future, would be considered in a public setting; and there are no immediate plans for any new exhibits or expansions.

The misinformation about increases in property taxes to support any Cosley Zoo expansion is also absolutely false and inaccurately initiated. Unfortunately, some of the same

misinformation in a number of areas has been presented by a number of our audience speakers, tonight. We obviously can't make people believe what they don't wish to believe.

As stated by President Kelly, the only issue before the Board and the community is one of a need for this Board to try to alleviate a situation of not enough Zoo parking. I also support the statements by President Kelly and the consideration of a possible two-phase parking lot construction, if warranted.

Commissioner Frey stated that he supports what the other commissioners and President Kelly have already said.

Commissioner Pecharich stated that she wanted to make a comment regarding the master plan and people not wanting the zoo to change. She went to the zoo this past week with her son to purchase a Christmas tree, which has been a tradition for them since her son was an infant. She said that when the zoo first started fifty years ago it didn't look like it does now. It was a small zoo. Because of past and present employees, the zoo has improved. That is what made it what it is today. She doesn't know if people complained as the zoo evolved over the years. She said that if we need to remain relevant and continue with animal conservation, that we need to continue to improve the zoo. Keep in mind that the zoo we see today is not the same zoo as when it started or even twenty years ago. This is a transformation we need to see; however, expansion of the zoo is not the issue that we are voting on today. For those of you who are concerned about what the expansion is going to do stop and think if it didn't expand over the course of the years what kind of zoo would we even have today.

President Kelly stated that the lawsuit that was brought against the Park District and the City was related to the Intergovernmental Agreement that we have with the city. This resolution tonight specifically states that we will not be filing for zoning within the Intergovernmental Agreement, instead we will go through the zoning process. It reads as follows:

The Executive Director and the attorneys for the Park District are directed to not file and process the Zoning Application under the procedures set forth in the Intergovernmental Agreement between the Park District and the City of Wheaton dated July 20, 1998 but are instead directed to file and process the Zoning Application utilizing the zoning procedures and standards set forth in the City of Wheaton's zoning ordinance.

There were no further comments from the board.

Motion passed by roll call vote.

Ayes: Barrett, Frey, Mee, Pecharich, Vires, Kelly

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

4. General Obligation Limited Tax Park Bonds, Series 2023 – Bid Results and Recommendation for the Issue of approximately \$2,041,218 General Obligation Limited Tax Park Bonds, Series 2023

Commissioner Vires moved to approve the Issue of \$2,046,178 General Obligation Limited Tax Park Bonds, Series 2023 with Republic Bank of Chicago, at a rate of 4.29%, the. Seconded by Commissioner Frey.

Anthony Miceli Senior Vice President of Speer Financial stated that they received 5 bids today on the district's annual issue of General Obligation Limited Park Tax Bonds 2023 series, with Republic Bank of Chicago, Oak Brook Illinois being the lowest bid at a rate of 4.29%, the highest bid came in at 4.97%. After the sale they revised part of the bonds to fill up the debt service extension base so the new par will be \$2,046,178. We will close this issue on December 12th. With the proceeds of the bonds there will be approximately \$480,000 that will be used for payment of the 2019A alternate revenue source bonds, that payment is due December 15th so we will close just ahead of that payment. We will have approximately \$1,547,000 of new money for annual capital expenses. There were no questions from the board.

Motion passed by roll call vote.

Ayes: Barrett, Frey, Mee, Pecharich, Vires, Kelly

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

5. Ordinance 2023-08

Commissioner Vires moved to approve Ordinance 2023-08 An ordinance providing for the issue of \$2,046,178 General Obligation Limited Tax Park Bonds, Series 2023, for the payment of land condemned or purchased for parks, for the building, maintaining, improving and protecting of the same and the existing land and facilities of the District and for the payment of certain outstanding bonds of the District, providing for the levy of taxes to pay said bonds and authorizing the sale of said bonds to the purchaser thereof. Seconded by Commissioner Pecharich. No discussion.

Motion passed by roll call vote.

Ayes: Barrett, Frey, Mee, Pecharich, Vires, Kelly

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

6. Petition for Disconnection of Certain Territory from the Wheaton Park District – Review and Consideration of a Disconnection Petition for 2S725 Cree Lane

President Kelly moved to table the Petition for 2S725 Cree Lane Disconnection of Certain Territory from the Wheaton Park District seconded by Commissioner Mee. No discussion.

Motion passed by roll call vote.

Ayes: Barrett, Frey, Mee, Pecharich, Vires, Kelly

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

7. Resolution 2023-08

Commissioner Pecharich moved to Approve Resolution 2023-08 Authorizing and Ratifying the First and Second Amendments to the Purchase and Sale Agreement with Aldersgate United Methodist Church. Seconded by Commissioner Mee. No discussion.

Motion passed by roll call vote.

Ayes: Barrett, Frey, Mee, Pecharich, Vires, Kelly

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

8. Employee Insurance Benefits Renewal for 2024

Commissioner Mee moved to Approve:

- a. Blue Cross Blue Shield Employee HMO and PPO Health Insurance Program
 - b. Blue Cross Blue Shield Dental PPO Plan
 - c. Dearborn National Vision Plan, Group Term Life, AD&D, and Voluntary Life
 - d. CompPsych Employee Assistance Program
- at a cost of Approximately \$2,017,766 before Employee Contributions

Seconded by Commissioner Frey. No discussion.

Motion passed by roll call vote.

Ayes: Barrett, Frey, Mee, Pecharich, Vires, Kelly

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

9. Health Insurance / Employee Contribution Rates for 2024

Commissioner Frey moved to Approve Employee Contribution Rates of 5% of Premium Costs for HMO Coverage and 15% of Premium Costs for PPO Coverage for 2024. Seconded by Commissioner Barrett. No discussion.

Motion passed by roll call vote.

Ayes: Barrett, Frey, Mee, Pecharich, Vires, Kelly

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

10. Arrowhead Golf Course / New Golf Cart GPS Units –

Commissioner Vires moved to Approve a Lease of 112 Yamatrack GPS Systems at a Cost of \$48,160 Per Year for Four Years Plus Installation Costs of \$11,200. Seconded by Commissioner Frey.

President Kelly asked Executive Director Benard if this was the first year the lease was expiring. Benard stated it was.

Motion passed by roll call vote.

Ayes: Barrett, Frey, Mee, Pecharich, Vires, Kelly

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

11. Arrowhead Golf Course Chemicals 2024

Commissioner Frey moved to Approve the Bids for the Vendors, Products and Prices per Staff Recommendations (*see back page of Agenda*). Seconded by commissioner Mee. No discussion.

Motion passed by roll call vote.

Ayes: Barrett, Frey, Mee, Pecharich, Vires, Kelly

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

12. Cosley Zoo Fall Carnival Rides

Commissioner Mee moved to Approve Payment to JBR Fundways in the Amount of \$35,284.43 Seconded by Commissioner Frey.

Commissioner Pecharich asked why the price changed since the subcommittee meeting. Benard said that the original figure was an estimate, the updated number didn't get properly transferred to the regular meeting agenda.

Motion passed by roll call vote.

Ayes: Barrett, Frey, Mee, Pecharich, Vires, Kelly

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

13. Cosley Zoo Visitor Center Deck Replacement Project

Commissioner Frey moved to approve Change Order # 1 for an Additional \$625 and Change Order #2 for an Additional \$2,150 from Wallfill. Seconded by Commissioner Barrett. No discussion. Motion passed by voice vote.

14. Central Athletic Center Ice Rinks Sale of Alcohol –

Commissioner Vires moved to approve the Sale of Beer and Wine Between 8:00 am and 8:00 pm January 27, 2024 at the Central Athletic Center Ice Rinks During a Special Event Rental Seconded by Commissioner Pecharich. No discussion. Motion passed by voice vote.

15. Community Center Parking Lot Repaving / Change Order #2 –

Commissioner Mee to Approve Change Order #2 in the Amount of \$4,617 with Abbey Paving. Seconded by Commissioner Barrett. No discussion. Motion passed by voice vote.

16. Community Center Phase 2 Interiors / Change Order #1

Commissioner Vires moved to Approve Change Order #1 in the amount of \$12,003.56 with Stuckey Construction. Seconded by Commissioner Frey. No discussion. Motion passed by voice vote.

17. Briar Patch Park Renovation Project / Change Order #2 –

Commissioner Pecharich moved to Motion Approve Change Order #2 in the amount of \$640.40 with Engineering Resource Associates. Seconded by Commissioner Vires. No discussion. Motion passed by voice vote.

18. Arrowhead Cart Path Paving Project / Change Order #1

Commissioner Frey moved to Approve Change Order #1 in the amount of \$2,000 with Obsidian Asphalt Paving. Seconded by Commissioner Barrett. No discussion. Motion passed by voice vote.

19. Ordinance 2023-06

Commissioner Mee moved to Approve Ordinance 2023-06 Approving a Social Media Policy. Seconded by Commissioner Pecharich. No discussion.

Motion passed by roll call vote.

Ayes: Barrett, Frey, Mee, Pecharich, Vires, Kelly

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

20. Ordinance 2023-07

Commissioner Frey moved to Approve Ordinance 2023-07 Approving and Authorizing Execution of a Funding and Reimbursement Agreement for the Construction of a Playground Between the Wheaton Park District and the Play for All Playground and Garden Foundation. Seconded by Commissioner Barrett. No discussion.

Motion passed by roll call vote.

Ayes: Barrett, Frey, Mee, Pecharich, Vires, Kelly

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

21. Community Center Phase 2 Interiors

Commissioner Frey moved to Approve Resolution 2023-10 Approving the emergency expenditure of funds without competitive bidding for Community Center Spa Mechanical Equipment Replacement. Seconded by Commissioner Barrett. No discussion.

Motion passed by roll call vote.

Ayes: Barrett, Frey, Mee, Pecharich, Vires, Kelly

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

REPORTS FROM STAFF

Commissioner Pecharich thanked everyone for the successes in the staff reports.

Commissioner Mee was impressed with Rams Football fundraising efforts. He was pleased to see participation in In House Basketball increasing, and with the increase in Parks Plus Fitness Center Memberships of 300 people since the beginning of the year. He commented on the increase in Cosley Zoo revenue in comparison to revenue at this same time last year, as well as the increase of 4000 rounds of golf from last year at this time.

Executive Director Benard thanked Director of Parks and Planning Sperl and his team for their hard work on the ice rinks.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:08 p.m., Commissioner Mee moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Pecharich seconded. Motion passed by voice vote.

