Village of Antioch Park Commission

Wednesday, March 19, 2025
6:30 p.m. Village Senior Center, 817 Holbeck Drive, Antioch, IL

1. **Call to Order**
   Park Board Olaf called the March 19, 2025 regular meeting of the Park Commission to order at 6:31 p.m.

2. **Roll Call**

	Present	Absent
Church	_____	____X___
Deichsel	___X_____	_____
Hartman	_____	____X___
Klemm	___X____	_____
Nolan	___X___	_____
Olufs	___X___	_____
Weber	_____	____X___
<u>Staff</u>		
Kotloski	____X____	_____
Ford	____X___	_____
Crimmins	_____	____X___

3. **Pledge of Allegiance**
   Antioch Park Commission led the Pledge of Allegiance

4. **Approval of Minutes**
   Klemm/Deichsel motion and second to partial approve the March 19, 2025, Park Commission minutes. Minutes approved until line 9.
   Vote –
   Yes = 4
   No = 0

5. **Communications**
   Nothing to report

6. **Chairperson's Report**

   Chairman Church not present for report

7. **Director's Report**

Introduction: Director Kotloski introduced herself to the Park Board, sharing her extensive background with over 22 years of experience in the field of parks and recreation. A native of Fox Lake and current resident of Antioch, she initially pursued a degree in education before discovering her passion for parks and recreation. She holds a master's degree in Parks and Recreation from Illinois State University.

Her career began at the Lindenhurst Park District, followed by a position with the Northern Suburban Special Recreation Association (NSSRA), where she managed staff and programs serving individuals with disabilities. She then worked with the Northbrook Park District before returning to Lindenhurst as the Director of Recreation. Director Kotloski noted that each of her career transitions was the result of being actively recruited, reflecting her reputation and expertise in the field.

Centennial Park Master Plan and Grant Update: Director Kotloski informed the Board that the Centennial Park project is scheduled to go out to bid, with construction anticipated to begin in the fall and targeted for completion by spring 2026. The Village has been awarded a $600,000 grant for the project, which requires a matching contribution of the same amount, an obligation the Village will be fulfilling.

Kotloski emphasized the importance of honoring the park's history and the strong community involvement that went into its original development. She expressed her openness to any feedback or recommendations from the Board as the project moves forward. The Board requested that all design plans and drawings be shared for review prior to the project being sent out for bid.

Camp Crayon Update: Director Kotloski informed the Board that a consultant was hired to conduct a feasibility study regarding exemption status for Camp Crayon. The findings confirmed that the program does not qualify for the exemption. Drawing from her background in exemption processes, Kotloski explained the reasoning behind this determination.

In 2017, DCFS (Department of Children and Family Services) updated its regulations regarding what qualifies as exempt and non-exempt childcare programming. These changes included language for park districts, following lobbying efforts by the Illinois Association of Park Districts and related groups. However, because the Village of Antioch operates under municipal code rather than park district code, and does not have a separate tax levy for the parks and recreation department, it does not meet the criteria for exemption. Communities such as Lake Forest and Libertyville have established separate

tax brackets or districts to meet these requirements, which Antioch currently does not have.

Kotloski noted that while she will still submit the exemption request form, it is likely to be denied. Board member Olufs inquired about the process of becoming licensed, and Kotloski explained that doing so would require extensive facility renovations, staffing increases, and other updates to meet licensing standards, an undertaking that would cost millions and require a significant decision by the Village.

The Board expressed their sadness over the potential end of Camp Crayon, recognizing its 50-year legacy in the community. The possibility of forming a park district was briefly discussed, and Kotloski clarified that while it is a feasible option, it would need to be initiated by residents and brought forward for a vote in a future election.

Commissioner Klemm asked whether this decision would also affect the future of the Kiddie Kamp summer program. Kotloski confirmed that without the exemption, Kiddie Kamp would also be unable to operate.

Lindenhurst shared services update: Director Kotloski reported that there is no formal update regarding shared services with Lindenhurst, as continued community support has affirmed the value of maintaining independent operations. As a result, there is no current need to pursue a merger or shared service agreement with the Lindenhurst Park District.

Board members raised questions regarding the status of the Hot Shots Sports program in light of previous merger discussions. Kotloski confirmed that the Village intends to continue its partnership with Hot Shots moving forward. However, she noted that an updated agreement will be necessary regarding the use of school facilities during the colder months. Past agreements were not consistently enforced, which led to unexpected facility charges.

Kotloski emphasized that with stronger program management and improved marketing efforts, there is significant potential for growth. Hot Shots remains a well-regarded program used by many park and recreation agencies across the region.

Department updates: Director Kotloski informed the Parks Commission that Kelley Crimmins is now officially part of the Parks and Recreation Department. Previously, Crimmins split her time between two departments, but she is now fully dedicated to supporting Parks and Recreation operations.

Upcoming events: Director Kotloski shared several updates regarding upcoming Parks and Recreation events. The *Shamrock Jam* is approaching, and she will be featured on-air with 95 WIIL Rock this coming Friday to promote the event.

For the *Easter Egg Hunt*, outreach has begun to previous participants. The traditional egg hunt will continue to take place in front of the bandshell, and the *Flashlight Egg Hunt* will once again be held at the Sawmill.

The *Thursday Night Summer Concert Series* is set to kick off on June 12th. The department is collaborating with *The Drive* radio station to increase outreach and visibility for the event.

Planning for the *Fourth of July* celebration is still underway. Commissioner Klemm raised concern regarding the annual 5K run, traditionally sponsored by State Bank of the Lakes, which may be affected by ongoing construction in the area. Director Kotloski will explore alternative options or routes for the event.

8. **Financial Reports for Period Ending February 28, 2025**
   The Commission reviewed the Financial Reports for the period ending February 28, 2025.

9. **Next Meeting**
   The next Park Commission meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 16, 2025 at 6:30 pm at the former Senior Center building.

10. **Other Business**
    Commission Inquired and commented on subjects to include:
    Commissioner Nolan inquired about the lack of signage at Sequoit Creek Park and asked about the vendor for the location. Director Kotloski responded that she would follow up on the signage and confirmed that the vendor will be The Latte Café, with Anne planning a soft opening soon.

    Commissioner Klemm initiated a brief discussion regarding facility rentals and potential pricing adjustments.

    Commissioner Diechsel proposed scheduling park walk-throughs in the upcoming months to review conditions and needs in person.

11. **<u>Adjournment</u>**
    Nolan/Diechsel motion and second to adjourn the meeting at 8:07 p.m.
    Vote –
    Yes = 4
    No = 0