Village of Antioch Park Commission

Wednesday, April 16, 2025
6:30 p.m. Village Senior Center, 817 Holbek Drive, Antioch, IL

1. **Call to Order**
   Park Board Member Nolan called the April 16, 2025 regular meeting of the Park Commission to order at 6:30 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____	_____

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

4. **Approval of Minutes**
   Nolan/Olufs motion and second to approve the March 19, 2025 Park Commission minutes.
   Vote –
   Yes = 4
   No = 0

5. **Communications**
   Nothing to report

6. **Chairperson's Report**

   Chairman Weber began his report by welcoming Katie to the team.

   He then presented informational signs, provided free of charge by the CDC, to be posted at local parks warning visitors about ticks that may carry Lyme disease. Chairman Weber shared that, according to CDC data, approximately 40% of ticks are carriers of Lyme disease. He also noted that early treatment with doxycycline is most effective within the first 30 days of infection. A common symptom is a red ring (often called a "bullseye rash") around the affected area.

   Chairman Weber recommended that these signs be installed at the entrances of all Antioch parks to help raise awareness and promote public safety. Commissioner Kotloski asked where exactly the signs should be placed, and Chairman Weber confirmed they should be located at the park entrances.

   He went on to express his excitement that the Village is able to match the $600,000 grant awarded for the Centennial Park redevelopment project.

   Chairman Weber also inquired about how park maintenance is managed. Director Kotloski explained that general park clean-up is handled by Public Works. There was some initial confusion regarding the specifics of Weber's question, but Kotloski clarified that mowing is contracted out, and Sequoit Creek has a separate contract for maintenance. When asked about staffing, Kotloski noted that approximately 3–4 seasonal Public Works employees are hired each year to assist with the increased summer workload.

7. **Director's Report**

Director Kotloski began her report by acknowledging that the Village has successfully matched the $600,000 grant for Centennial Park, and plans for redevelopment are moving forward.

She informed the Board that Kelley is no longer working for the Village of Antioch.

Director Kotloski provided updates on upcoming events:

- The Easter Egg Hunt will follow the same setup as previous years.
- The Flashlight Egg Hunt is sold out.

The Fourth of July celebration will be relocated to Sequoit Creek Park. The parade will begin at 10:30 AM, followed by a break during the day and evening festivities including fireworks.

She noted that demolition of the Williams Park Pavilion began the day prior. Although there is no hard completion date, it is expected to be finished before the Lions Club Chicken BBQ.

Chairman Weber asked for clarification on parking and law enforcement during the July 4th parade. Director Kotloski assured the Board that there is ample parking throughout downtown Antioch and that law enforcement and safety procedures will remain consistent with previous years.

Kotloski requested any suggestions from the Board. Chairman Weber inquired about T-shirts and giveaways. Director Kotloski explained that giveaway items are typically handled by the participating groups like the drive, and a VIP tent is also planned for the event.

Director Kotloski then updated the Board on the upcoming seasonal brochure, noting that it will only include summer programming, unlike previous years which included fall. Physical copies will be available at the Parks and Recreation building, and postcards with a QR code linking to the digital brochure will be mailed to all households in the 60002 ZIP code on May 10.

Camp Crayon Update

Director Kotloski reported a positive shift in the status of Camp Crayon. While earlier there was little hope, there is now a chance of moving forward. A memo has been drafted to comply with current DCFS exemption guidelines, which must be submitted in person or by mail, Kotloski will deliver it to the Waukegan office personally.

They are now working with a different agency and have revised both their program narrative and schedule. The updated program complies with DCFS guidelines but will not include preschool for two-year-olds without a parent present. However, the Parent-Tot program will continue as usual.

Due to DCFS restrictions, preschool classes under the Camp Crayon umbrella cannot exceed 24 hours per week, which has led to schedule and fee changes. Kotloski emphasized that pillar programs help subsidize community events.

Chairman Weber asked for clarification, and Kotloski reiterated that preschool programs without parent participation must remain under the 24-hour weekly limit. When asked about location, she confirmed that Camp Crayon will be housed at the Parks and Recreation building. The DCFS teacher-to-student ratio is 1:20, though they aim for a preferred 1:8 ratio.

Commissioner Hartman inquired about expanding programs to other facilities. Kotloski explained that although offers have been made, this is not currently an option. She emphasized the team's commitment to improving the program if the exemption is approved, stressing that Camp Crayon serves as the Village's entry point for lifelong community engagement.

When asked about fee increases, Kotloski stated that no decision has been made yet, as they are still awaiting official responses and have only just finalized the proposed schedule. Payment plans will still be offered. Once feedback is received, budgeting will consider pay rates, student ratios, and supplies.

Chairman Weber asked about the proposed budget. Kotloski responded that it is being built around a lower enrollment model, acknowledging that while not zero, a smaller initial turnout is expected.

Commissioner Hartman asked about income from external user groups. Kotloski explained that while many groups have not paid for use in the past, the Village will need to begin addressing this issue more directly. Hartman noted that if the Waves Swim Team is paying, others should as well, and Kotloski agreed. Chairman Weber asked about contracts, and Kotloski confirmed that creating contracts is part of the plan moving forward.

The Village plans to evaluate facility rental rates for next year, including types of rates and rental contracts. She noted that the Village can no longer afford to extend its previous level of generosity, given rising costs. Kotloski shared her experience in policy and procedure development to support a smooth transition.

Aquatics and Program Updates

Director Kotloski stated that a seasonal aquatics manager will step up as Aquatics Coordinator this summer. Commissioner Olufs asked whether the full-time position remains open. Kotloski explained that a full-time hire is on hold until the future of the combined preschool/aquatics role is clear.

Chairman Weber asked if lifeguards will be Red Cross certified, and Kotloski confirmed that Matt Stanik, who is certified and has trained guards in the past, will return to lead training this summer.

Weber also inquired about aqua aerobics, and Kotloski confirmed that the previous instructor is returning.

Commissioner Hartman suggested offering more evening swim lessons, especially for Levels 4 and 5. He also recommended reserving spots in each level for children who move

up or down mid-season. Kotloski agreed that having a plan is essential, including canceling low-enrollment classes and reallocating those time slots to higher-demand levels.

Hartman emphasized a philosophy of “under-promise and over-deliver,” and asked about the Hot Shots program. Kotloski assured the Board that Hot Shots will continue, stating they are among the best in the Chicagoland area. She attributed past cancellations to poor facility management, not the program itself. Summer programming will proceed outdoors as usual, but fall planning will require stronger communication with schools and parents.

Chairman Weber expressed concern over costs associated with Hot Shots, noting that return value can be limited. Kotloski acknowledged this and explained that program rates are typically calculated by adding 30% to the vendor's base fee.

Discussion also turned to aqua center pricing. Weber referenced past fee increases, and Kotloski noted that most pools operate at a loss, so revenue should focus more on memberships, early bird sales, and strategic marketing.

Commissioner Olufs suggested offering exclusive benefits to pass holders, such as early entry or passholder-only events. Kotloski confirmed that early access is already available, and they will work on better communicating those perks.

8. **Financial Reports for Period Ending March 31, 2025**
   The Commission reviewed the Financial Reports for the period ending March 31, 2025.

9. **Next Meeting**
   The next Park Commission meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 18, 2025 at 6:30 pm at the former Senior Center building.

10. **Other Business**
    Commission Inquired and commented on subjects to include:
    Nothing to report
11. **<u>Adjournment</u>**
    Hartman/Nolan motion and second to adjourn the meeting at 7:39 p.m.
    Vote –
    Yes = 4
    No = 0