

Village of Antioch Park Advisory Board

Wednesday, January 21, 2026

6:30 p.m. Village Hall, 395 Skidmore Dr, Antioch, IL

1. Call to Order

Chairman Weber called the January 21, 2026 regular meeting of the Park Advisory to order at 6:32 p.m.

2. Roll Call

	Present	Absent
Deichsel	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>
Hartman	<u> </u>	<u> X </u>
Nolan, B.	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>
Nolan, S.	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>
Olufs	<u> </u>	<u> X </u>
Schartz	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>
Weber	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Staff</u>		
Kotloski	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>
Ford	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Antioch Park Advisor led the Pledge of Allegiance

4. Approval of Minutes

Schartz/Nolan motion and second to approve the January 21, 2026 Park Advisory minutes.

Vote –

Yes = 5

No = 0

5. Director’s Report

Director Kotloski opened the meeting with a renovation update presentation regarding the Centennial Park improvement project. The presentation outlined the history of the project, the progression from initial concepts to the current design, and included updated renderings of the new playground structure. The digestible version of the presentation shown as a Q&A and the project photos, are available on the Village

website under the Parks and Recreation Department's Centennial Park Project Update page.

Following the presentation, Director Kotloski invited questions from the Advisory Board.

Deichsel inquired about the impact of the project on baseball programs. Director Kotloski stated that the baseball fields will not be impacted during Phase 1. The north parking lot will be closed to accommodate construction equipment, and signage will direct patrons to the south parking lot. While additional street parking along Anita Avenue is anticipated, this has occurred previously during high-traffic events. Director Kotloski also noted that the Antioch Youth Little League (AYLL) has been notified of the upcoming changes and construction impacts.

Sue Nolan expressed appreciation for the updated park renderings and noted she was impressed with the design. She commented on public feedback circulating online and expressed hope that the release of accurate photos and information would provide greater clarity and understanding within the community. Director Kotloski acknowledged the importance of community feedback, noting that both staff and the Advisory Board take public input seriously and remain committed to serving the needs of Antioch residents.

Brian Nolan asked why the Advisory Board was not involved in selecting the updated playground design. Director Kotloski explained that following significant public feedback regarding the previous design, the Village was required to act within a limited timeframe to maintain the project schedule. She noted that the grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources includes strict deadlines. Failure to meet those deadlines would have resulted in the loss of grant funding and negatively impacted the Village's eligibility for future grant opportunities. The design approval timeline was necessary to ensure compliance with grant requirements.

Weber thanked Director Kotloski for her work in preparing the presentation.

Deichsel noted that photos circulating on social media do not reflect the updated renderings presented in the slideshow. Director Kotloski clarified that the images shared online are not official Village of Antioch materials. Deichsel further commented that the updated playground design provides a thoughtful transition from the former structure and expressed support for the selected climbing features.

Schartz inquired about the commemorative bricks currently located at Centennial Park. Director Kotloski stated that a formal plan regarding the bricks will be presented as a future agenda item, anticipated for either next month or March. The intent is to salvage and repurpose as many bricks as possible; however, due to their age and condition, not all bricks may be recoverable. Board members discussed preliminary ideas regarding preservation options.

Director Kotloski concluded her report by informing the Advisory Board that their recommendation regarding the proposed pickleball courts was presented to the Village Board of Trustees. The Trustees approved the recommendation, and the courts will be constructed as two dual-use tennis courts with pickleball overlay. She thanked the Advisory Board for their diligence on the matter.

Director Kotloski also provided updates on upcoming special events:

- The Princess Dance will be held on February 6 at NorthBridge Church. Advisory Board members were invited to volunteer.
- The Hot Chocolate Walk has over 400 registered participants. The free community event includes hot chocolate provided by the Village, water bottles donated by the VFW, and a complimentary showing of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* at the Antioch Theatre.
- The Shamrock Shuffle and post-race celebration will take place on March 2.

6. **Communications**

Director Kotloski invited members of the public to address the Advisory Board with questions or comments regarding Centennial Park and the proposed playground structure.

A member of the public inquired about the size of the surrounding synthetic wood fiber playground area. Director Kotloski stated that the overall playground footprint will remain approximately 12,000 square feet, consistent with the current layout. She clarified that while the footprint remains the same, the new playground structure itself will occupy approximately 8,000 square feet. She acknowledged that the structure will be smaller than the existing one but emphasized that the design concept focuses on vertical elements to create height and play value rather than overall width.

Another community member recommended that the updated playground renderings be shared on social media, noting that the images presented differ significantly from

those currently circulating online. Director Kotloski stated that the Village will be posting the updated and accurate renderings on its official social media platforms after the meeting.

A member of the public addressed the Board, stating that while he did not personally know the current Board members, he was familiar with Mr. Scharzt and expressed enthusiasm about his appointment. He asked Mr. Scharzt to share his perspective on the proposed playground design, noting Mr. Scharzt's past involvement with the original playground.

Scharzt responded that, given current conditions and funding limitations, the proposed design represents the most feasible option. He stated that while all of us would prefer to preserve the original structure, restoration costs, particularly for lumber replacement, would exceed \$1 million, which is not financially viable. He further commented that the proposed design maintains elements of the castle aesthetic and preserves the spirit of the original playground, while improving upon prior replacement concepts that had been considered.

The public commenter concluded by expressing hope that Mr. Scharzt's perspective would be strongly considered moving forward. He also expressed concern about what he perceives as a disconnect between long-standing community members and current leadership but is more than enthusiastic about Scharzt's current involvement.

Chairman Weber thanked the speaker for his comments and stated that the Advisory Board members are committed to serving the Antioch community. He noted that several Board members have long-standing ties to the community and share the goal of achieving the best possible outcome for residents. Weber emphasized that public meetings, including Parks Advisory Board meetings and Village Board meetings, have spaces intended to provide residents with opportunities to share input and ensure their voices are heard.

7. Chairperson's Report

Chairperson Weber began his report by commending Director Kotloski and staff member Fielder for their work on the recent Wine Walk event. He complimented the event's success and specifically noted the quality of the food offerings.

Chairperson Weber also expressed support for the updated Centennial Park playground design. He stated that the new structure will provide a safer and more

accessible play environment for the community. He further shared his enthusiasm for the future of the project and noted that he is already looking forward to Phase 2 of the park improvements.

8. Financial Reports for Period Ending December 31, 2026

The Park Advisory Board reviewed the Financial Reports for the period ending December 31, 2026.

9. Next Meeting

The next Park Advisory Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 18, 2026 at 6:30 pm at the Village Hall building.

10. Other Business

The Commission discussed additional items of interest.

Deichsel inquired whether staff had contacted the Antioch Queens regarding participation in the upcoming Princess Dance event. Staff member Fielder confirmed that outreach had been made.

Chairperson Weber concluded the discussion by thanking staff and fellow Board members for their continued hard work and dedication.

Director Kotloski also expressed appreciation to the Advisory Board members who volunteered and assisted at the recent Wine Walk event.

11. Adjournment

Nolan/ Deichsel motion and second to adjourn the meeting at 7:17 p.m.

Vote –

Yes = 5

No = 0