Regular Meeting Minutes of the
Gurnee Park District Board of Commissioners
August 18, 2026

Board President Popper called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., led the Pledge of Allegiance and asked for roll call. Commissioners present: Christine Popper, Gerry Crews, Aaron Dalzot and Sarah Beckmann. Commissioners absent: Liz Nelson. Also present: Mike Szpylman, Executive Director; Kraig Owens, Director of Parks and Planning; Sumitra Potharazu, Director of Business Services; Jennifer Gilbert, Marketing and Community Relations Manager; and Kari Hagen, Accounting Manager. Auditor Erin Sordo, from Lauterbach & Amen was present via teleconference to discuss the 2025-2026 Audit.

A motion was made by Crews to approve the minutes of the regular session held on July 21, 2026. The motion was seconded by Beckmann. Roll call vote taken. Ayes: Crews, Dalzot, Beckmann and Popper. Nays: None. Absent: Nelson. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Crews to approve the minutes of the Park Tour held on July 28, 2026. The motion was seconded by Beckmann. Roll call vote taken. Ayes: Crews, Dalzot, Beckmann and Popper. Nays: None. Absent: Nelson. Motion carried.

A motion to approve the total bills, payouts, and payroll in the amount of $1,417,308.27 presented on August 18, 2026, was made by Crews and was seconded by Beckmann. Roll call vote taken. Ayes: Crews, Dalzot, Beckmann, and Popper. Nays: None. Absent: Nelson. Motion carried.

The financial and Treasurer's reports were reviewed and discussed.

The Board President opened the floor to visitors; there were no visitor comments.

A motion was made by Beckmann to discuss the Approval of the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Audit Report prior to the Director reports. The motion was seconded by Crews. Roll call vote taken. Ayes: Crews, Dalzot, Beckmann, and Popper. Nays: None. Absent: Nelson. Motion carried.

Sumitra Potharazu welcomed Erin Sordo, Auditor from Lauterbach and Amen to discuss the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Audit.

A motion was made by Crews to approve the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Audit and was seconded by Beckmann. Roll call vote taken. Ayes: Crews, Dalzot, Beckmann, and Popper. Nays: None. Absent: Nelson. Motion carried.

Department Directors reviewed their written reports with the Board.

Director of Parks and Planning Kraig Owens reviewed the parks report. Popper thanked Kraig and his staff for quickly restoring the grounds following Gurnee Days.

The Recreation Report was reviewed and discussed by Mike Szpylman. Enrollment and attendance at the Viking Preschool location were reviewed. Due to low enrollment, the class schedule was reduced, resulting in increased enrollment, sustaining the program.

Director of Business Services Sumitra Potharazu reviewed the business report. Potharazu highlighted audit findings and noted that the information supports decision-making regarding future capital projects, asset maintenance, and the District's financial position.

Director of Marketing and Community Relations Jennifer Gilbert reviewed the marketing report.

Executive Director Mike Szpylman reviewed his report. Szpylman thanked staff for their hard work and attention to detail in planning and executing Gurnee Days. The Tree Dedication will be held on October 4th at 1:00 pm in the Dance Hall. The Best of the Best Award nominations were discussed.

ACTION ITEMS

A motion to approve the Prairie Oaks Drainage Improvement Project was made by Crews and seconded by Dalzot. Roll call vote taken. Ayes: Crews, Beckmann, Dalzot, and Popper. Nays: None. Absent: Nelson. Motion carried.

A motion to approve changes to the Personnel Policy Manual Update 4.11.8 Anniversary Awards was made by Beckmann and seconded by Dalzot. Roll call vote taken. Ayes: Crews, Beckmann, Dalzot, and Popper. Nays: None. Absent: Nelson. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Beckmann to enter into executive session at 8:05 to discuss Semi Annual Review of Executive Session Minutes- Sec. 5 ILCS 120/2 (c) (21). Motion seconded by Dalzot. Roll call vote taken. Ayes: Dalzot, Popper, Crews, and Beckmann. Nays: None. Absent: Nelson. Motion carried. A motion was made by Beckmann to return to open session at 8:07 p.m. Motion seconded by Dalzot. On voice vote, all voted aye and the Board returned to open session.

A motion to release the following executive session minutes; 12/16/2025 and 8/19/2025 was made by Beckmann and seconded by Dalzot. Roll call vote was taken. Ayes: Crews, Dalzot, Beckmann, Popper. Nays: None. Absent: Nelson.

A motion to adjourn was made by Beckmann and seconded by Crews. Roll call vote taken. Ayes: Dalzot, Popper, Crews, and Beckmann. Nays: None. Absent: Nelson. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

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Christine Popper, President Kari Hagen, Secretary