

Regular Meeting Minutes of the
Gurnee Park District Board of Commissioners
July 21, 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, and Aaron Dalzot. Commissioners absent: Sarah Beckmann and Liz Nelson. Also present: Mike Szpylman, Executive Director; Kraig Owens, Director of Parks and Planning; Melissa Marsh, Director of Recreation; Sumitra Potharazu, Director of Business Services; Jennifer Gilbert, Marketing and Community Relations Manager; Kari Hagen, Accounting Manager. Liz Nelson arrived at 7:03 p.m.

A motion was made by Crews to approve the minutes of the regular session held on June 16, 2026. The motion was seconded by Dalzot. Roll call vote taken. Ayes: Crews, Dalzot, and Popper. Nays: None. Absent: Beckmann and Nelson. Motion carried.

A motion to approve the total bills, payouts, and payroll in the amount of \$1,436,479.53 presented on July 21, 2026, was made by Crews and was seconded by Dalzot. Roll call vote taken. Ayes: Crews, Dalzot, Nelson, and Popper. Nays: None. Absent: Beckmann. 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.

Department Directors reviewed their written reports with the Board.

Director of Parks and Planning Kraig Owens reviewed the parks report. Kraig shared that Gurnee Days preparation is progressing as planned and provided an update regarding the large mulch delivery. Crews inquired about the reporting of work orders, as he was concerned that the detailed reporting provided may require an excessive amount of time to prepare. Kraig shared that the report is extracted from current systems and is not labor intensive. The new community requirements regarding Flowering Bradford Pear trees was discussed and Kraig shared that this species of tree will no longer be planted; however, existing trees will not be removed. The planned upgrade to electronic door access was discussed, and Owens confirmed that the project has already been budgeted.

Director of Recreation Melissa Marsh reviewed the recreation report. Melissa shared that the Cops and Bobbers event is scheduled for Wednesday July 22, 2026; the Mike and Joe concert is scheduled for Thursday July 23, 2026; the Neighborhood Nights event at Shaw Park is upcoming. Melissa also shared that the Hunt Club Aquatic Center is currently four pass sales short of its seasonal sales goal.

Director of Business Services Sumitra Potharazu reviewed the business report. Sumitra shared that the audit went smoothly and thanked staff for efficiently providing all requested materials to the auditors.

Director of Marketing and Community Relations Jennifer Gilbert reviewed the marketing report. Jennifer shared that several social media campaigns have been highly successful recently. Jennifer also reported that targeted email campaigns have been well received.

Executive Director Mike Szpylman reviewed his report.

ACTION ITEMS

A motion to approve the Hunt Club Park Paving – Phasing II Project Bid was made by Nelson and seconded by Dalzot. Roll call vote taken. Ayes: Crews, Nelson, Dalzot, and Popper. Nays: None. Absent: Beckmann. Motion carried.

Other Business discussed Mike Szpylman reminded the board members that the Parks Tour is scheduled for Tuesday, July 28, 2026. The Gurnee Days schedule was discussed, including the parade meeting time and the team member T-shirts selected for the event. Mike also confirmed that the Gurnee Days schedule and additional information are available on the Park District website.

A motion to adjourn was made by Crews and seconded by Nelson. On voice vote, all voted aye. The meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Christine Popper, President

Kari Hagen, Secretary