

MINUTES OF THE LINCOLNWAY SPECIAL RECREATION ASSOCIATION REGULAR BOARD MEETING HELD ON FEBRUARY 17, 2026 AT 9:30 A.M. AT THE LINCOLN WAY SPECIAL RECREATION CENTER, 1900 HEATHER GLEN DRIVE, NEW LENOX, ILLINOIS

I. General Functions

Call to Order: President Vitale called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

Pledge of Allegiance: All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Roll was taken and those present were:
Andy Biesterfeld, Executive Director, Crete Park District
Greg Vitale, Executive Director Mokena Park District
Audrey Marcquenski, Director, Frankfort Square Park District
Greg Lewis, Executive Director, New Lenox Community Park District
Jay Kelly, Executive Director, Manhattan Park District
Gina Hassett, Executive Director, Frankfort Park District
Kirsten VanDuyne, Executive Director, Wilmington Park District
Kelly LaMore, Park Manager, Peotone Park District

Absent: None

Others present were Keith Wallace, Executive Director; Melissa Jensen, Superintendent of Recreation; and Tom Kraus, Office Manager.

Special Guests: LWSRA Jamar Newell, Intern from Grambling State University; Ron Gryga, President LWSRF; Lou Filosa Treasurer LWSRF; and members Julie Leehaug and Tom Mau LWSRF.

II. Public Comments: None

III. General Functions (continued)

- 1. Treasurer’s Report – President Vitale asked for a motion to accept the January 31, 2026 Treasurer’s Report.

Board member Hassett moved to accept the January 31, 2026 Treasurer’s report and Board member Lewis seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken.

Ayes: (8) Kelly, Hassett, LaMore, Marcquenski, Lewis, Biesterfeld, VanDuyne, Vitale
Nays: (0)
Abstain:(0)
Absent: (0)

Motion Carried

- 2. Payment of Bills:
 - A. President Vitale asked for a motion to approve the Payment of the Bills in the amount of \$194,603.82 may include lodging and travel.

Board member Kelly made a motion to approve the payment of the bills as presented and Board member Biesterfeld seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken.

Ayes: (8) Kelly, Hassett, LaMore, VanDuyne, Marcquenski, Lewis, Biesterfeld, Vitale

Nays: (0)

Abstain:(0)

Absent: (0)

Motion Carried

3. Special Guest:

- a. Intern- Jamar Newell- Grambling State University- He is in his senior year and is enjoying working at LWSRA. He said he is learning a lot.
- b. Lincolnway Special Recreation Foundation – Lou Filosa introduced those who attended with him. He presented the Board with a check of \$65,000, the most they have donated at one time. He explained that the members have met with more local businesses to partner with the foundation to raise money. Berkots conducted a ‘round up’ campaign last year in 3 of their stores and raised \$5,000. This year they will do a similar campaign in all 20 stores, but benefiting LWSRA and two other organizations as well. Whitmore Ace has conducted a round up campaign for the last 2 years. They will be working on some grants this year and an indoor golf outing. They are looking for 2 new board members. Keith thanked LWSRF on behalf of the Board and Staff.

(The foundation Board members left the meeting)

4. Communications: None

IV. Consent Agenda:

- 1. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes of January 20, 2026. President Vitale asked for a motion.

Board member Hassett made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented and Board member LaMore seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken.

Ayes: (7) Kelly, Hassett, LaMore, Marcquenski, Lewis, Biesterfeld, Vitale

Nays: (0)

Abstain:(1) VanDuyne

Absent: (0)

Motion Carried

V. Staff & Committee Reports

1. Executive Director –

- Staff – We are evaluating the cleaning service vs bringing it back in house. The current cleaning crew are doing just an okay job and are not consistent.
- a. Donations & Fundraising
 - i. Marketing Supervisor
 - 1. Sponsorships, Fundraising, Grants –
Fundraising - We received verbal commitment of \$10,000 from the Costello family for the 50th Anniversary. We also received \$11,500 from the Exceptional children’s charity. They are dissolving the charity

and chose LWSRA to give some of their remaining funds. Keith is trying to convince them to join LWSRF.

Grants – Staff is working on grants that are being sought to benefit staff.

Sensory Garden – Hero’s Village - Staff submitted for the WCMHB grant. We are hoping to get approved for the full \$200,000.

Sensory Bus Update - We have received confirmation of reimbursement from Will County for some of the equipment purchased in the 3rd quarter.

Distinguished Agency Accreditation - LWSRA will go in 2027 for Accreditation. I will be meeting with a new committee to review what we have completed so far.

SRA Directors meeting - The SRA directors met on Feb 5th Topic included, Legislative topic, students and promoting the profession, as well as current events. Our next meeting is on April 16th.

2. Brochure, Website

3. Foundation – Keith notified LWSRF that this Board has directed him to have them do an audit done. The process is started. Discussion was held.

ii. Outreach & Inclusion Supervisor – Report was in the Board’s packets.

1. Outreach

2. Inclusion

iii. Facility Manager - Report was in the Board’s packets.

iv. Office Manager - Report was in the Board’s packets.

2. Superintendent of Recreation -

a. Staff Intakes and Safety – Intakes are back up to 22 for the month. There are 3 staff that manage the process.

i. Manager of Programs -

1. Teens and Adults, Transportation, Rentals

ii. Manager of Programs - Report was in the Board’s packets.

1. Hawkings and Youth – Two more interns are being sought for the summer.

iii. Program Supervisor - Report was in the Board’s packets.

1. Adaptive – LWSRA hosted a wheelchair basketball tournament at Frankfort Hickory Creek school. Mak and the interns did a great job.

iv. Program Supervisor - Report was in the Board’s packets.

1. After school and general

VI. Finance & Personnel –

VII. Facilities Planning – None

VIII. Old Business – None

1. Amend Regular Meeting Minutes of July 15, 2025 – President Vitale asked for a motion. A copy of the minutes was in the Board’s packets. It was previously omitted from being approved at an earlier meeting.

Board member Hassett made a motion to amend the July 15, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes as presented and Board member LaMore seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken.

Ayes: (7) Kelly, Hassett, VanDuyne, LaMore, Marcquenski, Biesterfeld, Vitale

Nays: (0)

Abstain:(1) Lewis

Absent: (0)

Motion Carried

IX. Executive Session - None

X. New Business –

- a. Executive Session Minutes Released June 2025 – December 2025 Including Previously Withheld Minutes - None
- b. 2025 Spring-Summer Agency Overview – Keith include the report in the Board’s packets for them to review and share with their Districts.

XI. Director/Board member Comments

Executive Director Wallace said the tickets for the 50th Anniversary will be on sale next week. He encouraged all to reserve their tickets early. It will be a Sneaker Ball. He thanked the Board for their support. He noted that the center and the park have been very busy with the good weather.

Board member VanDuyne said she is enjoying the social media postings. She told staff that they are doing a great job.

Board member Lewis said that NLPD has recently held some meetings in preparation for a referendum. Programming at LWSRA was mentioned in both meetings as a positive. He mentioned that former Board member Chavez is now working at Hickory Hills Park District and is going through the process of reviewing, releasing and destroying many years of Executive Minutes. She learned the process as a member of LWSRA Board. Keep up the good work.

Board member LaMore said it looks like things go great. Peotone Park District will be holding a paint night and hope

Board Member Biesterfeld said congratulations on the gift from LWSRF. Staff does a lot of work to keep them moving but it does pay you back. Good job!

Board Member Hassett said ditto to all the positive comments.. She has definitely seen more on social media about the 50th Anniversary. Keep up the good job.

Board member Marcquenski said keep up the good work and she is glad to see that LWSRA is getting new interns.

Board member Kelly said LWSRF’s efforts and the passion they have behind their mission is an easy one to grasp, but their efforts and comments about being a direct reflection of the efforts of staff and couple that with what you are doing to attract young professionals is a testament to what you are doing for participants and professionals as an agency and to build your reputation. It is not by happenstance. You should all be very proud of that and congratulations.

Board Member Vitale said he agrees with all the comments. He will be meeting on Thursday with Jordan for an interview that will be on social media.

XII. **Executive Session** - None

XIII. **Adjournment** – President Vitale asked for a motion to adjourn at 10:14 a.m.

Board member Hassett moved to adjourn the meeting and Board member Kelly seconded the motion. Upon a voice vote, all voted Aye. The meeting adjourned at 10:14 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Mary T. Strand, Recording Secretary