

MINUTES OF THE LINCOLNWAY SPECIAL RECREATION ASSOCIATION REGULAR BOARD MEETING HELD ON MAY 19, 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, Executive Director, Frankfort Square Park District
Greg Lewis, Executive Director, New Lenox Community Park District
Shannon Forsythe, Deputy Director, Manhattan Park District
Gina Hassett, Executive Director, Frankfort Park District
Kelly LaMore, Park Manager, Peotone Park District

Absent: Kirsten Van Duyne, Executive Director, Wilmington Park District

Others present were Keith Wallace, Executive Director; Melissa Jensen, Superintendent of Recreation; Tom Krauss, Office Manager; and Mary Strand, Recording Secretary.

Special Guests:
A. Makayla Henry - University of Iowa
B. Mandi Albrecht- University of St. Francis

II. Public Comments: None

III. General Functions (continued)

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

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

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

Nays: (0)

Abstain:(0)

Absent: (1) VanDuyne

Motion Carried

- 2. Payment of Bills:
 - A. President Vitale asked for a motion to approve the April, 2026 Payment of the Bills in the amount of \$195,426.19 which may include lodging and travel expenses.

Board member Hassett made a motion to approve the payment of the April, 2026 bills as presented and Board member Biesterfeld seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken.

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

Nays: (0)

Abstain:(0)

Absent: (1) VanDuyne

Motion Carried

3. Special Guest: New Interns
 - A. Makayla Henry - University of Iowa – Makayla said she lives in New Lenox and is excited to learn at LWSRA. Her major is Therapeutic Recreation with a minor in Psychology.
 - B. Mandi Albrecht - University of Saint Francis – Introduced herself and said she lives in Manhattan, IL. She is excited to get a new perspective on the programs and activities. Her major is Recreational Therapy.
President Vitale welcomed both and said they will definitely learn a lot at LWSRA.
4. Communications: None

IV. Consent Agenda:

1. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes of April 21, 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) Hassett, LaMore, Forsythe, Marcquenski, Lewis, Biesterfeld, Vitale

Nays: (0)

Abstain:(0)

Absent: (1) VanDuyne

Motion Carried

V. Staff & Committee Reports

1. Executive Director –
 - Staff – Staff has made the decision to end the cleaning service. The cleaning is done in-house while a new service is contracted.
 - Distinguished Agency Accreditation - Staff are working hard to fill out the assessment application. We are looking forward to having our meeting soon with our mentor to see if we have enough to submit. The plan is to complete the process for 2028. Discussion was held.
 - SRA Directors meeting - Next meeting will be April 16th will report at Meeting what was discussed.
 - Upcoming Events & Meetings - Parks Day and Legislative Day at the Capital May 5th -6th.

- . . .
- a. Donations & Fundraising
 - i. Marketing Supervisor
 1. Sponsorships, Fundraising, Grants –
 - New Lenox Lions Club donated \$15,000 toward Hero’s Village
 - Emily DuMais, DePauw University, a senior softball player, selected LWSRA as part of her Senior Wish giving campaign for summer camp and raised \$5,400.
 - Frankfort School District 157-C donated \$12,078. Since 2015, the district has donated a total of \$88,084 to LWSRA Wheelchair Basketball.
 - We received confirmation that LWSRA will be awarded a \$20,000 grant for Karen’s Shed in Hero’s Village. Keith met with
 2. Donations - The Kindful report for April is attached for review.
 3. Brochure, Website
 4. Foundation – The Foundation Golf Outing is scheduled for August 14, 2026. Keith reminded all to register as soon as possible, as the Foundation will only host one golf outing this year
 5. Sensory Garden – Heroes Village –
 - Staff met with the New Lenox Lions Club, and they have designed their shed for Hero’s Village. This shed is for the visually impaired. Staff also met with Miracle Recreation to gather quotes for potential sensory play items.
 - The kickoff planning meeting with Wight & Company was held on May 12th. Phase 2 kick-off meeting to discuss the specific details of the program, funding, and schedule.
 6. Sensory Bus Update – The second sensory bus is expected to be completed by May 29th.
 7. Distinguished Agency Accreditation - LWSRA remains on target for 2028 Distinguished Agency Accreditation.
 8. SRA Directors meeting - The next SRA Directors meeting is scheduled for May 21st.
 9. House Bill – The House Bill for OSLAD accessible projects is moving along in the process. It would allow extra points for universal designs.
 - ii. Outreach & Inclusion Supervisor – Report was in the Board’s packets.
 1. Outreach
 2. Inclusion – Titan Art Gala – Held April 16th. Artwork was available to purchase throughout the entirety of the Cultural Arts Weekend and raised \$847.10, which went to TITANS programming.
 - iii. Facility Manager - Report was in the Board’s packets.
 - iv. Office Manager - Report was in the Board’s packets. Registration for spring/summer programs has been coming in steadily. Staff are working to accommodate as many individuals as possible from long waitlists.

- 2. Superintendent of Recreation – Melissa Jensen told the Board that Camp Training will start next week and camp begins June 1st.
 - a. Staff Intakes and Safety –
 - i. Manager of Programs -
 - 1. Teens and Adults, Transportation, Rentals
 - ii. Manager of Programs - Report was in the Board’s packets.
 - 1. Hawklings and Youth – Our youth and teen/adult group rehearsed singing, dancing, and some speaking lines for 9 weeks. They performed “Find Your Voice” and “Dream Bigger” on April 17th and 18th during cultural arts weekend.
 - iii. Program Supervisor - Report was in the Board’s packets.
 - 1. Adaptive –
 - iv. Program Supervisor - Report was in the Board’s packets.
 - 1. After school and general

VI. Finance & Personnel –

- a. Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget Presentation – Tom Kraus. Tom provided an Overview with comparisons. He highlighted Revenue and Expenditure Breakdowns as well as Fund Balance and a look ahead of programming and services. Inclusions were discussed; it is a variable that cannot be controlled. Board member Biesterfeld noted that participation drives the budget.

VII. Facilities Planning – None

VIII. Old Business – None

IX. New Business –

- a. 2025 Fall Agency Overview – Keith included a memo for the Board members to show the participation and services utilized for Fall 2025. The members can bring it to their Boards for discussion. It shows the successes and increases in numbers. Things are trending up.
- b. Motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget – President Vitale asked for a motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget.

Board member Biesterfeld made a motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget as presented and Board member Lewis seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken.

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

Nays: (0)

Abstain:(0)

Absent: (1) VanDuyne

Motion Carried

X. Executive Session –

a. Director Review –

Board member Hassett made a motion to go to New Business in advance of moving to Executive Session and Board member Biesterfeld seconded the motion. Upon a voice vote, all voted Aye.

Motion Carried

President Vitale asked for a motion to go into Executive Session pursuant to exception 1.

Board member Hassett so moved and Board member Marcquenski seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken.

Ayes: (0)

Nays: (7) Hassett, LaMore, Forsythe, Marcquenski, Lewis, Biesterfeld, Vitale

Abstain:(0)

Absent: (1) VanDuyne

Motion Denied

President Vitale thanked the members for their input on Keith's evaluation, the summary of which was included in the Board's packets. Board members consistently rated his performance in the areas of agency management, project management, budgeting, information management, change management, organizational assessment, safety management, and leadership/communication as mostly "Exceeds Expectations" or "Outstanding." A few areas were rated "Meets Expectations," but the overall feedback was very positive. A major theme in the comments is that you are viewed as a dynamic and respected leader who represents LWSRA well both personally and professionally. Board member LaMore echoed the sentiment of everybody else She learns a lot from Keith and being on the Board and Peotone learns a lot from LWSRA. She thanked Keith for his leadership and his service.

Board member Lewis noted that the biggest thing was that Keith surrounds himself with good people. He puts key people in key spots and it is the whole team with his leadership that make for this success. Board member Biesterfeld said the fact that Keith is leading the effort to go after the Distinguished Agency is a testament to having confidence in his staff that he has hired. They have to be good enough to support each other and him.

XI. Director/Board member Comments

Executive Director Wallace said thank you for the kind words. He credited his staff and Board members that he leans on to help him. He said his *network* is part of his *net worth*. .

Attorney O'Driscoll said a couple of binding opinions have just dropped. One says if you go into Executive Session pursuant to a particular reason and stray beyond it, the tape will then be released to the general public. Discussion was held. The second one had to do with being more specific on the Agenda.

Board member Biesterfeld commented that the Springfield experience was quite a show. He said it proves what advocacy does for the Districts in the long run. He thanked the staff for bringing some stuff to Crete and he will check out the program very soon.

Board member Lewis said it's important to note that the work at the state level to get called out to go testify on behalf of the work Keith is doing down in Springfield is huge. He commented on the session

held by members of DCFS and then a Board members discussed the proposed legislation to license all individuals who are part of programs for children.

Board member LaMore congratulations on the great registrations. She said have a great holiday weekend.

Board Member Hassett said she is excited for the Titans to be coming to Frankfort Park District. It was great to see IAPD down in Springfield and it shows we are getting what we pay for. She thanked everyone who traveled down and she wished everyone the best summer.

Board member Marcquenski said to hang in there and enjoy the holiday before summer hits. She also congratulated the staff on the great numbers and registrations. Everything seems to be in a good place and thank all of you for your efforts.

Board member Forsythe said she is happy that Manhattan gets the opportunity to host camp for LWSRA and if anyone needs anything to please call.

Board Member Vitale said it is exciting to see all the camps and summer programs starting up. He also said that the Mokena accessible playground is ahead of schedule. It will open before Memorial Day. It was nominated for the Burke playground of the year. He invited all to come out and see it.

XII. Adjournment – President Vitale asked for a motion to adjourn at 10:17 a.m.

Board member Hassett moved to adjourn the meeting and Board member Lewis seconded the motion. Upon a voice vote, all voted Aye. The meeting adjourned at 10:17 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Mary T. Strand, Recording Secretary