

MINUTES OF THE LINCOLNWAY SPECIAL RECREATION ASSOCIATION REGULAR BOARD MEETING HELD ON SEPTEMBER 15, 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 9:30 a.m.

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

Roll Call: Roll was taken and those present were:
Greg Vitale, Executive Director Mokena Park District
Kirsten VanDuyne, Executive Director, Wilmington Park District
Audrey Marcquenski, Director, Frankfort Square Park District
Greg Lewis, Executive Director, New Lenox Community Park District
Kelly LaMore, Park Manager, Peotone Park District
Gina Hassett, Executive Director, Frankfort Park District (*joined at 9:38 a.m.*)
Jay Kelly, Executive Director, Manhattan Park District
Absent: Andy Biesterfeld, Executive Director, Crete 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: Billy LaPonte, Youth Program Supervisor
Antonio Vance, Northwest Missouri State University Intern

II. Public Comments: None

III. General Functions (*continued*)

1. Treasurer's Report – President Vitale asked for a motion to accept the August 31, 2026 Treasurer's Reports. The agenda showed the Treasurer Report for April and it was noted it should say July.

Board member Kelly moved to accept the August 31, 2026 Treasurer's report and Board member Marcquenski seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken.

Ayes: (6) LaMore, Kelly, Marcquenski, Lewis, VanDuyne, Vitale

Nays: (0)

Abstain:(0)

Absent: (2) Biesterfeld, Hassett

Motion Carried

2. Payment of Bills:
 - A. President Vitale asked for a motion to approve the August 31, 2026 Payment of the Bills in the amount of \$252,708.87 which may include lodging and travel expenses.

Board member Lewis made a motion to approve the payment of the August 31, 2026 bills as presented and Board member LaMore seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken.

Ayes: (6) Marcquenski, LaMore, Kelly, Lewis, VanDuyne, Vitale

Nays: (0)

Abstain:(0)

Absent: (2) Hassett, Biesterfeld

Motion Carried

3. Special Guest: Billy LaPonte, Youth Program Supervisor, introduced himself. He attended the University of Missouri with a degree in Parks, Recreation, Sports and Tourism. He has background experience as an intern at Jefferson Parks and Recreation in Missouri. He is very happy to be at LWSRA. He is a Frankfort resident.

Antoino Vance, Northwest Missouri State University, Intern, introduced himself. He has a clinical background, went to U of I for under grad and now is doing his master's at NWMissouri. He lives on Chicago's south side.

4. Communications: None

IV. Consent Agenda:

1. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes of August 18, 2026. President Vitale asked for a motion.

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

Ayes: (6) Kelly, VanDuyne, LaMore, Marcquenski, Lewis, Vitale

Nays: (0)

Abstain:(0)

Absent: (2) Hassett, Biesterfeld

Motion Carried

V. Staff & Committee Reports

1. Executive Director – Keith's report was in the Board's packets.
 - a. Donations & Fundraising
 - i. Marketing Supervisor –
 1. Staff–Keith said that all staff are in the process of succession planning. It will be a guide to building the Operations Manual.
 2. Sponsorships, Fundraising, Grants – Keith said there are three grants out for the Sensory Garden to hopefully fund Heros Garden #2. The grants are Ecolab, Mathew's foundation out of Chicago and William G & Mary A. Ryan foundation out of Hinsdale. Two more grants are applied for.
 3. Donations - The Kindful report for August was attached for review. He thanked Frankfort Park District for their donation of 4 accessible picnic tables.

4. Distinguished Agency Accreditation – Keith told the Board that staff has received the letter stating that LWSRA can reapply and it was already paid for. He has also talked to the project mentor, and they have suggested that we use something other than Power DMS. Reimbursement for Power DMS has been requested.

5. Hero's Garden – The Village of New Lenox has given approval for the engineering of the sheds.

(Gina Hassett joined at 9:38 a.m.)

6. IAPD Best of the Best - LWSRA and WDSRA will be recognized for intergovernmental cooperation at the IAPD Best of the best awards on October 6th. Also they will be recognized for LWSRA 50th Anniversary.

7. Legislator vs Hawks Wheelchair Basketball Game was held September 2. Keith said it was fantastic.

8. Sensory Room – There have been a few upgrades, one is an interactive wall.

9. Golf Outing – LWSRF Golf Outing, the Foundation rescheduled for October 17th. There are two foursomes available.

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

1. Outreach – Please contact Emma for assistance.

2. Inclusion – The numbers are very high again. Next year there will not be the 4-hour program. Discussion was held.

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

- Andrew is working on completing the list of ADA Compliance repairs/updates.

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

2. Superintendent of Recreation – Melissa Jensen was on vacation, and her report was in the Board's packets.

- a. Staff Intakes and Safety –

- i. Manager of Programs -

1. Teens and Adults, Transportation, Rentals –

2. Special Olympics –

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

1. Hawkings and Youth –

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

1. Adaptive – The LWSRA Adult Wheelchair Softball finished 2nd in the nation at the 2026 NWSA Wheelchair Softball World Series. All Tournament Awards include Best Left Field for Leo Onuki, Best Left center for Devin Lockett, and best right center for Keith Cooper. Devin Lockett also won Golden Glove honors. The LWSRA Junior Wheelchair Softball team finished 4th in the nation as LWSRA collaborated with NWCSRA and NWSA to host the 2026 Junior World Series! Justin Rittenhouse won best short stop.

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

1. After school and general -

2. Summer Camp –

- VI. **Finance & Personnel** – None
- VII. **Facilities Planning** – None
- VIII. **Old Business** – None
- IX. **New Business** – None
- X. **Executive Session** – None

XI. Director/Board member Comments

Executive Director Wallace received recognition by the State of Illinois House of Representatives. He was inducted to the Class of 2026 American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration as a Fellow. It was offered by Rep. Patrick Sheehan. He is speaking at the Conference in the Opening Session. He and Melissa are also speaking at the next SSPRPA meeting. He thanked all for their support. Board Member Kelly said the good work continues. The recognition is awesome and a direct reflection of what staff is doing.

Board member Hassett said congratulations on all the medals. The accolades are for Keith, but we know the team also makes it happen and that everyone contributes. Thank you to everyone for allowing it to happen.

Board member Lewis said the basketball game with the legislators was very good. It was good to see so many good athletes. Great job.

Board member LaMore said congratulations on the great summer and Congrats to Keith on his recognition by the State of Illinois.

Board member Marcquenski said Congratulations to Keith and all the athletes who took home all the medals. It is quite a list of accomplishments.

Board member VanDuyne said the Sensory Bus was a hit at events. Inclusion has been great there currently is one person enrolled. Her staff appreciates learning from the LWSRA staff.

Board Member Vitale said he echoes everyone's statements and congratulations to Keith and on the 2nd place in Wheel Chair Basketball. He was sorry that he couldn't attend the Legislative game.

XII. Adjournment – President Vitale asked for a motion to adjourn at 9:56 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 9:56 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Mary T. Strand, Recording Secretary