



**Vernon Hills Park District
Board of Park Commissioners
Special Board Meeting**

**September 25, 2025
Sullivan Community Center
635 N. Aspen Drive, Vernon Hills, IL 60061
5:00 PM**

Minutes

1. Call to Order

President Sente called the Special Meeting to order at 5:02 PM.

2. Roll Call

Present: Commissioners Beaumont, Robbins, Doerhoefer, Sente.
Commissioner Jacobs arrived at 5:06 PM.

Staff Present

Executive Director Matthew LaPorte; Superintendent of Finance & HR Jessica Mitchell; Superintendent of Recreation Tom Ritter; Superintendent of Parks Mark Fleishman; Communication & Marketing Manager Cheryl Buhmann; Administrative Assistant/Risk Manager Amy Darling.

3. Welcome to Visitors and Guests - Public Comment Period

President Sente stated that the Board will now hear remarks from the public. Remarks will be limited to three minutes and no board response will be given. President Sente asked if there were any remarks to be heard. No remarks were heard.

4. New Business

A. Grosse Pointe Playground Structure Discussion

President Sente led a discussion to provide Executive Director LaPorte direction on what ninja course amenity would be included in the Grosse Pointe OSLAD project. The Board would not be voting on the amenity, only making a recommendation. The approval would become part of the bid award at a later date. Director LaPorte noted that by choosing a new amenity, additional funding would be required which he is confident could be available. Director LaPorte reiterated that staff have performed





capital project analysis, and noted that several projects have come under the budgeted, resulting in capital expense savings. The savings will assist the District in accommodating the increase in project expenses. President Sente explained that during the NRPA Conference in Orlando, there was a piece by Greenfield that prompted the discussion to consider something other than the originally proposed amenity. As a result, the project engineer, JSD, was asked to revise their original amenity to provide something more challenging for users for the Board to consider. The Board discussed the pros and cons of the three options: The original (option 1) and secondary (option 2) designs by JSD and the new structure they saw in Orlando (option 3). The consensus was that the original design by JSD may not provide enough challenge and may not be used as a result. The Greenfield amenity, while exciting, was generally geared toward a more adult level user and the costliest of the three. The second proposed design by JSD was favored by a majority of the Board and recommended by staff. Commissioner Robbins expressed concern that the original grant budget had increased. Director LaPorte and President Sente explained that amendments to the project were discussed at prior board meetings and Director LaPorte provided a summary of those amendments. Director LaPorte was directed to request the revised structure (option 2) by JSD for the project.

B. 2025 NRPA Conference Discussion

Time constraint prevented the Board and staff from discussing the recently attended NRPA Conference. President Sente would like a more formal follow up to the conference to allow the exchange of ideas and sharing of information.

5. **Adjournment**

Upon proper motion and second the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the Special Meeting at 5:58 PM.

Carol Sente
Park Board President

Matthew LaPorte
Park Board Secretary

