FRANKFORT PARK DISTRICT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS SPECIAL
MEETING TUESDAY AUGUST 25, 2026
140 OAK STREET, FRANKFORT, IL 60423

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

President McCarey called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT Commissioner McCarey
Commissioner Gentry
Commissioner Ponton
Commissioner Ruvoli

ABSENT Commissioner Barz

ALSO PRESENT Gina Hassett, Executive Director; Edward Newton, Supt. Building and Grounds; and Mary Strand, Recording Secretary.

GUESTS: Residents: Tom, Amy and Evelyn Kens; Scott Kircher; Deb Swasas; Jan Look; Angela Sands; John Sabey; Michael Antoniazzi; Kelly Murphy; Ed and Drue Madon; Joe and Sharon Zobel; and Nancey Feigel.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA – Approved as presented.

5. CONSENT AGENDA – Items on the consent agenda are considered to be routine in nature and will be enacted in one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a board member so requests, in which event, the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered separately. President McCarey asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Ruvoli noted that the date on the Minutes under Item 6, Finance Report, says "May 31", but should be amended to "June 30". The motion made on July 14, 2026 was correct.

A. **Approval of the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of July 14, 2026**
B. **Approval of the Executive Meeting Minutes of July14, 2026**

Commissioner Gentry made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as amended and Commissioner Ponton seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken.

Aye: (4) Commissioners Ponton, Gentry, Ruvoli, McCarey
Nay: (0)
Abstain: (0)
Absent: (1) Barz

Motion approved

6. Finance Report- APPROVAL OF BILLS (financial reports attached) – President McCarey asked for a motion to approve the July 31, 2026, Accounts Payable and Payroll in the amount of $356,246.29 which may include travel and lodging expenses. Gina told the Board that Regina's last day was last week. The audit firm came out to discuss with Gina and Regina before she left to clear up any questions they had. The documents went out in June. Most of the work is done electronically.

Commissioner Ponton made a motion to approve June 30, 2026 Accounts Payable in the amount of $356,246.29 as presented and Commissioner Ruvoli seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken.

Aye: (4) Commissioners Gentry, Ruvoli, Ponton, McCarey
Nay: (0)
Abstain: (0)
Absent: (1) Barz

Motion approved

7. CITIZENS COMMENTS AND/OR CORRESPONDENCE – President McCarey invited those in attendance to speak. Commissioner Ruvoli thanked all for coming to the meeting.
Sharon Zobel lives adjacent to Michele Bingham Park. She read a statement listing her objections and concerns to relocating the Dog Park less than fifty feet from her back yard. It will no longer be an open green space and she will have an obstructed view. She noted that the kids won't want to play there because they will lose their ball over the fenced Dog Park. She didn't think that there was a thoughtful evaluation process in making the decision to move the Dog Park there. She requested a FOIA of the processes on August 7th and has not received any yet. She questioned why the current location is no longer suitable. Another concern is the timeline of the project. In addition the Topographic survey shows broken drain tiles and drainage concerns with no mitigation included. She respectfully requested to consider another location to move the Dog Park to or at least pause the start of the project until the public can see the analysis of the decision. She asked what if the problem that is being solved by the move.
Amy Kens stated she is a big fan of the Park District. Her backyard is adjacent to the cemetery. She doesn't think that the Dog Park belongs in a residential area. She has concerns about the current flooding, runoff water and drainage issues. She has concerns about maintenance and home depreciation. Another concern is to have the Dog Park next to the playground. In addition, she thinks it is ethically immoral to remove the soccer practice field from the park when it was named after a tragedy that resulted in the death of Michele Bingham. The soccer would be impacted. Another concern is dogs barking. Her son has a disability, spends many hours in the yard and is very afraid of dogs and barking triggers his anxiety. It will have a negative impact on him. She asked the Board to reconsider the relocation.
Kathleen Duffy stated that there was a survey sent to those who use the Bark Park and there was no mention that it would be reduced in size. Her concern is that it will limit the exercise of the dogs. Many of the people who use the Dog Park are not Frankfort residents and she said they feel misled by not mentioning the smaller size.
Tom Kens stated that he is not anti-dog or anti-dog park. He said he is opposed to relocating the Dog Park to Michele Bingham Park and asked the Board to consider a different location. He noted that he did look into the new plans for Commissioners Park and saw that the new entrance would be where the Bark Park is currently located. And that it is in need of repairs. He discussed with his neighbors and the concerns were noise, waste, parking, drainage, funeral services and the park's legacy along with the reduced size. He suggested that the Board could reconsider moving the Dog Park to another open space area of Commissioners Park.
Evelyn Kens read her request to relocate the Dog Park. She noted that a Dog Park in Michele Bingham Park could decrease the home values and privacy. She voiced concern that the Dog Park would be too close to homeowners' yards and bring barking dogs. Her family frequents the park and would not do so if there was a Dog Park. Another concern is the proposed location is approximately thirty feet from the playground. She has been bitten by a dog previously, so is not really a fan. She appealed to the Board to consider a different location and thanked them.
Joe Zobel said he appreciated the Board's job. He noted that there is an ordinance that limits a homeowner to own more than 3 dogs. He stated that his new neighbor, the Dog Park, would break that rule and have 10 or 12 dogs at a time. He thinks the Board should reconsider putting it there. He thinks it will bring a lot of noise and irritation to the area.
Michael Antoniazzi said he uses Old Plan Trail near the park a lot and his kids go to that park. He doesn't think they would want to go there if there was a Dog Park. His neighbor just go bit in the face by another neighbor's dog. He doesn't think it is a good idea to have a Dog Park next to a playground and his daughter has allergies to dogs.
Kelly Murphy she thanked the commissioners for allowing the residents to speak. She felt

without the information from the FOIA request she can't address some of the issues. She mentioned the condition of the park after a rain. She said that dog waste could cause a biohazard and wondered if any studies were done on that. She stated that other dog parks she googled were not near homes. She didn't understand why a better or more open space couldn't be selected.

Jan Look stated she lived by the park for 45 years. She understands that it is difficult for the Board to reimagine the space, but the question remains, Why Michele Bingham Park? The fact that it is a neighborhood park for sports and recreation begs the question why not another location?

President McCarey thanked the residents for their comments and for joining the meeting. The Board did appreciate it. They will be looking into all the questions and concerns.

8. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

- President McCarey said he was able to meet and network with others in the Village.
- He told the Board that the Back to School Bash was moved indoors due to the weather. It was a great turnout, but not too many vendors participated.
- He was invited to a discussion with executives of Silver Cross Hospital. It was very productive and their presentation was good.
- The convention is next month and the list of seminars and classes have been released.
- He asked Ed if the maintenance department finished cleaning up after storms. Most of the major stuff is done.

9. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT –

A. Approval of Resolution 2026-08 Review of Closed Meeting Minutes – A memo with the dates of the minutes was in the Board's packets for their review. President McCarey asked for a motion.

Commissioner Ruvoli made a motion to approve Resolution 2026-08 regarding review of closed meeting minutes and destruction of audio and video recordings and Commissioner Ponton seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken.

Aye: (4) Commissioners Gentry, Ruvoli, Ponton, McCarey
Nay: (0)
Abstain: (0)
Absent: (1) Barz

Motion approved

B. Approval of Repairs to Founders Center Roof – Staff is recommending that the Board approve the emergency replacement of the center roof area at the Founders Center by Style Craft in the amount of $36,952 utilizing funds budgeted for roof replacement. President McCarey asked for a motion.

Commissioner Ruvoli made a motion to approve the emergency replacement of the center roof area at the Founders Center by Style Craft in the amount of $36,952 as presented and Commissioner Ponton seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken.

Aye: (4) Commissioners Ponton, Ruvoli, Gentry, McCarey
Nay: (0)
Abstain: (0)
Absent: (1) Barz

Motion approved

C. Approval of Agreement with Lauterbach & Amen for Accounting Services – With the departure of Regina, Gina is evaluating several options for maintaining Finance Department operations. Her options are:

1. Reallocate responsibilities internally
2. Utilize a third-party accounting firm
3. Modify the Finance Department structure

Staff will continue evaluating the options above. Consideration of anticipated costs, staffing implications, continuity of operations and level of financial expertise provided under each structure will be prioritized. The goal is to establish a finance structure that provides appropriate internal oversight and accountability while ensuring the District has sufficient expertise and support for its monthly accounting, budgeting, levy financial reporting and other financial responsibilities. Staff will present a recommended approach to the Board for consideration once the costs and operational implications of the available options have been further evaluated. Regina will come back for 3 Fridays in September to help out. A candidate is being considered. The audit is about 80% completed.

No action taken.

- Storm Repairs - Gina stated that there have been two major storm events in the last several weeks. The first storm caused a power outage, and 5 trees were down or partially destroyed. They must come down completely. The power line came down in front of the Maintenance Garage. The outfield fence at Commissioners Park was down, windscreens and fence posts by the tennis court. A downed tree at Indian Boundary Park has now been removed. Playground damage occurred at Stone Creek Park. The power was out for 1 ½ days in the second storm. The LED lights burnt out and a few electronic devices were damaged. Ed was able to make repairs to the canopy at Brook Meadow, but at Stone Creek Ed will order a new canopy. The insurance adjuster came out to view the damages. He looked at the roof damage on the Founders Center room and staff has an estimate for it. It is likely that there will need to be 2 claims. The outfield fences for fall ball and the dugouts for the two small fields came down, Trees are not covered unless they are intentionally planted. The toddler swings in Fort Frankfort were on the ground. Ed is making sure that they put it back together per manufactures specs. It could have been from misuse.
- Vandalism - The damage at Jassen Park to the table top and slides has been repaired.
- Dog Park - An overview of the communications from the residents who have been communicating with staff was included in the packets. Most of them attended tonight's meeting. Exhibits and maps were included.
- Fort Frankfort – Staff received the entrance arch was installed 2 weeks ago.
- Paving Project – The project for trail improvements for Lakeview North and South was put out for bid. No bids were received. The project will be rebid for spring.
- 2027 Park Board Election – Two Board of Commissioners seats will be up for election in the April 2027 election. Packets are available at the Park District offices beginning August 24, 2026.The filing for candidate petitions is November 16-23, 2026.
- DCEO Funds – The application process is moving along. No work has been done. Bids will go out at the end of this year.
- Indoor Recreation Center – Discussion will be held in the Committee Meeting.
- Storm sheltering – Gina explained that the children from Day Camp sheltered at Chelsea School and the Puent Building. Staff did an excellent job of keeping the children occupied and safe.
- Historical Society Preservation – The group held their Ice Cream Social in the gym and had very good attendance. The staff was happy to accommodate them.

10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Special Recreation –

B. Building and Grounds Report – Ed's report was included in the Board's packets.
   - Storms on July 27th and August 11th required extensive cleanup and repairs requiring the team to put regular tasks aside.
   - Vandalism at Jannsen Park on July 4th has now been repaired.
   - Playgrounds have been mulched prior to the storms. Most of it remained in place.
   - Tuckpointing has been completed on two areas of the exterior gym walls at Founders Center.

- Four seasonal workers departed last week.
- Roof replacement should begin in two to four weeks.
- Staff replaced many of the 84 LED lights ,damaged by the storms, throughout the Founders Center. An insurance claim will be filed for the cost of replacement.

C. The Recreation Report – Stacey's report was included in the Board's packets.

- National Night Out Against Crime – It was held on August 4th. Staff set up an information table to promote upcoming programs and events along with Fall registration.
- Senior Picnic – It was held on July 22nd at the Founders Community Center. One-Hundred seniors were in attendance.
- Splash Park – A summary of revenue and expenses will be forthcoming after the park closes for the season.
- Community Garage Sale – It was held August 1st. 93 homes in the District boundaries participated, the weather was not the best.
- Day Camp – It concluded July 31stand was another amazing summer.
- Pre-School – It will begin September 8th and Kristin has been preparing for it along with the maintenance department.
- Prairie Care – It will begin August 20th. New this year is full-year registration.
- Family Camp Out - September 18 will be the Camp Out.

a. Community Outreach – Julie's report was included in the packets. Julie is working on Pours for Parks. A report has been produced by See My Legacy.

D. Public Relations – Debs report was included in the Board's packets. She has included the Digital Media report.

E. Planning Report – None

11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None

12. COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS –

Commissioner Gentry said thank you to the staff and appreciates the cleanup efforts being done so quickly. Ed added that he also thanks his staff because there wasn't even power and they worked hard through it.

Commissioner Ponton echoed what Commissioner Gentry said. He also praised the Recreation staff for all the extra work they needed to do to shuffle around the program schedules, moving outdoor activities indoor and keeping the public informed. He asked Gina and Ed to thank their staff employees.

Commissioner Ruvoli said to Ed thanks to him and his team for all the extra work. He thanked Stacy's team for their handling the programs and events that needed to be switched around. He noted that the Social Media Marketing is doing well and said thanks to Deb. He said thanks to Julie for the Pour for Parks report. He noted that vendors are all set for the event. He told the residents in attendance thank you for attending and voicing their concerns.

Commissioner McCarey told the residents thanks for coming to the meeting and please to return.

13. ADJOURNMENT –– President McCarey asked for a motion to adjourn the Frankfort Park District Board of Commissioners Regular monthly meeting of August 25, 2026, at p.m.
Commissioner Gentry so moved, and Commissioner Ruvoli seconded the motion. Hearing no objections, all present voted Aye. Motion passed by a voice vote at 7:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary T. Strand
Board Minutes Secretary