FRANKFORT PARK DISTRICT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS SPECIAL
MEETING TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 8, 2026
140 OAK STREET, FRANKFORT, IL 60423

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

President McCarey called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT Commissioner McCarey
Commissioner Gentry
Commissioner Ponton
Commissioner Ruvoli
Commissioner Barz

ABSENT None

ALSO PRESENT Gina Hassett, Executive Director; Stacy Proper, Super intendent of Recreation; Edward Newton, Supt. Building and Grounds; and Mary Strand, Recording Secretary.

GUESTS: Residents: Tom and Amy Kens; Deb Swasas; Jan Lock; Kelly and Jason Murphy; Ed and Drue Madon; and Nancey Feigel; Sharon Bingham; Darlene Cunningham; Courtney Hammang; David and Theresa McDonald; Dan and Vera Dougan; Liz Grove; Shawn and Kathy Duffy; Sue Panezzo; Darla Kircher; and Danny Doogan.

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.

A. **Approval of the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of August 25, 2026**
B. **Approval of the Committee Meeting Minutes of August 25, 2026**

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

Aye: (5) Commissioners Ponton, Barz, Gentry, Ruvoli, McCarey
Nay: (0)
Abstain: (0)
Absent: (0)

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 welcomed everyone and read a prepared statement (attached). He then invited those in attendance to speak.
Amy Kens expressed her concerns at the August 25th Board Meeting. She read a statement and produced photos of her family enjoying the park where the proposed dog park would be and some of the park's negative conditions. She asked for a port-o-potty to be installed. She encouraged the Board members to vote 'yes' to terminate the contract for the Dog Park relocation to Michele Bingham Park.
Liz Grove said the park is special for many reasons. It is a beautiful quiet place and next to the cemetery where Michele is buried and her family too. She fears that dogs barking would take away the serenity.
Sue Panazzo has gone to the Bark Park since it was installed. She claimed that the reduction to a one acre plot at Michele Bingham Park from the three acres at Commissioners Park is not good for the dogs. She wants to keep the dog park as is.
Deb Swasas has lived by the park before it was named to honor Michele Bingham. She loves to watch the kids play there and loves the open green space. If a dog park was installed there, it would eliminate many activities. She asked the Board to let Michele Bingham Park be left as the beautiful park it is now.
Kathleen Duffy said the proposed dog park issue has opened a lot of wounds. The park is a sanctuary to her and many others. She apologized for the miscommunication last April regarding renaming the park. She feels that people are being kicked out of the current Bark Park area to make room for 'For-Profit' sports. She said that members of the Bark Park were not given adequate input and notice of the proposed relocation. She said the space, Commissioners Park, is for all of the community not just the athletes.
Darlene Cunningham said she loves the Frankfort area and Michele Bingham park has to say. It is a sanctuary and asked to keep the legacy alive.
Veva Dougan was a soccer coach to Michele and helped dedicate the park. If it is taken away it would be devastating to the family and friends of her memorial.
Danny Dougan said it was a poor decision and could have been handled a lot better. He said it should remain as is.
Kelly Murphy said the park is very peaceful. She noted that families use the park and enjoy and is hoping it can stay as is.
Commissioner Barz thanked Sharon Bingham for attending the meeting. He noted that the current Bark Park was never donated to FPD. The 60 acre parcel was purchased by FPD.
Executive Director, Gina Hassett, told the gathering that the Bark Park was 'allocated' the three acres it currently has, and not 'dedicated'. There is no deed to have it remain in perpetuity. The athletic organizations that use the fields are recreational non profit, 501 3 c groups.
Jan Lock said the emotional impact speaks to how residents feel. It would take away green space and there are safety concerns of walking past the park if a dog park was added as it share the road with the cemetery. She asked why not keep the Bark Park at Commissioners Park.
Commissioner McCary invited all to attend future meetings and said that meeting minutes are posted on the web site. All Bark Park members will be notified of the next steps.

8. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT –
   A. Approval of the Termination of the Construction Contract for the Relocation of the Dog Park to Michele Bingham Park. President McCarey asked for a motion. Commissioner Ruvoli told the residents that the Board appreciates that they came out and gave their feedback. It is very important to the Board and not something they always get. He

noted that the Board is elected and serve as volunteers and work together for the community.

Commissioner Ruvoli made a motion to approve the* Termination of the Construction Contract for the Relocation of the Dog Park to Michele Bingham Park and authorize staff to provide notice of termination to the contractor in accordance with the terms of the contract. *Commissioner Ponton seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken.

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

Motion approved
(residents left the meeting at 7:06 p.m.)

B. Approve the Contract for Repairs to Founders Center Roof – Gina told the Board that during the recent storms, the roof over the Founders Room sustained damage when several tree limbs landed on the roof area. Staff reported the damage to PDRMA, and a PDRMA insurance adjuster, along with a representative from Style-Craft Roofing, inspected the roof and obtained core samples. Style-Craft Roofing, formerly known as Rogers Roofing, was previously awarded the contract to replace the roof over the main hallway at the Founders Center and we are awaiting the work to be completed. Style-Craft has provided a quote of $189,924 to repair and replace the damaged portion of the Founders Room roof resulting from the storm. It would be advantageous to complete the Founders Room roof repairs in conjunction with the already-planned main hallway roof replacement. At this time, staff has not received confirmation from PDRMA regarding coverage of the estimated $189,924 repair cost. Staff recommend that the Board authorize staff to proceed with the Style-Craft proposal, contingent upon PDRMA's confirmation of coverage and subject to the District's applicable emergency procurement requirements. If PDRMA does not provide coverage, staff will return to the Board with an update and recommendations regarding the funding of the repair. Discussion was held. President McCarey asked for a motion.

Commissioner Barz made a motion to approve the emergency repairs caused by storm damage to the Founders Center Roof by Style-Craft in the amount of $189,924 once PDRMA Confirms the repairs are covered under the claim and Commissioner Ruvoli seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken.

Aye: (5) Commissioners, Ruvoli, Barz, Gentry, Ponton, McCarey
Nay: (0)
Abstain: (0)
Absent: (0)

Motion approved

9. PRESIDENT'S REPORT
   - President McCarey said he agrees with one of the residents who mentioned the terrible happenings in Frankfort in the last couple of weeks. The town has been in the news and not in a good way.
   - He thanked the staff for all they did for the parade. It turned out well. He asked that they be told what a great job they did.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT – Continued
- Gina said that some villages put out a summary of their meeting the next day on their web site. She suggested that FPD could do just highlighting motions that were approved or denied and perhaps what the Board might consider at the next meeting, or even next steps on an issue. While it was considered a good idea, it was deemed to pile on to the already heavy workload. Commissioners Gentry and Ponton were not in favor of a summary.
- Gina told the Board that she has hired a new financial person, Karen LaPont. She will start on Monday September 14.

10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Special Recreation –

B. Building and Grounds Report – Ed's report was included in the Board's packets.

- Storms clean up continues.
- The Pre School ceiling repairs and clean up has been done.
- The crew also replaced the damaged light fixtures at the Founders Center. With over 80 LED lights needing replacement this is an ongoing task.
- Parks are being used weekly and staff has been fitting in small jobs among the bigger projects.

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

- The Fall brochure was delivered to residents and registration is still underway. The Mother/Child Dance has been filling up.
- Beginner Skateboarding has filled to capacity and a second class has been offered.
- The Back to School Bash moved indoors due to weather and was well attended.
- Fall Soccer will be coming to an end by September 30th.
- Men's Softball is in it's second session and has 9 teams.
- The Splash Pad closed September 3rd. It was the best season ever. The revenue before expenses was close to $20,000 and concessions $14,000. The rentals were down slightly. An accounting of all monies will be done for the next meeting.
- Preschool began today and will hold the Teacher Meet and Greet today and tomorrow.
- Prairie Care started on August 30th. Enrollment has increased, averaging approximately 35-40 children in Before Care and 50 Children in After Care daily. Staff have met with the school district to see if FPD could use more of their space.
- Stacy thanked everyone for coming out to the Fall Fest Parade.
- 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, regarding the parade, told the staff thanks for making everything easy for the Board. You make us look good. He apologized to the staff for having to deal with all the fallout from misinformation on social media. He recognized that it caused a lot of extra work and he appreciates the staff handling it all.

Commissioner Ponton thanked everyone. The residents concerns were very meaningful. The feedback is great. Everything that we, as a Board and Staff do, means a lot. He noted that the residents in attendance stated they knew FPD is struggling with funds. In the future, we have to keep in mind on large projects, did we keep everything in mind and considered the pros and cons.

Commissioner Ruvoli thanked Stacy and Ed for all their work on the parade and told them to thank everyone who helped. He thanked Gina for being his wheelchair baseball game at LWSRA. Gina will let Tom know the date of the next Operation Playground. He thanked Gina and Stacy for all the work they did on the Bark Park.

Commissioner Barz said ditto to the other commissioners statements. He said the float looked good. He thanked Gina for handling the stressful situation over the past few weeks.

13. ADJOURNMENT –– President McCarey asked for a motion to adjourn the Frankfort Park District Board of Commissioners Regular monthly meeting of September 8, 2026, at p.m.
Commissioner Barz so moved, and Commissioner Ponton seconded the motion. Hearing no objections, all present voted Aye. Motion passed by a voice vote at 7:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary T. Strand
Board Minutes Secretary