

Crete Park District  
Board of Commissioners  
Minutes  
April 20, 2016

President Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Roll Call: Mike Smith, Patty Wiater, Rita Piepenbrink, Jen Smith and Linda Johnson

Others Present: Therese Hale, Secretary/Assistant Director, Patricia Polzin, Director, Janel Geary, Recreation Supt., Janet Porter, SSSRA, Lisa Przewiecki, SSSRA

Public: Kelly A Hallin, Joshua Humbert Hallin, Gail Johnson, Donna Koven, Bill Gray, Michelle Calderone, Ellen Belotti, Charlotte Gebauer Koelling, Karl Hershberger, Maureen Faletti, Rachel Deck, Maureen Marthaler, Dave Nanista, Laura Fleischman, George Fleischman and Bonnie, Charles, Olivia, and Isabella Pressler

Pledge of Allegiance

President Johnson called the Public Hearing for the adoption of the Annual Budget and Appropriation of Funds for the Crete Park District fiscal year beginning May 1, 2016 and ending on the 30<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2017 to order at 7:00 PM. With no public comment, the hearing was closed at 7:04 PM.

**Recognition of Visitors:**

Director Polzin explained each year the Park District gives an award to a person, business or family for Volunteer of the Year. Crete Park District wants to recognize those who give above and beyond to make our District a better place. This year we would like to honor The Pressler family. Janel Geary explained Charlie Pressler has been a coach, his wife volunteers in preschool, their oldest daughter helps with special events, and the two youngest Presslers volunteer at soccer. Presslers were awarded a plaque and gift certificates. President Johnson thanked them for their service.

Janet Porter of SSSRA thanked the board for allowing them to come speak and for considering membership in their organization. She explained that in the 1970's legislation was passed that would allow District's to join SSSRA without referendum. She spoke about how we have been in discussion about joining the SSSRA since 2008 and gained some positive momentum. She invited several residents that were in attendance to speak about the positive effect SSSRA can have on our residents. Several letters of support were presented to the board.

Kelly Hallin, resident of Crete Park District spoke about her two special needs children. When her kids were younger they participated in some of the park district programs, but they soon found out their needs were greater than the park district could provide. She explained that it is imperative these kids are included. Her oldest is now 18 and his choice is stay home or be on

the streets. This is a problem for kids his age because we all understand being on the street is trouble. She encouraged the District to join so the kids can get the support they need to be back at the park district participating.

Donna Koven, resident of Crete Park District has a son who is special needs. She has participated in SSSRA for years and explained the extreme financial burden when not being part of SSSRA. The fees are 4 times, so what would cost a member \$60, costs her \$240. She explained to the board it is important for them to get involved young. It is important for them to be involved in the team environment. She urged the board to join and considers the benefit to be great for the people of Crete.

Maureen Marthaler, Crete Park District resident spoke about the great opportunities for young people, not just participants, but for kids who need work. The additional employment opportunities for our teens is a great bonus to providing programs for special needs.

Carl Hershberger, Crete Park District resident spoke about the amazing stories he hears about when supporting fundraisers for SSSRA. He feels if Crete Park District has the opportunity to partner with SSSRA and include all citizens in our programming, we absolutely should do it.

Laura Fleishman has been active with SSSRA and Special Olympics for 20 years. Her son has participated in basketball and several other programs throughout his life. She explained these kids need this because it is their social life. It is how they learn to make and be friends.

Gail Johnson, Crete Park District resident has worked part time for SSSRA. She explained the people who are at the meeting are just the tip of the ice burg. Ms. Johnson said giving these people more opportunity is so important for special needs kids and adults. As tax payers, this miniscule amount will have an infinite impact on so many people.

Mr. Bill Grey, Crete Park District resident said he has two daughters who worked there and said he has seen firsthand the difference SSSRA makes on both the participants and the employees. He urged the board to make the move to join SSSRA.

Ellen Belotti, Director of Special Education at CM 201-U came to say as an educator how important these programs are. Some of the kids and young adults can participate and be with their friends, but they just need the extra support that this program can provide. Ellen feels the sense of community and a warmth and friendliness in Crete that she hasn't experienced before. She wants the special needs people to be a part of that and urged the board to join SSSRA.

Michelle Calderone is a Special Olympics coach at CM 201U and highly recommends joining SSSRA. She explained her athletes need the physical exercise and the positive programming outside of school. She would love to see more opportunities for her children outside of school.

Rachel Deck from CM 201U also spoke about how much this would mean to the kids of the District. She urged the board to move forward and join SSSRA.

Maureen Faletti, Crete Park District resident, explained how she has witnessed participants and their parents and what a huge difference this makes in their life. She feels this would be a great asset to Crete.

Dave Nanista has a son who is a participant in the programs. He said his son enjoys these programs immensely. He spoke highly about the staff members at SSSRA and can't think of another thing that would be important to spend the money on.

Charlotte Koelling questioned the change in the levy. Janet Porter explained upon joining SSSRA, Crete Park District would add a Handicapped Fund. The levy will be \$.04 per \$100,000 EAV. For a home worth \$150,000 this would equate to approximately \$20 per year. 2.5 cents of the .04 would go to SSSRA or approximately \$35,000 annually. The remainder of the money would go to Crete Park District for ADA Accessible improvements. Ms. Koelling also asked about insurance and Janet Porter stated they are part of the Park District Risk Management pool.

Director Polzin explained that legislation allows the park district to join without referendum. The board has decided, however, to put the issue to referendum and let the people vote whether they wish to join.

Janet Porter explained SSSRA is also good for adults who have physical disability giving the example of a person who has a stroke or injury and needs Therapeutic classes. They also serve Veterans with a free health club. SSSRA serves a large spectrum of ages and abilities. She said the Lion's Club and Crete Township has helped fund programs over the years and letters of support have been sent to the board. Janet addressed the audience and explained SSSRA will need their help to get the referendum passed.

Kelly Hallin said she feels it is silly to spend the money for a referendum when the average home will only be paying \$20 a year. Director Polzin explained there is still some question as to whether tax objectors will get involved and challenge the addition to the levy. President Johnson explained they are trying to be cautious and have been watching several cases in the courts since 2008. Director Polzin said we have until August to get the binding referendum on the ballot for the November election. President Johnson expressed gratitude for those who came to speak. She and the board wanted to hear from the public. Donna Koven pointed out her son no longer lives here and she doesn't personally need the service at this time, but she would definitely vote yes. Kelly Hallin explained to the board that parents with special needs kids often can't come to meetings like this and don't have the time or fight left to even approach the park district for help with Recreation. They are often overwhelmed with day to day living. She feels strongly that if the benefits are offered, we will see a great deal more

participating. Donna Koven pointed out special needs parents have a big problem in the summer. You can't hire a 16-year-old girl to watch a 14-year-old special needs boy.

Ellen Belotti from CM201U said she counted 200+ students in our park district that would benefit from this service. All of these students are between the ages of 3 and 21. She knows there are several over the age of 21 that would also benefit. Janet Porter pointed out when Lan Oak joined they had 12 families active. Now they have 309.

Janet Porter thanked the Board of Commissioners for the opportunity to speak and said she is happy to answer any questions that may come up.

Director Polzin discussed the township agreement with SSSRA. They do pay the difference between resident and nonresident rate, but their funding is limited. The township cannot tax for Special Recreation because the Rural Park District is a no taxing body. They are currently serving 8 families.

Commissioner Piepenbrink said we currently have only 2 families using our scholarship program. She said if we suddenly had 200 participants we wouldn't be able to fund it without joining. If we have this many people in need, it justifies proving the service. Director Polzin has been speaking to the clerk of the township and Janet Porter and would like to see us have an agreement with the township so their members could also use the SSSRA services.

Commissioner Piepenbrink has been contacted by people who are not for joining because of the additional tax. They feel we are constantly being taxed. Secretary Hale said the letter was sent out on social media this week and there were no negative comments, only positive.

Director Polzin explained we cannot use tax money to educate people about the referendum. President Johnson pointed out if the tax payers say no, we don't have the option.

It is currently not on the agenda. We need to check with the attorney for the proper verbage. He suggested we place it on the agenda in July, but we will look into having it on in May.

We will be having a park tour June 15 at 5 PM.

**Smith moved and Piepenbrink seconded a motion to approve the Minutes from March 16, 2016. All Commissioners present voted aye. Commissioner Piepenbrink asked to have the minutes copied and placed in her mailbox.**

**Smith moved and Wiater seconded a motion to approve the Accounts Payable and Payroll as presented. Questions were answered and on a roll call vote, all Commissioners present voted aye.**

**Secretary's Report:**

Account balances and financial statements were presented. The next regular meeting will be held on May 18 at 7 PM.

**Wiater moved and Piepenbrink seconded a motion to approve the Ordinance number 15-16-09, an Ordinance adopting the Combined Annual Budget and Apporriation of Funds for the Crete Park District. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye.**

**Recreation Report:** Commissioner Piepenbrink likes that our staff continued to get an education and advance their skills. Director Polzin said Supt. Geary will be getting the Community Builders Award to Janel in May. She will also be attending the Career Day in Sauk Village this month.

Commissioner Smith said her daughter is currently in Preschool Prep class and she hears the parents being very positive about our programs. She said it's good to hear good things about what we do here.

We are having a tough season with our Micro Soccer. Several unhappy parents about scheduling. We originally had soccer pictures planned for this room tonight and had to reschedule in the dome. Colling Fagan is doing a nice job handling the program that has a lot of kids and very picky parents.

**Maintenance Report:** We have our new employee, Steve Smith, starting on Monday.

**Long Range:** Director Polzin met with President Johnson and will present the updated report next month.

**Personnel/Finance:** Wiater asked to move this to executive session.

**Attorney's Report:** None

**Director's Report:**

There is some legislature we are following that will affect some of our employees called the overtime rule. At this point, employees can be exempt from overtime only if they make over \$23,660. The new legislation will change that amount to \$47,892. Any employee making less than this will not be able to use our comp time system. Commissioner Smith said overtime shouldn't be an issue. Employees should be scheduled accordingly. Overtime is the result of bad management.

Comed is finished with their project. Mr. Most came to us and pointed out there was a lot of damage to Triebold farm, but not on our property.

Director Polzin and Assistant Director Hale will be in Springfield on May 3 and 4.

**Old Business:** We met with Tech 3 about the Village Well house and have agreed to demolish the small building we have at Swiss Valley to make room for a larger Well House. A portion of this building will be available for the park district to use for storage. We will have to move the swing and they will be pouring concrete curbing for this playground.

Garrent Playground construction has started. We are hoping the equipment for Gordon Park will be in before Garret is complete and the construction company will go from one playground to the next.

**New Business: Commissioner Wiater asked that we look into some safety equipment/cameras for the bike trail.**

**Presidents Report:** President Johnson thanked the staff for all their hard work.

Wiater moved and Piepenbrink seconded a motion to move into Executive Session at 9:25 PM for the purpose of 2 ©I, the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees of the public body or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee of the public body or against legal counsel for the public body to determine its validity. All Commissioners present voted aye.

Wiater moved and Piepenbrink seconded a motion to move out of Executive Session at 10:30 PM. All Commissioners present voted aye.

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:** The Park Tour was scheduled for June beginning at 5 PM.

**Smith moved and Piepenbrink seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 PM, to be reconvened on May 3 at 6 PM. All Commissioners present voted aye.**

**President Johnson reconvened the meeting at 6 PM on May 3, 2016.**

Roll Call: Mike Smith, Patty Wiater, Rita Piepenbrink, Jen Smith and Linda Johnson

**Wiater motioned and Piepenbrink seconded to move into executive session under section 2 ©I, , the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees of the public body or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee of the public body or against legal counsel for the public body to determine its validity. All Commissioners present voted aye.**

**Wiater moved and Piepenbrink seconded a motion to return to regular session at 7:52 PM. All Commissioners present voted aye.**

**Wiater motioned to combine the Secretary and Treasurer position and add them to the job description of the Assistant Director, seconded by Piepenbrink. On a roll call, board members Wiater, Jen Smith, Linda Johnson, Piepenbrink voted yes, Mike Smith voted no. Motion carried.**

**Wiater motioned to increase Director Pat Polzin's salary by \$1600 annually, seconded by Piepenbrink. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners present voted aye.**

**Wiater motioned to increase the salary of Janel Geary by \$1000 and increase the salary of Amy Madsen by \$750, annually. Additional salary increases include the sum of \$4500 to be divided by the Park Director between Andy Biesterfeld, Janel Geary, Amy Madsen and Therese Hale. The \$4500 will be dispersed over 52 weeks starting May 1, 2016. Second by Piepenbrink. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners present voted aye.**

**Wiater motioned that the board is to be notified as to how the \$4500 is divided before any employee is notified. Second by Piepenbrink. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners present voted aye.**

**Wiater motioned that a review and restructuring take place for all employment positions at Crete Park District. Second by Piepenbrink. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners present voted aye.**

**Wiater motioned that the board will explore an exercise for team building for the staff. Second by Jen Smith. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners present voted aye.**

**Wiater motioned to adjourn, second by Jen Smith at 8:02 PM. All Commissioners present voted aye.**