



**BOARD OF EDUCATION - SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES
OF MONDAY, MAY 4, 2023
PEOTONE HIGH SCHOOL - MEDIA CENTER**

CALL TO ORDER:

At 6:01 p.m., President Robinson called the special board meeting of Monday, May 4, 2023 to order and requested all who are present to please stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance. A roll call of the board members present was taken and the following board members answered aye (7), Tara Robinson, President, Rick Uthe, Vice President, Jennifer Moe, Secretary, Jodi Becker, Board Trustee, Roger Bettenhausen, Board Trustee, Tim Stoub, Board Trustee, Dawn Love, Board Trustee. Mr. Steve Stein, Superintendent was present with the Board for the special board meeting.

ALSO PRESENT:

Peotone Park District Board members, Barb Sim, President, Shaun Ziems, Vice President, Lindsey Schwiesow, Secretary, Jacklyn Van Overmeiren, Commissioner/FOIA Officer, Kelly LaMore, Park Manager.

OPPORTUNITY FOR VISITORS TO SPEAK:

Andrew Zwolinski, of Peotone, IL, signed in to speak tonight to address the conditions of the baseball/softball fields at the park district. These fields have been left without enough support for a long time. Mr. Zwolinski hopes that a resolution can be made between the park district and the school district to work on the fields at the park or if the school district decides to build their own fields or facility, let's come together, so we can have the fields or facility our athletes justly deserved.

Natalie Clay, of Peotone, IL, signed in to speak tonight on behalf of PBSA as a whole - we are willing to help with the fields' maintenance in any way we possibly can. Also, as a parent of a high school softball player we as parents can help too - maybe fundraisers or sponsorships. Please keep us informed.

Jean Hespen, of Peotone, IL signed in to speak about her concerns about the condition of Blue Devil Drive. So please let's come together, the park district and the school district to resolve this issue. We want to make Peotone a place where people want to come and raise their children.

DISCUSSION:

- a. ***Baseball/Softball Fields***
- b. ***IGA***
- c. ***Blue Devil Drive***

President Robinson reported that the school district received a letter from the park district asking for the district's help with some things at the park. President Robinson asked the Park District board - we need to know what the park district's perspective is and what the park district is looking for from the district - so let's layout the issues so we can start digesting what you need.

President Sim started the conversation and said that initially it is what the public is speaking to. Obviously, no decisions will be made tonight and she would like this to be a conversation type forum. In addition, President Sim speaks on behalf of the board as the President of the Park Board. She said that our letter addresses all the issues that the public has been coming to us regarding the park district and most of these pieces fall into the partnership with school district. Moreover, the people of the Peotone Park District are simply residents of the Village of Peotone, and the school district has a much larger residency and also the school district's tax base does not pay into the Peotone Park District. So supporting a lot of the park areas is difficult for the park district because there is a very limited budget. President Sim continued to say - we have created a list of the park district's usage of the school facilities for our programs and the school district's use of the park district facilities.

The park district has gone as far to have a survey done to know the boundaries of the park district and the school district. However, the survey shows us that the park district and the school district's boundaries are intermingled. President Sim told everyone that they can review survey tonight, if anyone would like to review the survey. The park district also had estimates done on the baseball/softball fields and Blue Devil Drive. The estimate on the ball field was done a year ago to move back the home plate and it was \$80,000 just to move the plate, and to rebuild the field now would probably cost more than \$150,000 and that is just an estimate. PBSA and the School District are the only ones using the fields, the park district does not use or rent out the fields. And the estimate to rebuild the Blue Devil Drive was around \$450,000 and President Sim said the 2023-2024 Budget tax revenue for the park district is \$240,000, so there is no way in our budget to do these projects

President Robinson wanted to go over the letter from the Park regarding the ball fields and what you need from us now. Right now we split maintenance of the fields between the park district, school district and PBSA - each of us pay 1/3 of the cost. President Sim responded that is correct - the park district will pay out to the vendors and then send a statement to the school district and PBSA pay one-third of the cost. And on the east/west fields the improvements is split one-third between the school district and one-third PBSA. So right now, we share the costs of improvements to the fields.

President Robinson asked President Sim - what you are looking for from the district. President Sim responded that if you want major improvements done to those fields, we need the school district to step up - we do not have the funds to do that.

Tim Stoub, Board Trustee asked if the park district receives any additional revenue that you see. President Sim responded that the ball fields are not rented out to any other organizations but we do have program income, grants which are specific to a project. We do not get any private donations and we do not have good luck with fundraising. So we do not have large sums of money. Mr. Stoub also wanted know what the impact would be if the school district would build their own fields and pull away from the park district? President Sim responded that we love having people in the park and as a taxpayer how much would that cost to build your own fields?

The park district board asked the school district if we can form a committee and work on these issues and projects together and make our athletes, families and all of us proud of Peotone.

President Robinson reported to the park district aside of the big ticket projects, which I am interested in - drill down on softball and baseball fields.

President Sim responded that if we could have a district's maintenance employee trained on dragging the baseball softball fields that would very helpful. The park district has one maintenance person, and if something happens to him we are out of luck. Both the school district and the park district agreed to have current insurance in place, so that the school district's maintenance employee can be trained on park district's equipment to learn how to drag the fields.

Jennifer Moe, Board Secretary, asked what can we do short term solution - to get our through the season - are the fields playable? Yes, the fields are playable for now, but there is only a week left to the season.

President Sim said that most of those projects and issues would come into play with an intergovernmental agreement between the school district and the park district. President Sim said that we don't have a current intergovernmental agreement between the school district and the park district. The only one that she could find was from 1996 and it expires in 2006, or maybe it is from 1994 and expires in 2004. So for nineteen years we have been working without any kind of intergovernmental agreement between the park district and school district, and this is a piece that we need to address.

President Robinson asked if the Park District is willing to continue to keep the high level of maintenance of the fields. President Sim let me say this - that there is 4200 residents in village of Peotone which is in the Peotone Park District and there is double that amount of residents in the school district and the park district is not solely used by the residents of the village of Peotone. The school district's cooperation is very important to us.

President Robinson said that we need to have some kind of framework in place for what you are looking and what it will cost. President Sim responded yes we do, but we need to get all together as a committee level - what does the school need and what the park district can do and how do we cooperate with each other.

President Robinson asked if we can skip and go right to the Blue Devil Drive conversation. It has been an ongoing topic and we are all aware that it will cost several hundred thousand dollars to repair. President Sim said that Blue Devil Drive is nightmare to the park district all year long.

President Robinson responded we agree as well, that being said, about ten years ago it was proposed that the park district pay one-third, the village pay one-third and the school district to pay one-third for the repair of Blue Devil Drive. Are you thinking that the park district has the funds to repair your half of the Blue Devil Drive?

President Sim responded that the park district is working on something outside of the school district's cooperation regarding the repairs of the Blue Devil Drive and she wants to leave it as that. Jodi Becker, Board Trustee asked the park district - are you saying that they do not need help from the District regarding Blue Devil Drive? President Sim said no not tonight.

Jennifer Moe, Board Secretary, asked if the school district is still interested in acquiring Blue Devil Drive. President Robinson talked after repairs of Blue Devil Drive it would have to be maintain yearly. The main key is getting Blue Devil Drive repaired and it has been repaired and also the maintenance of the Drive after it has been repaired.

Roger Bettenhausen. Board Trustee, added that his view is that he will push for the school district to build their own fields instead putting more money in rebuilding a new field at the park district. President Sim said if this is what the school district wants to move forward with, the park district is good with this. Mr. Bettenhausen said that in the short-term, we need to step up and get the fields ready for the fall, and the school board will discuss further what we want to do going forward.

President Robinson said we will each continue to pay one-third of the bills as we have been doing. We will work together to get the fields ready for the summer and fall. The school district will create a committee to work together with the park district on the fields, Blue Devil Drive and the Intergovernmental Agreement.

President Robinson will have Chris Crawford reach out to the park district regarding the training of one of our maintenance employees.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 7:24 p.m., President Robinson asked for a motion to adjourn the special board meeting of Monday, May 4, 2023. Mrs. Robinson made a motion to adjourn and Mr. Uthe seconded the motion, and on a voice call vote, the following board members answered aye (7) Mrs. Robinson, Mrs. Becker, Mr. Bettenhausen, Mr. Uthe, Mrs. Moe, Mr. Stoub, Mrs. Love and no nays.



Tara Robinson, President



Cathy Cuculich, Reporter