

**LINCOLN PARK DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 10, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER – At 6:02 PM, Don Peasley called to order the Lincoln Park District Board of Commissioners’ monthly business meeting.

ROLL CALL – Commissioners attending were Don Peasley, Gary Nodine, Dave Perring, and Sam White. Bob Thomas was absent. Staff in attendance included Becky Strait, Allison Baker, Jennifer Prather, and Angie Coombs. Vern Haseley was absent.

PUBLIC HEARING: ORDINANCE#367 – FISCAL YEAR 2026 BUDGET & APPROPRIATION

Don Peasley announced the Public Hearing open at 6:03PM for discussion. Seeing as there were no members of the community present, Don asked the Board if there were any further questions on the topic. The Public Hearing closed upon unanimous vote at 6:05 PM.

MINUTES OF MEETING – Minutes of the meeting in November were presented. Don asked if there were any questions, comments, or suggested amendments. Dave Perring made the motion to approve the minutes as presented. Gary Nodine moved to second the motion, which then passed after a unanimous roll-call vote.

VISITORS – NONE

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE – The operating expenses were submitted for approval in the following funds:

GENERAL	-	\$	4,471.52
LIABILITY	-	\$	85,862.00
RECREATION	-	\$	6,589.69
CAPITAL IMP.	-	\$	34,391.33
BOND REPAYMENT	-	\$	829,752.71

Angie pointed out that the totals were large mostly due to the Bond repayment and Insurance Payments being included. She explained that IPARKS changed their renewal dates to coincide with the calendar year. Also noted was that the Bond repayment would be processed via a wire transfer, which is due on the 15th.

Gary Nodine the motion to approve Accounts Payable as presented, which was seconded by Sam White, and passed after a unanimous, roll-call vote.

CASH FLOW –

Don inquired about the Real Estate Tax proceeds, for which Angie had included a document. Angie explained that the Bond Fund had over 100% and all others were less than 0.5% short. Angie continued to explain that the annual estimate for Personal Property Replacement Taxes was very close to the total amount received, of \$102,500.00. The total was approximately \$24,000 less than the previous year, but the State had provided a letter in 2024 explaining how the distribution of taxes had been recalculated, and to expect lower amounts in the following years. Angie stated that the same estimate of \$100,000 was included in the Budget & Appropriation in hopes that the distribution changes have leveled out moving forward. Angie pointed out to the Board that the tax levy for the Audit Fund does not cover the cost of the annual audit. Therefore, with the Board’s permission, she would prepare a resolution to allocate the “Revenue Recapture”

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received in 2025 for Audit costs to be approved at the next meeting. The Board agreed that the Revenue Recapture funds should be allocated to audit costs.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – BECKY STRAIT

- A Slideshow presentation was displayed:
- Recent events include PJs & Treats with Santa, Jr. Railers, and Kids cooking classes.
- Park Improvements:
 - The work has paused for the season until next spring.
 - Becky reminded the Board that she had contacted Tod Stanton, of Design Perspectives, to request information and quotes for possibly updating the 5-year plan and OSLAD Grant application work.
 - Tod provided a quote for both aspects.
 - The Master Plan was quoted at \$50,000 and Grant Application at \$10,000.
 - The Board had previously agreed that other firms should be researched.
 - Dale Schaffenacker, a vendor of playground equipment, met with Becky and referred her to contact a firm located in Jacksonville, Benton Engineering.
 - Dale explained to Becky that he had worked with entities in the Jacksonville area, who had contracted Benton Engineering to assist with OSLAD grant applications, and he had heard a lot of positive feedback.
 - Per Dale, the firm likes to work with smaller entities and does not overcharge for services, as they understand the smaller budgets, and Dale has helped some add playground equipment as a result.
 - Becky contacted and met with Greg Hillis, of Benton Engineering, to discuss the services provided regarding master plans and OSLAD grant applications.
 - Mr. Hillis explained that their firm previously had a 100% success rate of their OSLAD applications, but that has lowered slightly, around the same time that LPD has had difficulty communicating with DNR staff about failed applications.
 - Becky explained the Board's interest in improving Memorial Park and possibly interest in applying for an OSLAD grant and the near expiration of the current master plan.
 - Benton Engineering quoted \$7,000 just for the OSLAD application and \$19,700 for the Master Plan.
 - If LPD contracts for both services, they would be willing to reduce the OSLAD fee to \$5,900.
 - Upon a quick review of the current Master Plan, Mr. Hillis explained that his firm compiles a plan that is much more focused on concrete suggestions from an engineering perspective with scheduled recommendations.
 - For instance, if the tennis court surfacing was found to be nearing the end of its lifespan, there would be recommendations to resurface the courts over a multi-year period.
 - Less emphasis would be placed on demographic data and extraneous information that does not relate to structural or other tangible improvements.
 - It was also suggested that, due to the pandemic, that the current plan could be adjusted, citing the delays caused by scarcity of labor and supplies during that time.
 - Also, the City's parks can be removed so that the focus is on LPD properties, of which improvements have been made to date and can be adjusted to identify such changes.
 - Sam inquired about the cost to update the current plan, which Becky stated that work could be done internally, and requires a Resolution to extend the Master Plan with an update.

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- Sam asked for clarification that the previous quote from Design Perspectives was \$60,000 for both, but Benton Engineering quoted \$25,600, which Becky verified.
 - Sam questioned how long LPD has been working with Design Perspectives.
 - Becky explained that LPD contracted that firm to compose the 2020 Master Plan and subsequently contracted them on 2 occasions for OSLAD Grant applications.
- Becky stated that, per her conversation with Mr. Hillis, his firm's goal is to help communities improve via grants available to them.
- Mr. Hillis also stated that their firm has also had some difficulty communicating with DNR about why some applications have been denied and conjectured that staff changes have played a part over the years.
- Gary questioned how much LPD used the previous Master Plan and asked how much it cost.
- Becky verified that LPD paid Design Perspectives \$9,000 for the Master Plan and around \$16,000 towards the 2 OSLAD Grant applications.
- Becky explained that, excluding the parks owned by the City, the Master Plan has been reviewed prior to improving Lehn & Fink & Exchange Club Parks, and was considered prior to improvements made to the main grounds.
- Gary expressed concern about spending more money on something that is not a guarantee, when those funds can be used to improve parks.
- Angie pointed out that the cost would be less than the other firm, and the odds were better since this firm has a high success rate, for up to \$600,000 grant money.
- It was asked if LPD opts to contract with Benton Engineering for the OSLAD grant, would they also provide the design specs for Memorial Park, or just the application part.
- Becky verified that the firm would also provide the design specs needed for the application.
- Becky also stated that she had discussed with Mr. Hillis the idea for Memorial Park is to keep it a green space, but to add some more recreational aspects to the area, and honor its historical significance.
- Dave Perring made the motion to contract with Benton Engineering for the 2026 OSLAD grant application.
 - Sam White moved to second the motion.
 - The motion passed after a unanimous, roll-call vote.
- North Parking Lot Improvement Project:
 - Becky verified receipt of the landscaping warranty.
- Inter-governmental Agreement with Lincoln Community High School:
 - Becky informed the Board that she had received a fully signed copy of the agreement, which was sent after she made the approved changes regarding the truck access for maintenance.
- Security System Upgrade:
 - Becky informed the Board that she had notified George Alarm of the upcoming change.
 - She is still in the process of obtaining the options available to purchase the burglar system.
- Aquatic Center:
 - Becky updated the Board on the status.
 - The pool designer contacted her to apologize for the delay caused by his illness which required some hospitalization.
 - The design is currently being reviewed by the engineer.
- 2026 Price Change Recommendations:
 - Becky explained that she felt comfortable leaving the membership prices unchanged.

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- Don questioned how many memberships were sold annually, which was around 1,000.
- Sam asked which membership was the most popular, to which the annual and monthly were both listed.
- Becky shared that Silver Sneaker participants count for around 100 memberships, for which many opt to use it for walking but there are just as many that utilize the Circuit level benefits.
- Gary asked about the daily fees.
- Becky explained how memberships and daily fees are incorporated into the annual budget.
- Becky suggested that the Track & Court fees be simplified.
 - There is a discrepancy at the Desk regarding the 12/13 age split, which can be an issue.
 - Combine the youth (under 5) and Seniors (60+) with one fee at \$3.00 and 5-59 as one fee at \$4.00, which will remove 1 price point.
 - Currently, 2&under are free, 3-12 \$3.50, 13-59 \$4.50, & Senior walking \$2.50.
 - Gary questioned charging for the younger kids in strollers.
 - Angie pointed out that often 3-5 yr olds are allowed to roam a little, and some parents do nothing while the kids make messes that staff then are required to clean up, which would justify the small fee.
- Becky explained that she had spoken with Jennifer about prices for Aerobic classes, and discussed how some patrons also choose to use the circuit area before or after class.
 - The recommendation is to increase individual class prices from \$5 to \$6.
 - Becky asked the Board to consider approving a combo fee of \$10, which would include both an Aerobic Class and Strength Day Pass.
 - Price comparisons of other facilities revealed that most Aerobic Class fees are \$20-25 per class for a day pass.
- Personal Training prices need to be slightly adjusted, mainly the 1-hour session packages.
- Becky is recommending adding a court reservation fee for volleyball, tennis and pickle ball.
- Open play times are currently, and will continue to be blocked out, for the busiest times during the week.
- There currently is no fee for the public to reserve a court.
- One example of where this should benefit everyone is that there are times when the volleyball court is reserved for an hour for just 2 people paying the daily fee.
 - Where a full court could have 10-20 people playing and paying the daily fee, it is shut down for only 2, which is a loss of income.
 - A court reservation fee would offset some of that loss.
- Sam inquired if the court reservation included the daily admission fee, which was verified to be separate, to better track the attendance for that reservation.
- Gary questioned whether the tennis court fees would be the same, which Becky verified that she is not recommending changing the hourly fee, just adding the reservation fee.
 - At \$10 an hour, that could be a shared expense at \$5.00 per person.
 - For doubles, that would only be an additional \$2.00 per hour/ person.
 - The amount would be less for pickleball players, which only use a half court and typically have 4 players per court.
 - The standard party/group rate for court rental is \$35/hour, which Dave asked if that was high, but Angie explained that the rate was based on the \$3.50 daily fee and minimum of 10 participants.
- Pickleball is another matter to discuss.

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- Sam mentioned that some of the community is not happy with LCHS as the courts are closed to the public during the hours students are on the property.
 - Becky explained that a group of pickleball players met with her recently to discuss the topic.
 - Becky proposes a court rental fee for pickleball; half court \$5/ hour and full court \$10/ hour.
 - Discontinuing the daily fee of \$3.00 for 1 hour is suggested, as most patrons play 2 hours, but to keep the option to purchase 1-hour punch cards.
 - Staff have difficulty monitoring the 1 hour usage and find that it is common for patrons to stay for a second hour without paying the additional \$2.00 fee.
 - The majority of patrons typically play for a 2-hour period.
 - Becky recommends following suit of other facilities:
 - Set “Open Play” Day/times throughout the week, which require no reservations and is first-come-first play format.
 - The “Drop-in” fee for open play hours is \$6.00 for 2 hours.
 - It would be an incentive to purchase a punch pass, which includes 20 1 or 2 -hour sessions at the previous rate (a few free punches were included with each package).
 - Punch Cards can be used for either Open Play or with a reservation, which has an hourly fee, and both have the stipulation that another punch will be deducted if play time exceeds the designated time.
 - The Pickleball Passport option will be available for unlimited Pickleball Open Play sessions at \$70 per month, which does not require reservations.
 - Becky recommends that the Fit/Net pass be modified to include unlimited Open Play Pickleball sessions and Strength Level Membership Access for \$100.00 per month.
 - Gary Nodine made the motion to approve recommended price adjustments for the daily fees and court rental fees as proposed.
 - Sam White moved to second the motion.
 - Motion approved after a unanimous, roll-call vote.
- Becky reminded the Board that the Christmas party will be December 20th, in conjunction with Jon Young’s Winter Dance and its catering. Dinner will be held in the Railer Room and the dance will follow in the Ball Room.

SUPERVISOR OF OPERATIONS - Vern Haseley (presented by Becky)

- Vern reported to Becky that the staff had been busy with snow removal and winterizing the equipment.
- Angie stated that Matt had changed the lights in both locker rooms recently.
- Becky informed the Board that special salt had been ordered to make sure that the new parking lot is not damaged chemically.
- Sam asked if there were any issues with the first snow removal, which Becky stated that Vern was sure to put out the delineators early to make the plowing easier. The aggregate area in the North Lot is actually where Vern decided to pile the snow, which was to help keep vehicles out of that immediate area.

PROGRAM REPORT – ALLISON BAKER

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- Allison reported to the Board that LPD had received 385 letters for Santa, which she was busy processing. Don asked about the previous year's number, which Allison estimated to be a little over 300. ME Realty donated towards the postage expense.
- PJs with Santa had around 50 participants, which had a pre-registration requirement, so a count could be used to order sufficient pizza. Most stayed the entire time, and parents reportedly enjoyed the less chaotic environment.
- Kids in the Kitchen has another session coming up, registration is full, and all the kids and instructor enjoy the class. Sam asked if any of the kids registered for both sessions, and Allison verified that there were a few, which is a good sign that they enjoyed the class.
- Allison is working on the details of a new tennis instructor with possible clinics & lessons. The targeted age group is Jr. High and High School age. The courts will be busy this winter.
- Jr Railers started their weekend games in December and there will be a break for the holidays. Don inquired about the registration numbers, which Allison verified that this year was close to last year's numbers, but there are more girls this year to where the numbers are almost equal. The local schools lowered their age brackets, and some Jr. Railer participants are playing in both. Sam asked if there were enough coaches for each team, which Allison verified that all teams have a coach. Allison stated that pictures were coming up, and that the new company used to order shirts was a success. The shirts came prepacked by team, so there was less work needed to distribute, and the quality was great.
- Allison informed the Board that the phones have been busy lately with people calling to inquire about room reservations. Don asked if LPD's prices were comparable to other local venues, and Allison reported that many are surprised when they learn that the fee is for the day when other venues charge by the hour(s). Allison also reported that people are shocked at the low rates for court rentals and the daily fees for facility usage as well. Angie pointed out that a local group of Live Action Role Players (aka LARPer's) love the facility and have rented out most of the facility for a day more than once. The Board was unfamiliar with LARPing, and there was a quick explanation of the event. LPD does offer the group a discount since they rent so many rooms and court space for their event, which brings a few hundred people visiting from all over.
- **FITNESS MANAGER: JENNIFER PRATHER**
 - Group Fitness Class attendance for November was 705, which was about 50 less than last November.
 - The last Meet & Mingle had 6 attendees, and the next one is on December 18th.
 - The Turkey Burner Class was enjoyed by all.
 - There will be special classes offered at the end of December, Holiday Hustle and a New Year's Eve class.
 - December will include a Personal Training Special.
 - LPD will be offering a special Video offer which includes a 10-day core workout they can do from the comfort of their own home.
 - Jennifer is speaking with instructors to discuss if any would like to record new videos, as the cache currently available were recorded during the pandemic.
 - Jennifer is working on the new class schedule.
 - Janelle Woolard contacted Jennifer to inquire about possibly teaching classes at LPD, and Jennifer wanted to ask the Board if there are any qualms about rehiring her. None of the Board mentioned any issues that would prohibit her rehire.

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- The theme for 2026 fitness classes is “Ultimate Fitness Tour”, with a rock concert style theme.
- Jennifer is working on the quarterly newsletter.
- The Best Body program will be offered in January.
- Jennifer is working on creating another escape room special class.
- The Foundation is selling a Calendar for 2026, which includes LPD photos each month and important dates are listed (such as holiday closures). At the back of the calendar are coupons that can be redeemed for a specific month.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Becky informed the Board that she received thank you cards from Lincoln Community High School and CIVC.

Becky informed the Board that she had pulled up some membership reports in the system and the current membership count was 1,043. In 2023, LPD sold 864 memberships and 758 in 2022.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- A. Capital Improvements:
 - 1. Park Improvement Projects: See Executive Director’s Report.
 - 2. North Parking Lot Improvement Project: See Executive Director’s Report.
- B. Aquatic Center: See Executive Director’s Report.
- C. Fiscal Year 2024 Audit Report:
 - 1. Angie stated that the final report was included for each Board member in their packet.
- D. Authorization of sale/conveyance of Park District Property: NONE.

NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Ordinance#366: Fiscal Year 2026 Tax Levy:
 - 1. Sam White made the motion to adopt Ordinance#366 as written.
 - 2. Dave Perring moved to second the motion.
 - 3. Motion passed after a unanimous, roll-call vote.
- B. Ordinance#367: Fiscal Year 2026 Budget & Appropriation:
 - 1. Gary Nodine made the motion to adopt Ordinance#367 as written.
 - 2. Sam White moved to second the motion.
 - 3. Motion passed after a unanimous, roll-call vote.
- C. Fiscal Year 2026 Prices: See Executive Director’s Report.

Executive Session: Dave Perring made the motion to enter Executive Session to discuss and employee matter. Gary Nodine moved to second the motion, and the motion carried. The Board entered executive session at 7:18 pm.

The Board exited Executive session at 7:47 pm. Don Peasley asked for the Board to make a motion on offering a counteroffer regarding Personal Training wages. Sam White made the motion to counteroffer as discussed. Gary Nodine moved to second the motion, which then passed after a unanimous, roll-call vote.

ADJOURNMENT: Seeing no further business, Gary Nodine moved to adjourn the meeting. Dave Perring moved to second the motion. Motion carried. Adjournment: 7:51 P.M.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 10, 2025 at 6:00 PM.