

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

CALL TO ORDER – At 6:00 PM, Don Peasley called to order the Lincoln Park District Board of Commissioners' monthly business meeting.

ROLL CALL – Commissioners attending were Don Peasley, Dave Perring, and Sam White. Gary Nodine and Bob Thomas were absent. Staff in attendance included Becky Strait, Vern Haseley, Allison Baker, Jennifer Prather, and Angie Coombs. None were absent.

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

VISITORS –

- Angie & Clint Myers, of American Patriot Pyro, were introduced to the Board by Becky. Both Dave and Becky thanked the Myers for a great show in July, and Dave also shared that he heard nothing but positive feedback. Becky reminded the Board that the previous contract had expired and, if the Board desired, a new contract was on the table. Per the previous Board meeting, Becky explained that Gary had inquired about Mt. Pulaski's show/budget in comparison to Lincoln's. Ms. Myers had previously spoken with Becky and offered to come speak with the Board and brought with them a breakdown of Lincoln's show. The Myers explained that Lincoln has a larger area, with fewer restrictions, for the display, which allows for larger and more expensive cakes. It was speculated that July 3rd had very little wind, which failed to diffuse the smoke and may have obscured the show a little. In comparison with Mt. Pulaski, their display limitations require shells no larger than 4" cakes, which also cost less than the larger ones. This alone may have accounted for the appearance of Mt. Pulaski's show having a larger budget. Dave did point out that many spectators watch from locations adjacent to LPD's grounds, so the big ones are nice for them. Ms. Myers inquired about vendors on LPD's property for the show, to help draw a crowd, and Becky explained that we do have food trucks and other activities on site, and the nearby church usually also sells concessions to the crowds in their lot and the school's. Don and Dave both praised the shows provided to date and speculated that LPD and Gary can review the list provided to consider adding to the budget. Mr. Myers did state that Mt. Pulaski has already planned a bigger show for the Semiquincentennial in 2026. Becky inquired about the Federal Tariffs, and how they affect the industry. Mr. Myers explained that they are able to import directly from the manufacturers in China, which did run into the issue of tariffs this year. Vern did inform the Myers, and reminded the Board, that there is a solar farm to be installed in the field behind the range & shop. Mr. Myer stated that the range would allow for sufficient clearance if the solar farm requires more distance. Before leaving the meeting, Mr. & Mrs. Myers thanked the Board for their time and patronage, stating that they like to focus on Logan County events prior to surrounding areas. Becky thanked them for their time and assured them that she would be in touch with them.
- Kevin Wills, of Bernardi Securities, Inc., was present to discuss the annual bond issuance with the Board. Mr. Wills greeted the Board while he passed out a handout prior to his presentation. Mr. Wills provided a quick recap of how the market has been doing over the past year and included the expectations for the next few months. He pointed out that, as shown on the graphs in the handout, that the last bond issuance was at a 2-year high, but the

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graph shows a gradual decline in the rates. The Federal Reserve is considering lowering the interest rate, and he hopes for a more favorable rate by January. Dave questioned the driving force for the downward trend, which Mr. Wills stated that the recent job reports have likely contributed to the stubborn inflation. Mr. Wills directed the Board to page 5 of the handout, which details the Park District's current bond issuance with the break down of taxable and non-tax bonds. Even though there are 2 series of taxable bonds, there is only one aggregate payment scheduled for December 15th. Once the Board approves to contract with Bernardi Securities, Inc., Mr. Wills will begin to work with LPD through the bid process. LPD will assist in preparing the term sheet to be circulated among prospective investors. The current taxable rate is at 5.45%, but he expects the rate to lower by January as discussed previously. The non-tax rate is 3.63%, but there is not much change expected. Mr. Wills explained that Park Code allows park districts to issue non-referendum bonds under the amount determined by PTEL and each district's DSEB. For the Lincoln Park District, that amount is \$854,000, which includes principal and interest. The amount allowed grows with the CPI but must remain less than the CPI allowance. Page 8 included a timeline of events within the bond issuance process. If the Board chooses to contract with Bernardi Securities, Inc., the contract will be signed by Becky, and the Board will hold a public hearing prior to the October meeting. The annual Bond Ordinance will then be approved at November's meeting, which gives the authority to prepare the terms & bids on the District's behalf. Dave asked if Heartland Bank & Trust purchased the bonds upon the last issuance, which Mr. Wills stated that they were invited to bid, but chose not to participate. Last year's issuance was sold to UCBank. Without any further questions, Mr. Wills thanked the Board for their time and exited the meeting.

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

GENERAL	-	\$	8,890.45
LIABILITY	-	\$	5,324.00
AUDIT	-	\$	13,464.00
RECREATION	-	\$	6,132.48
CAPITAL IMP.	-	\$	551,135.83

Don asked if anyone had any questions on items listed within Accounts Payable.

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

CASH FLOW –

Angie informed the Board that the Real Estate funds had been deposited, and a report was included showing the payments and total to date. With the funds allocated to their respective accounts, as the total is deposited into General and needs to be transferred, Angie will be able to reimburse General for outstanding payroll expenses. The Auditors have been busy and have made a few suggestions on how to improve the recordkeeping process. Angie stated that daily, membership, and programs fees are still consistent with the season.

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – BECKY STRAIT

- A Slideshow presentation was displayed:
- Becky began by thanking the staff for working hard during a busy summer. Pictures displayed snaps from the 5K, Kids Races, baseball/softball tournaments, and dog training.
- Upcoming events include the Stay Another Day with local 7th graders, Foundation Fundraiser at Country Aire, and a fall open house for the public.
- Staff are looking forward to the changing of the season which brings us to Halloween and Christmas events.
- Park Improvement Projects:
 - Exchange Club Park:
 - Becky stated that mulch was added, and grass has been seeded.
 - The park is looking much better.
 - Becky explained that LPD has received calls from the public to inquire about booking parties at Lehn & Fink and Exchange Club without any advertising.
 - Becky stated that she and her family had been out on a bike ride the previous week and there were approximately 20 people playing at Lehn & Fink.
 - Seth Thomas reports seeing people playing there all the time now.
- North Parking Lot Improvement Project:
 - The work has neared the end of the project.
 - The first front entrance will be open by the end of the week.
 - Becky did state that the middle section painted, where the old island was, looks a bit awkward, as it is wider than the island was and, as a result, has the parking lines extending past the islands.
 - Sam asked if the paint must be ground off and repainted, but Becky explained that she was told that process, or even a hot pressure washer would compromise the sealant.
 - The option to paint over and repaint is something to consider or just wait for it to fade and repaint how LPD wants at that time.
 - The Promissory Note has been deposited; final payment will be due next month.
- Lot Usage Agreement with Lincoln Community High School:
 - Becky did send the final version of the Inter-governmental Agreement to Lincoln Community High School.
 - Sam questioned if it had been signed/returned, but Becky replied, “not yet.”
- Annual Audit:
 - Becky informed the Board that the Audit is still in process.
 - Sam inquired about a deadline for the report, which Becky verified that the State Comptroller does have a deadline in place.
 - Becky stated that the State has granted an extension and will be kept up to date on the progress of the audit.
 - Also, Becky was informed by one of the auditors that requesting extensions from the State is not an uncommon event, which is why they will automatically grant a 60-day extension without questions.
 - The Audit firm estimates that the Audit will be done around the end of October.
- Maintenance Position:

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- Becky informed the Board that she had received approximately 30 applications, of which she and Vern interviewed 7 candidates.
- Of the 7 interviewed, Becky explained that 2 were very promising and would like the Board to consider hiring both since Tony will be retiring at the end of the year.
 - One candidate's name is Matt White, which Sam stated was no relation to him.
 - Don questioned the budget and hiring 2 at this time.
 - Becky explained that she had asked Angie to do some calculations on the matter, and it can be done.
- Becky suggested hiring Matt White first, as he was the strongest candidate, and include him in the second interview with the other candidate, with the plan to bring him on later in October.
 - Dave asked Vern if he was in favor of the 2 candidates, to which he replied that both should be a good fit.
 - Vern hopes to hire Matt first and let him start learning, then bring Doug Tacket on in October.
 - Vern did state that a 3rd employee may not be necessary during the winter months, especially since Rod has been helping, but Rod does not want full-time employment.
 - Don shared concerns about Doug finding other employment in the interim, but Becky explained that he is self-employed.
- Christmas Party:
 - Becky spoke with Jon Young more about his offer to donate the catering for LPD's party.
 - Jon Young, who has sponsored several dance fundraisers, and has credit with the caterer that he would be willing to basically give to LPD.
 - The Board and Staff would be invited to the dance after the meal in the Ballroom.
- Capital Planning / OSLAD Grant:
 - Becky explained that Memorial Park was next on the agenda for major capital projects.
 - Since Lincoln was added to the State's "distressed community" list, the matching fund component has been removed from any application for an OSLAD grant.
 - Becky recommends delaying part of the plan to update Memorial Park until 2026-2027, so there is time to apply for the 2026 OSLAD grant.
 - Part of the application is the 5-year plan, of which the current one is soon to expire.
 - Sam questioned if it would be possible to just update with the changes made or if the process had to be started completely over.
 - Becky explained that the previous 5-year plan included the City's parks, but she would inquire about updating.
 - Dave asked what improvements would be made out at Memorial Park.
 - Becky recapped that the Board has previously discussed reconnecting the road through, possibly removing the diamonds, adding more or another playground, more pavilions, and possibly even adding disc golf.
 - Sam stated that disc golf is very popular, and he has seen a few courses when traveling for his kids' sports.
 - Dave asked if there was a lot to the game.
 - Angie stated that a group did address the Board before Covid to inquire about the possibility of adding a course at Memorial park.
 - However, they pitched adding large concrete "tee box" pads for each hole, which was not something that the Board was in favor of.
 - Angie did state that some courses have signs, like at golf courses, that show the general shape and direction to the hole, which is a post with a cage and chains.

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- Don questioned if Open Arms kept LCU's disc golf course and if it was open to the public, but it was unknown for sure.
- Becky mentioned that there are still funds available to replace the ballroom driveway this fall.
 - The Board considered adding it to Aupperle's contract with the North Lot project, but the Board had decided to wait to see what the total price came in at.
 - Becky pointed out that the change in the State's bid threshold would facilitate in expediting the process, as Thomas Constructions' bid falls under that threshold.
 - Dave asked for clarification; to which Becky detailed that Aupperle's bid would add \$60,000 to the parking lot improvement contract, but Thomas Construction slightly over \$24,000 for labor and \$16,000 for materials.
 - Sam questioned if the concrete would be replaced, like for like, but Becky explained that it was suggested to use rebar and relocate the dumpster.
- Vern is still getting quotes to fix the concrete in the rear parking lot.
 - Dave asked how thick the concrete was back there, which Vern verified that it was 3 inches.
 - Vern stated that there are cracks that need to be fixed and the surface needs resealed, which is something that the Board was made aware of prior to the project approval.
 - There are, however, a few issues where the concrete was poured over the previous concrete.
 - Dave asked for an approximate cost for the needed repairs and treatment, which Vern estimated to be around \$25,000, but also stated that he was waiting for one more bid.
- Becky pointed out that the North Parking Lot Project had some funds available since the subgrade work was not as extensive as it was allowed a contingency for.
- Becky reminded the Board that next year's (2026) Bond funds will be used to pay \$300,000 of the promissory note principal, which is half, and leaves \$300,000 for other capital projects.
 - As was previously discussed, the Administrative Office's plumbing needs to be addressed before it becomes an issue.
 - The plumbing work would correlate with remodeling the Craft Room, since it has 3 sinks.
 - Sam asked for clarification that she was speaking about the Admin building and not the aquatic center, which Becky verified.
 - Vern explained to Sam that the water was mostly run via pipes in the ceiling.
- Another item listed for the Capital Improvement Plan is ADA upgrades for entrances and doorways.
 - Becky explained to the Board that more people are using the facility that rely upon canes, walkers, and wheelchairs.
 - Several of the doors require staff assistance for some patrons to use.
 - Dave inquired about the extent of the work that needs to be done, which Becky explained that she spoke with Vern and Dustin, from Givisco (the contractor for the ballroom), on the subject and about options available.
 - The current plans allocated approximately \$100,000 to start the project.
 - Dustin will look at some doors and their cost to provide that information to Becky.
 - Sam inquired about the risk of not being 100% compliant, but Becky explained that LPD is currently non-compliant, as it was "grandfathered in", and needs to be showing strides to rectify that situation.
 - Dave stated that he would prefer all of the Board be present to vote on the matter.
 - Becky explained that some guidance is needed, as she and Angie would be working on the annual Budget & Appropriation, which needs to be presented to the public next month.

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- Dave would like more information on the requirements and cost before moving forward.
- Vern stated that the project might require a plan for electrical to be ran to power ADA doors.
 - Becky informed the Board that Dustin, of Givisco, explained to her that another PD had put out a Request for Purchase (RFP) with a list of requirement for bids to be submitted, which means that LPD may not need an engineer for the project.
 - Dustin is willing to meet with Vern and Becky to get a better understanding of the project.
- Becky explained that she needs direction from the Board if they want to go that direction.
 - Dave stated that he wants to know more about the ADA requirements.
 - Becky explained that LPD needs to at least show a plan & some direction to implement that plan to make LPD more ADA compliant.
- Don suggested waiting until the next meeting to vote on the matter of ADA Compliance.
- Becky asked for a decision on the Ballroom Drive, if the Board wanted to move forward with that project this year.
- Dave Perring made a motion to accept the bid submitted by Thomas Construction totaling \$41,000 (with approximately \$24,000 labor and \$16,000 for materials) for the Ballroom Driveway replacement & Addition of a dumpster pad.
- Sam White moved to second the motion, which then passed after a unanimous, roll-call vote.

SUPERVISOR OF OPERATIONS - Vern Haseley

- Vern stated that Tony was able to fix the Sandpro.
- Bree did clean up the downed tree in Memorial Park.
- The splash pool and stairs to the slide will be sand blasted and painted. Sam asked when the pool closed for the season, which was verified to be the day after Labor Day, September 2nd.
- Vern explained to the Board that he was having a slight issue with the driving range, with weeds and invasive grass. Don stated that the local golf courses were reporting the same issue this year. Vern stated that he stopped fertilizing the range around 10 years ago to save some money, but it may be a good idea to start again, especially since it is getting used more.

PROGRAM REPORT – ALLISON BAKER

- Allison informed the Board that there will be another dance class offered in October.
- A Kids' cooking class will be offered in October, December, and February.
- The planning for the annual Halloween Fun Fest has begun, vendor letters have been mailed out, and she has coordinated with LCHS' NHS for volunteers. This year, there will be another VIP ticketed event, for early access before the crowd. This was very popular with families that have children with special needs last year.
- November will have a wreath making class.
- Allison is speaking with someone about possibly offering some paint classes.
- This year's event with Santa will look a little different, as she is considering a pizza & pajama party for Friday night. Don asked about who will be Santa, to which Allison verified that the previous Santa had recently notified her that he will be moving out of the area soon.
- Allison is working on offering another pickleball league this winter. It is a popular sport.
- Jr. Railer basketball registrations open on October 1st.

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- Allison is putting together the Fall/Winter program guide, which will also be a small handout for the upcoming Homecoming Parade.

FITNESS MANAGER: JENNIFER PRATHER

- Group Fitness Class attendance for August was 773 compared to last year's 763.
- The last Meet & Mingle had 11 attendees, and the next one is on Sept 23rd at 11 am.
- Lincoln Memorial Hospital was impressed with the kids' run and Jennifer coordinated to have Dolan hand out their medals. There were 61 kids and 91 participants for the regular 5K.
- September will have a Spin® fundraiser for suicide prevention. In the first 2 weeks, 6 non-members have signed up for the free classes. One class is in a new timeslot, and has had 8 participants, and half were new.
- Jennifer is looking for a few new instructors.
- Wellness walk is on the 2nd leg in the journey from Chicago to the end of Route 66. This portion of the trek features Missouri and Kansas.
- Active Agers has a potluck scheduled for the 19th.
- October will offer free classes for the first week.
- Equipment training will be offered after the open house.
- Allison and Jennifer will be attending a Wellness Expo at Heartland Community College in Normal.
- Getting volunteers from LCHS' Move Club for the Stay Another Day Event went well, with 19 students signed up to help.
- The Foundation will have a Country Aire Fundraiser on the 24th and pork chop sandwich with a bake sale on the 27th.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Becky informed the Board that she received thank you cards from Senator Sally Turner and her staff after they held their Senior Fair here. They really enjoy the location and see a lot of people come out for the event.

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.
 - 3. Promissory Note: See Executive Director's Report.
- B. Aquatic Center: See Supervisor of Operations' report.
- C. Authorization of sale/conveyance of Park District Property: NONE.

NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Contract renewal for 2026 Fireworks:
 - 1. Don asked what the current budget was for, which was verified to be \$19,000, with the City having paid \$5,000.

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2. Angie explained that the full amount budgeted was not used this year, in part due to the City's donation, and there being some funds budgeted for supplies, but the Foundation covered those costs
3. Jennifer stated that there is a chance that the City may choose to use that \$5,000 towards the annual Balloon Fest next year and advised against counting on that donation.
4. Don suggested seeing if the budget could be increased to \$25,000 to promote the anniversary of the United States.
5. Angie and Becky will review the Budget to see what can be done.
- B. Approve Bernardi Securities, Inc. contract as the annual bond underwriter:
 1. Dave Perring made the motion to approve contracting with Bernardi Securities, Inc. for the 2025 annual bond issuance.
 2. Sam White moved to second the motion, which then passed after a unanimous, roll-call vote.

Executive Session: Dave Perring made the motion to enter Executive Session to discuss an employee matter. Sam White moved to second the motion, and the motion carried. The Board entered executive session at 7:49 pm.

The Board exited Executive session at 8:10pm with no vote required.

ADJOURNMENT: Seeing no further business, Dave Perring moved to adjourn the meeting. Sam White moved to second the motion. Motion carried. Adjournment: 8:11 P.M.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 08, 2025 at 6:00 PM.