



Village of Lincolnwood Park and Recreation Board

**Board Meeting
September 9, 2025
6:15 pm**

**Gerald C. Turry Village Board Room
Lincolnwood Village Hall – 6900 North Lincoln Avenue**

Meeting Agenda

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Minutes Approval**
 - a. August 12, 2025, Meeting**
- III. Public Forum**
- IV. Old Business**
 - a. Recommendation Regarding Herbicide and Pesticide Use in Lincolnwood Parks**
- V. New Business**
- VI. Director's Report**
- VII. Staff Report**
- VIII. Chairperson's Report**
- IX. Commissioners' Reports**
- X. Adjournment**

Posted: September 5, 2025

**VILLAGE OF LINCOLNWOOD
REGULAR MEETING OF THE PARK AND RECREATION BOARD
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES
GERALD C. TURRY VILLAGE BOARD ROOM
TUESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2025**

Call to Order

Chairperson Tucker called the meeting of the Park and Recreation Board to order at 6:15 P.M. Tuesday, August 12, 2025, in the Gerald C. Turry Village Board Room of the Municipal Complex at 6900 N. Lincoln Avenue, Village of Lincolnwood, County of Cook, and State of Illinois.

Roll Call

On roll call by Kim Voulgarakis, the following were:

Present: Chairperson Tucker, Commissioners Grossman, Malca, Shaw, Frank

Absent: Commissioners Lovering, Tomacic

Also present: Director of Parks and Recreation Karen Hawk, Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation Michelle Artis, Recreation Supervisor Alex Tagle, Trustee Diaz Herrera, and Management Analyst Elijah Bebor.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the June 10, 2025 Park and Recreation Board meeting were presented for Park Board approval.

Commissioner Malca moved to approve the minutes of the June 10, 2025, Park and Recreation Board meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Shaw. On roll call, the minutes were approved unanimously.

Public Forum

None.

Old Business

None.

New Business

Chairperson Tucker introduced and welcomed the Park and Recreation Board's new appointees Commissioner Mike Grossman and Commissioner Annie Frank.

Village of Lincolnwood Parks and Recreation ADA Transition Report. Chairperson Tucker turned it over to Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation Michelle Artis.

Presenters: Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation Michelle Artis

Background:

- In 2024, Accessibility Consultation and Training Services, Inc. completed an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Report for the Parks and Recreation Department.
- Per ADA requirements a plan is required to be completed and reviewed every ten years. The report outlines barriers and necessary improvement efforts for parks, facilities, events and communications.

ADA Transition Plan Report:

- Presentation focused on park system due to the Village conducting a Feasibility Study for construction of new recreation center and renovating/rebuilding the aquatic center. The report identified issues that create barriers to accessible routes and usage for individuals with disabilities.
- State and local government and all its departments fall under the Title II section of the ADA. Agencies must provide programs and services in an integrated setting and are required to make reasonable modifications.
- Barriers found throughout the parks differed, however many were consistent in each location. Some issues can be addressed in-house and others may require outside contractors.
- Issues were categorized per barrier by priority, one being the highest and four being the lowest. Issues were found in each of the thirteen parks, with six parks identified with a high priority rating.

Financials

- Projected cost as of 2024 (when the report was conducted/completed) was \$359,205.

Recommendation

- Address the barriers with upcoming park renovations in 2025 and 2026 at Proesel and Goebelt Parks.
- Provide regular maintenance to playground surfaces; routinely inspect picnic table and trash receptacle locations.
- Address issues that can be completed internally/by staff.
- Review report with Public Works to determine 10-year plan to address barriers.

Park and Recreation Board Discussion:

- Around the park, the picnic tables and the garbage cans get moved around by rentals and general use of the park. People can pick up picnic tables and move to where they see fit.
- Is this something Public Works would make sure to say these are the designated areas and make sure they stay there, so if it gets moved the tables are not bolted down?
- We know the tables will not be moved back.
- Picnic tables being more of a concern being moved off of a path or accessible path than would a garbage can.
- Intend to install concrete pads and to place the picnic tables on the concrete pad. Try to make sure that it is in a shaded area.
- Picnic tables that we have now are quite heavy, and we hoped it would mitigate them being moved around.
- Possibility of bolting it down if we install a concrete pad.
- Are these all items that are going to bring us compliant with the ADA regulations.

Director's Report

Director of Parks and Recreation Karen Hawk - Thank you to everyone that volunteered and attended Lincolnwood Fest. It was another successful event, and the Village is planning to renew our agreement with SEM moving forward. We have an Eagle Scout who will be completing a ground level planting at the north entrance to Flowers Park off of the Valley Line Trail. These plantings will enhance the space that was cleared of dead vegetation and still allow for a view into the park from the path. Coming up, the bid document for Goebelt Park will be released this week with construction anticipated to commence in Fall of 2025 and be completed in Spring of 2026. Next, Proesel Park bid documents will be released this fall with construction anticipated to commence in Spring of 2026. Staff will report back to the Park and Recreation Board in October regarding program impacts that will occur due to construction in Proesel Park.

Staff Reports

Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation Michelle Artis - Rossi Park was closed to remove and replace the planters due to overgrown tree roots. The new planters were installed 1-2 feet on three of the sides from the original footprint to resolve the issue. Additional work was completed at Springfield Park with the removal of split and dead branches across four trees and the removal and replacement of woodchips at G.G. Rowell Park with treatments to prevent insect infestations. Public Works and Parks & Recreation Assistant Directors are acquiring quotes per Park and Recreation Board request regarding weed management at Village parks to present at the September meeting which will go to the Village Board for a recommendation.

Recreation Supervisor Alex Tagle - (presenting on behalf of Recreation Supervisor Kandice Newton) Summer camp has been going great and there is only one week remaining. The next upcoming event is Touch-a-Truck on Sunday, September 14th. This year it will be held at District 1860 and we will have a band along with a couple of restaurants. Finally, Trunk-or-Treat is right around the corner, and will be held on Sunday, October 26th from 3:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M. If you are interested in having a trunk, please let Kandice know.

Recreation Supervisor Alex Tagle - (presenting on behalf of Recreation Supervisor Julie Glowacki) The Cubs game last week was great, and the summer specialty camps are wrapping up. Starting in October, we are adding a new adult fitness class on Thursday evenings.

Recreation Supervisor Alex Tagle - Pool post-season starts next week, and the last day of the season is Labor Day, September 1st; shout-out to our amazing aquatics staff.

Chairperson’s Report

Chairperson Tucker - I just want to say Thank You for all of the hard work this summer, for Lincolnwood Fest and all of the hours put into it. Thank you very much.

Commissioner’s report

Commissioner Malca- Fest was one of the best musically in years, didn’t realize Lincolnwood could pull off such an event. Every year it gets better.

Commissioner Frank - Pool has been running wonderfully; extending lap swim hours and opening pool at 11 A.M.

Adjournment

At 6:47 P.M., Chairperson Tucker called for adjournment of the Park and Recreation Board meeting.

Commissioner Malca moved to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Shaw. The meeting was adjourned by roll call.

Park Board Minutes prepared by Kim Voulgarakis

Park and Recreation Board Chairperson: _____
Signature Date



MEMORANDUM

TO: Park and Recreation Board

FROM: Michelle Artis, Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation
Brendon Mendoza, Assistant to the Public Works Director

DATE: September 9, 2025

SUBJECT: Recommendation Regarding Herbicide and Pesticide Use in Lincolnwood Parks

Background

Lincolnwood has thirteen parks that the Public Works Department primarily maintains. Currently, the Village has two landscape maintenance contracts. One is a contract with Fleck's for lawn maintenance, which includes mowing and manual weed control at the Village's eleven satellite parks, trails, and a separate maintenance contract with Brightview for Centennial Park. The use of herbicides or pesticides is currently not in practice in the Village parks, except for Centennial Park, which utilizes a broadleaf pesticide and applies it twice per season.

This year has seen an abundance of weed growth in the small parks, most notably at Drake Park, Springfield Park, Goebelt, and GG Rowell Parks. These parks have experienced significant growth in dandelions and clover. The considerable rainfall and wind that the Village has experienced in 2025 are causing weeds to spread quickly throughout the parks.

Fleck's mows the eleven satellite parks each week over three days, then trims and provides limited manual weed control on the other two days of the week. Even with Fleck's mowing each park once per week, dandelions return within a couple of days, leaving the parks looking unkempt. Brightview mows and trims Centennial Park weekly. The Village's Public Works Department maintains Proesel Park, which is also mowed on a weekly basis.

While the Village does see some weed and dandelion growth in Proesel and Centennial Park, it is significantly less than in the satellite parks. Staff have received numerous comments regarding the poor condition of the satellite parks due to the abundance of weeds and dandelions throughout Spring 2025.

Staff research indicates that herbicides and pesticide use may have been discontinued in Village parks, except Centennial Park, sometime around 2016, based on conversations with previous Public Works and Parks Department Directors. This timeframe aligns with the period when the nation was under heightened awareness after the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC, 2015) classified the active ingredient, glyphosate in Roundup (manufactured by Monsanto) as "probably carcinogenic to humans" and noted its decision was based on "limited" evidence. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) stated that glyphosate is not likely carcinogenic to humans.

Glyphosate is a non-selective systemic herbicide that kills plants down to the roots by blocking key enzymes that are essential to plant growth, causing plants to wither and die over a period of several days to a week. It is very effective on virtually all types of weeds and is relatively inexpensive. According to EPA, an average of 280 million pounds of glyphosate products are applied annually in the United States. While most glyphosate-based herbicides (GBHs) are used for agriculture, they are also the primary herbicides for forestry, highways, rights-of-way, commercial and industrial areas, public parks, and other public and private lands. However, there are continued concerns about toxicity, persistence in the environment and the effects on wildlife and human health. (Dolesh, R., January 23, 2020)

One of the most important considerations regarding the use of GBHs is the safety of the public and park workers who apply it. In practice, park and recreation employees who intend to apply pesticides must become certified pesticide applicators under the classification of "public agency applicators" and have licensed operators which are tied to the applicator's license. To become certified, employees must first be registered with the state's departments of agriculture, complete a training program, and then work under an already certified applicator for a year. Maintaining certified status requires annual testing and annual recertification. (Dolesh, R., January 23, 2020) On the Illinois Department of Agriculture website it lists the cost of a Commercial Not-for-Hire Applicator License Fee as \$120 for a 3-year license and \$90 for a 3-year Commercial Not-for-Hire Operator License. Training and study materials are available through the University of Illinois Extension Pesticide Safety Education Program, and study guides/manuals available in English and Spanish for additional costs.

There are agencies across the United States that have been looking for or trying a variety of alternatives including organic herbicides. As of 2019, there were less than 40 communities nationwide that have implemented an organic land management (OLM) program for their green spaces. This approach does not use synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, or herbicides. The most common method of organic weed management is "mechanical" which is removal by hand – this is a tedious and time-consuming approach but is highly and most effective way to remove unwanted species. Another organic approach that is more common is an integrated pest management (IPM) program; this is less strict and allows for use of traditional chemical treatments when necessary. Weed control without pesticides, such as glyphosate, will be much more expensive, less effective, and require greater time commitment from staff.

The National Park Service on its website states that all pesticides used on national park lands must be approved before use. The regional coordinator reviews and approves pesticides, biological control agents, and genetically modified organisms proposed by park IPM coordinators. Pesticide usage is reported and tracked on an annual basis. Methods include manual, mechanical, cultural, biological, and chemical applications. (National Park Service, March 19, 2025)

The current state of Lincolnwood's parks reveals a significant infestation of weeds, particularly dandelions and clover. The Village does not have an ordinance against the use of pesticides or herbicides. An article featured by the National Parks and Recreation Association in its monthly Parks & Recreation magazine lists steps that agencies should take into consideration; they are listed below:

Seven Steps Your Agency Should Take Now

1. Commit to a system-wide re-evaluation of your entire weed control and landscape maintenance program.
2. Develop an agency-wide or intergovernmental procedure to evaluate your current applications of glyphosate-based herbicides (GBHs) and alternative methods to control weeds in your park landscapes.
3. Review your internal safety training program, giving special attention to your protections for workers who apply GBHs. Perform spot inspections to improve your training program.
4. Look at alternatives to glyphosate and test safer, less toxic methods. These can include flame, hot foam, organic herbicides, manual and mechanical control, and, seriously, goats.
5. Evaluate the circumstances and occasions that you need to use glyphosate as a last resort and justify such uses.
6. Consult with peer agencies, such as public works and transportation departments, to evaluate alternative methods.
7. Look to the future.

The Illinois Department of Agriculture implemented the Pesticide Application on Rights-of-Way Notification Act beginning on January 1, 2025, see below:

Effective January 1, 2025, Public Act 103-0976 regulates the use of pesticides in municipalities. This Act requires municipalities and government entities to provide 24 hours' notice to the public before applying a pesticide on a public right-of-way within the corporate boundaries of a municipality.

The notice must include location and date of intended applications, name and type of pesticide to be used, reason for use, concentrations, any special instructions, name and telephone number of the applicator, and the contact information for the Illinois Department of Agriculture. The notice must be in writing and posted at least 24 hours before the intended application. Written notice is sufficient if posted in newsletters, websites, calendars or other correspondence currently published by the government entity. Posting on a bulletin board is not sufficient.

A municipality or local government who applies a pesticide to a public right-of-way is required to give notice to the public with the exception of the following: park districts, forest preserve districts, conservation districts, and school districts; they are exempt from the requirements of the Notification Act. While park districts are exempt, the parks in Lincolnwood are part of the municipality and may still require notice. This is being investigated by staff.

When using a pesticide, the communication to the public must be in written form and posted in newsletters, websites, calendars or other correspondence currently published by the municipality or local government and contain the information below in the Notice:

1. The intended location, date range and range of times during the day that the material may be applied;
2. The brand name, common name, and scientific name of each product that may be applied;
3. The type of pesticide contained in any product that may be applied;
4. The reason for use of each product that may be applied;
5. The range of concentrations of any end-use product that will be applied;
6. Any special instructions appearing on the label of the product applicable to an individual's use of the public right-of-way following an application;
7. The State agency, mosquito abatement district, or other unit of local government name and telephone number of the certified applicator;
8. Contact information for the Illinois Department of Agriculture's Pesticide Misuse Section, including a telephone number and website information for the Department.

Illinois Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Environmental Programs
217-785-2427
800-641-3934 (Pesticide Hotline)
www.agr.illinois.gov

Staff conducted research on how other agencies in Illinois are treating their parks and have listed them below:

- Park Ridge Park District (21 parks): Minimal reliance on pesticide and synthetic fertilizers. Strive to manage lawns as naturally as possible; has Lawn Care Application Program on their website including product labels and Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for all chemicals they use
- City of Evanston (76 parks): The City passed Ordinance 20R-10 adopting the City of Evanston Sustainable Pest Control and Pesticide Reduction Policy (2010) to reduce pesticide applications on City owned or leased property and includes a prohibited pesticides section (excerpt: Those classified by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) as known, probable, likely, possible, or suspected carcinogens); in 2015 started pesticide free parks pilot program for 5 parks (Ackerman, Perry, Burnham Shores, Trahan, Eiden)
- Chicago Park District (616 parks): Limits use of pesticides, uses scheduled mowing to manage dandelions and reminds the public that the sight of dandelions indicates a safe space for all park patrons to play; avoids spraying weed control chemicals in close to 90% of its parks, has partnered with Midwest Grows Green (MGG) for over 15 straight years, following organic lawn care basics such as keeps the grass 3 inches high
- City of Lake Forest (17 parks): In 2023, launched a pilot program with MGG for 1 of their parks (Everett Park) to be a pesticide-free park
- Skokie Park District (45 parks): Limits the use of pesticide and has an Integrated Pest Management Plan. As stated on their website, their control measures are done in a way that minimizes environmental health and economic risk. Currently five of the parks are chemical free. These five parks are small, low-use parks.

MGG defines a pesticide-free park as one that is maintained under the principles of natural lawn care. Natural lawn care uses a combination of sustainable practices and natural products to promote an optimal relationship between plants and soil, making lawns naturally more resistant to weeds, insects, and diseases without the use of synthetic chemicals or fertilizers.

MGG, a company used throughout the United States, recommends four simple and cost-effective tips for a pesticide-free park, and are listed below:

- Mowing high to shade out weeds.
- Choosing the right species with characteristics designed to adapt to the current climate and conditions of the planting area.
- Using natural fertilizers for slower nutrient release, which feeds the soil and helps prevent runoff.
- Watering correctly at 1 inch per week to encourage strong deep roots and discourage pests.

Weed control will be a significant and costly undertaking, considering the amount of staff and time that would need to be dedicated to each park over several years, or the cost of outsourcing to bring the weeds under control. Additionally, there is no quick fix. This process will take considerable time, given the large number of parks and the extensive overgrowth of dandelions, clover, and other weeds.

While dandelions may be considered unsightly, they are a sign of a chemical-free park. Additionally, dandelions are an essential food source for pollinators.

Update

After the presentation to Park and Recreation Board regarding herbicides and pesticide use in Lincolnwood Parks on June 10, 2025, the Board requested estimates for natural or non-toxic chemical treatment of the Village parks. Staff researched both natural/hand-pulling weeds on a weekly basis and use of a broadleaf post emergent herbicide for Village parks. Each method would be completed by lawncare contractors due to the amount of labor hours needed to naturally treat the Village parks and not having Public Works staff certified and trained in the usage of chemical treatments. Hand-pulling the weeds weekly by an outside company would not be fiscally feasible. Chemically treating the Village parks is also not feasible given the current budget status of the Parks and Recreation department.

In the state of Illinois, companies, organizations, or government entities are required to be certified in the safe usage of handling and applying chemicals in public parks or areas. Public Works plans to certify two supervisors to become licensed applicators. The department is also identifying who among Public Works staff would become certified operators in the usage of pesticides/herbicides and researching the number of labor hours incurred if chemically treating Village Parks. Operators work under the supervision of applicators. This process for the Public Works Department can take at least a year.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommend continuing current practices of using only mowing to address weeds.

Discussion and Recommendation

Park and Recreation staff are seeking a discussion and recommendation from the Park and Recreation Board to the Village Board regarding the use of current practices or utilizing pesticides and herbicides within Village Parks.

Documents Attached

1. Exhibit A – Photos of Drake, Springfield, Goebelt, G.G. Rowell Parks

Drake Park – May 18, 2025



Close-up of Drake Park – May 18, 2025



Springfield Park – May 18, 2025



Goebelt Park – May 16, 2025



G.G. Rowell Park – May 16, 2025



G.G. Rowell Park – May 20, 2025



G.G. Rowell Park – May 16, 2025



G.G. Rowell Park – May 20, 2025

