

# MORTON GROVE SPECIAL EVENTS COMMISSION & MORTON GROVE DAYS OPERATIONS GROUP

## MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 17, 2025, MEETING

Commission Chair Paul Minx called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. and led the assemblage in the Pledge of Allegiance. Attendees (Special Events Commissioners in **bold**):

<b>Paul Minx</b>	<b>Jeff Wait</b>	Cmdr. Eric Ficht
<b>Rita Minx</b>	<b>Lisa Rathunde</b>	Zoe Heidorn (staff liaison)
<b>Cmdr. Dominik Przekota</b>	Nancy Leong	
<b>Bill Burns</b>	Marty O'Brien	

Absent: **Terri Cousar, Katy Shimanski, Georgianne Brunner, Boyle Wong, Dan DiMaria, John Pietron**

### Introduction of Guests

Cmdr. Dominik Przekota introduced Cmdr. Eric Ficht, who will be taking over Morton Grove Days responsibilities for Cmdr. Dominik Przekota as he takes on new responsibilities at the Police Department.

### Chairman's Comments

No comments.

### Presentation/Acceptance of Previous Meeting Minutes

There were no draft minutes to approve from the previous meeting of the Special Events Commission.

### Morton Grove Days Event: 2025

The event is scheduled for four days: Thursday, July 3, through Sunday, July 6.

### Sub-Committee Reports

**Beer Garden:** Rita Minx said that they need to request more 48-ounce pitchers from Mullarkey this year. They ordered 12 cases last year and ran out. Approximately 288 pitchers needed to be washed and sanitized by volunteers. The cost last year was \$180 per case. The Commissioners discussed whether to increase the quantity of the 48-ounce pitchers or order 64-ounce pitchers, which would increase the price of each pitcher. Marty O'Brien noted that unused pitchers could be returned. The Commissioners decided to order 16 cases of the 48-ounce pitchers this year rather than change the size of pitcher.

**Business Expo/Craft Show:** Jeff Wait said that the Business Expo is planned for Saturday, July 5. The event will be held along Dempster Street around the Park District's gazebo, which will provide more shade for participants. He noted that pick-up and drop-off of products and displays may be more difficult for businesses, but the location is overall an improvement. The Chamber of Commerce recently requested use of the Civic Center for the event. The Commissioners discussed the request and agreed that the Civic Center is a secure location used for money exchange and counting. Opening it to the public would be too disruptive.

**Carnival:** Zoe Heidorn reported that a draft contract with North American Midway is under review and should be finalized and executed soon. She reported that staff requested a carve-out in this year's contract to allow the Park District to distribute sno-cones or similar treats at their children's event. She noted the need to modify the carnival's footprint this year due to the sale of 6210 Dempster Street to Fifth Third Bank for construction of a new bank branch. She could not confirm when construction would begin, but said it was best to assume the site would be under construction at the time of Morton Grove Days event this year. She distributed site plans showing last year's set up, the footprint of Fifth Third's property and access, and a potential future site plan. The Commission discussed the site plans. Cmdr. Eric Ficht, Cmdr. Dominik Przekota, Bill Burns, and Zoe Heidorn agreed to meet at the staff level next week to discuss the site plan modifications and operations and access needs.

**Children's Entertainment:** Jeff Wait said this will be held on Sunday, July 6, due to the Business Expo being held on Saturday. The event will be held at the normal time and will feature the foam party again, which was successful last year.

**Entertainment:** Zoe Heidorn reported that the entertainment schedule was filled and that the next step was to execute contracts with the bands. The headliner bands include Hi Infidelity (July 3), Seventh Heaven (July 4), Mike & Joe (July 5), and Sealed with a Kiss (July 6).

**Festival Operations:** Bill Burns said that he received positive feedback on last year's bathroom set up. They will probably include two accessible bathrooms near the Civic Center patio. The drive for the bands leaving the event from the stage was problematic during the fireworks. The vision is to make a path through the park to Lake Street so that vehicles can safely exit during the fireworks. Jeff Wait noted that people sit in Lake Street to watch the fireworks, so this too could be problematic. The Commissioners discussed the logistics of bands leaving during the fireworks and whether bands could be required to stay until after the fireworks. They agreed to come up with a better solution this year. The Commissioners discussed options for access and placement of security staff and officers. Bill Burns said that the contracts for operations will need to go out in early March.

**Fireworks:** Zoe Heidorn said that an RFP was issued for the fireworks this year. Johnny Rockets increased their price by \$5,000 to \$35,000 for 2025, so staff could not justify renewing the contract without a competitive process. The bid opening would be on February 26, 2025. The RFP was sent to eight fireworks companies in the region.

**Fundraising/Sponsors:** Zoe Heidorn said that Boyle Wong (absent) reviewed the sponsorship packages of other communities and found that others offer higher sponsorship levels. She expected that staff would propose additional levels of sponsorship. She reported that the Village has committed to the Cumulus multi-media advertising budget for 2025 and planned to include Morton Grove Days advertising at no cost to the Morton Grove Days Commission.

Staff was reviewing options to advertise event sponsors through the radio as part of this package. Bill Burns asked if they could send sponsorship requests to vendors. The Commissioners agreed that this was a good idea. Paul Minx reminded the group that they needed to reach out to the stage sponsor and beer sponsor.

**Parade:** Bill Burns said that he would take over parade operations for Mike Lukich this year. He reported that they have a couple of smaller bands and other groups committed. This year they are trying to add a little more activity to the parade as it goes by. He asked if they could post the contract to the website. Zoe Heidorn said that she could do this. Bill Burns asked if there was any need for drone work from the Public Works Engineering Division. Zoe Heidorn responded that they could do without drone footage for the parade and marketing material. Bill Burns said that one of the problems with the parade last year was communications. He asked if he could purchase two-way radios for approximately \$200 this year. The Commissioners agreed that this seemed appropriate.

**Public Relations:** No report.

**Restaurants:** Zoe Heidorn said that she has received verbal commitments from Lee's Concessions and Culver's. She is waiting for confirmation from Village Inn. She said that they were going to request an additional food item to be served by Village Inn. She asked if the group would be comfortable making the vendor fee \$500 per vendor, as usual, but adding a fee of \$500 per additional tent used (over one tent). The Commissioners discussed the tent costs and agreed that this was reasonable to cover the Commission's costs.

**Security:** Cmdr. Eric Ficht reported that they have already contacted the Forest Preserve District about the closure at Linne Woods and that the security contract for 2025 services has been executed. The Police Department is concerned with the increase in incidence of vehicular crashes into parades. He distributed a roadway plan showing streets and driveways that intersect Dempster Street and various barrier options, including commercial barricades and the positioning of heavy-weight vehicles. The Commissioners discussed the logistics of using various types of barricades. Cmdr. Ficht sought clarification from the group as to whether animals are allowed on the event grounds. Rita Minx said that the policy is that no animals are allowed except for service animals. The Commissioners discussed how security would verify the legitimacy of a service animal.

**Volunteers:** Rita Minx said that Georgianne Brunner would coordinate volunteers as usual but noted that coordination with administrative staff at Village Hall was helpful last year.

**Miscellaneous:** Rita Minx asked if the patio north of the Civic Center could be expanded by approximately three feet on all sides to eliminate the trip hazard. Bill Burns said that staff is reviewing options. It is more likely that the entire pad will be replaced. A meeting is scheduled with Public Works staff to discuss next steps.

### **Santa Comes to Town 2024**

Jeff Wait said the 2024 event went really well. He said that they received some suggestions from one parent. In the future, they will do better at communicating that there may be a long wait to see Santa. They are working to address the issue of children who did not receive a toy seeing children who did receive a toy and considering some activities for kids while they're waiting in line.

**Old Business**

None

**Topical Comments**

None

**Next Meeting Date: Monday, April 21, 2025**

**Adjournment**

Jeff Wait moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:57 p.m., seconded by Rita Minx.

**Motion passed unanimously via voice vote.**