

MINUTES OF THE DIVERSITY EQUITY INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE PLEASURE DRIVEWAY AND PARK DISTRICT OF PEORIA, ILLINOIS, HELD TUESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2026 AT 10:00 AM AT THE PEORIA PARK DISTRICT BONNIE NOBLE CENTER FOR ADMINISTRATION AT 1125 W. LAKE AVENUE, PEORIA, IL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Trustee and Chair Alexander Sierra, Trustee Mark Slover, Executive Director Cahill, Sherry Carter-Allen, Brooke Sommerville, and Jodi Scott

MEMBERS ABSENT: Pastor Marvin Hightower and Devon Hawks

TRUSTEES PRESENT: Trustees Joyce Harant, Reagan Leslie Hill, Alexander Sierra, and Mark Slover

STAFF PRESENT: Executive Director Emily Cahill, Brianna Cobb, Nick Conrad, Scott Loftus, Becky Fredrickson, Matt Freeman, David Gray, Chanel Hargrave-Murry, Karrie Ross, Shalesse Pie, Jennifer Swanson, Katie Van Cleve, Spencer Wilson, Attorneys Kevin Day and Justin Gunn, and Alicia Woodworth

1. CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Sierra presided and called the meeting to order at 10:08 am.

2. ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken.

3. MOTION TO PERMIT COMMITTEE MEMBER TO ATTEND MEETING ELECTRONICALLY

No request to attend meeting electronically was received.

4. MINUTES

4.A. Approval of October 28, 2025 and November 18, 2025 DEIA Committee Meeting Minutes

Sherri Carter Allen MOVED TO APPROVE the October 28, 2025 and November 18, 2025 DEIA Committee meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Jodi Scott and carried by unanimous Aye voice vote of all members present.

5. PROCESS/POLICY UPDATES

No formal process or policy updates were presented under this item.

6. NEW BUSINESS

6.A. Pillar One: Equitable Access to Parks, Facilities, and Programming

-Review of 2025 Intern Program

David Gray, Recruitment and Professional Development Manager, presented an overview of the 2025 Internship Program.

Key highlights included:

- The internship program operates year-round, with summer being the heaviest participation period.
- The most recent ICJIA (Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority) grant cycle supported interns through June 2025.

- As of the meeting date, seven interns were actively working in the current rotation.
- The Mayor’s Youth Internship Program ran June 2 – July 11, 2025, with four high school participants. Two were returning interns, demonstrating positive program impact and retention.
- Interns participated in structured weekly schedules including:
 - Professional development training
 - Leadership development
 - Team-building exercises
 - Exposure to multiple Park District facilities and operations
- The Bonnie Noble Center classroom space was enhanced and utilized for professional development sessions.
- College interns were incorporated into leadership roles, mentoring high school interns.
- The Counselor-in-Training (CIT) program included 13–15-year-olds who participated in professional development training sessions, introducing them to career pathways within parks and recreation.

The Committee discussed continued ICJIA funding uncertainty due to anticipated state budget constraints. Executive Director Cahill noted:

- The District typically receives renewal indication in February from the grant monitor.
- Staff are collecting outcome metrics to support future grant applications.
- The District is preparing legislative talking points to communicate the essential nature of ICJIA funding.
- The 2026 District budget includes short-term contingency support; however, long-term continuation would require Board discussion.
- There is precedent for phased grant reductions rather than abrupt termination. The Committee encouraged proactive engagement with legislators and bipartisan advocacy regarding youth workforce development funding.

6.B. Pillar Two: Focus on the PPD Workforce

Shalessie Pie presented the Workforce Stats Report.

Discussion included:

- Review of workforce demographic data.
- Potential comparison of Park District workforce statistics with other public entities (City, County, School District).
- Job fair season updates:
 - February 4 (Bonnie Noble Center)
 - March 14 (RiverPlex)
 - April 7 (Bonnie Noble Center)
- The District-hosted job fairs provide:
 - On-site application stations
 - Interview space
 - Departmental hiring representatives
- A recruitment commercial was produced in partnership with Central States Media.
 - Script and voiceovers were completed by Park District staff.

- Promotion is primarily digital with some paid online advertising.
- Additional collaboration with local media outlets occurs through community features and sponsored content.

The Committee commended the recruitment efforts and discussed continued outreach strategies.

6.C. Pillar Three: Actively Promote and Encourage the Diversity, Equity, Inclusiveness and Accessibility of PPD-Funded Contractors and Suppliers

-Qualifying Construction Contracts Reports

-Survey Status Update

Spencer Wilson presented updates to the DEIA contractor participation report.

Updates included:

- Summary sheet showing:
 - Projects bid
 - Projects awarded
 - Completed projects
 - Minority participation metrics
- Completed projects included RiverPlex boardwalk and concrete work.
- Minority participation percentages are finalized only after certified payroll and subcontractor documentation are received.

Discussion included:

- Importance of comparing historical total minority spending data.
- How procurement data may inform future governance decisions.
- Need for annual reporting summaries for broader Board discussion.

Post-Project Contractor Survey Results

Spencer presented initial anonymous contractor survey responses.

Themes identified:

- Contractors support DEIA goals.
- Primary challenge: difficulty consistently meeting minority participation goals due to workforce limitations.
- Some contractors noted limited subcontractor availability.
- One contractor commented that goals can be more challenging on smaller projects.

Follow-Up Actions:

- Staff will conduct follow-up phone calls to clarify responses.
- Committee requested additional data collection:
 - Contractor industry sector
 - Company size classification (small/medium/large)
 - Workforce size range (reported categorically)
- Committee emphasized identifying sector-specific challenges without compromising anonymity.

7. PENDING BUSINESS

None at this time.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

Trustee Sierra acknowledged upcoming committee chair rotation in accordance with updated Board policy regarding annual committee appointments.

Discussion included:

- Historical structure of committee leadership.
- Policy changes adopted during Board retreat.
- Importance of continuity and institutional knowledge.
- Trustee Sierra expressed appreciation for committee collaboration.
- Recognition of formal transition to Trustee Reagan Leslie Hill as incoming Chair.

Trustee Sierra delivered closing remarks reflecting on:

- Codifying DEIA into permanent committee structure.
- Expanding commitment to include Accessibility.
- Strengthening procurement transparency.
- Establishing contractor workforce profile requirements.
- Embedding DEIA principles into institutional infrastructure.

Committee members expressed appreciation for Trustee Sierra's leadership and reaffirmed commitment to continuing DEIA progress.

9. ACTION ITEMS REVIEW

- Staff to conduct contractor survey follow-up calls and report back with categorized industry and company size data.
- Staff to prepare annual minority participation spending summary for broader governance discussion.
- Continue legislative outreach regarding ICJIA funding.
- Continue collaboration with City of Peoria Procurement Expo and Buying Plan initiatives.

10. NEXT MEETING

February 17, 2026 at 10:00 AM

11. ADJOURNMENT

At 11:25 AM, Sherry Carter-Allen MOVED TO ADJOURN the meeting. Motion seconded by Executive Director Cahill and passed by unanimous Aye voice vote of all members present.

Submitted by Alicia Woodworth
Executive Assistant and Board Secretary