OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE PLEASURE DRIVEWAY AND PARK DISTRICT OF PEORIA, ILLINOIS, HELD AT 6:30 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2026 HELD AT THE BONNIE W. NOBLE CENTER FOR PARK DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, 1125 WEST LAKE AVENUE, PEORIA, IL

TRUSTEES PRESENT: Trustees Joyce Harant, Reagan Leslie Hill, Alexander Sierra (in at 6:47 PM), Ron Silver (in at 6:48 PM), Mark Slover, Vice President Steve Montez (in at 6:47 PM), and President Robert Johnson

TRUSTEES ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Executive Director Emily Cahill, Matt Freeman, Mike Friberg, Scott Loftus, Shalesse Pie, Karrie Ross, Jennifer Swanson, Willie Howe, Chief Aaron Watkins, Kristi Shoemaker, Mary Harden, Majid Aslam, Attorneys Kevin Day and Justin Gunn, Edward Spencer, Miles Howley, and Alicia Woodworth

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Johnson presided and called the meeting to order at 6:46 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken.

3. CALL FOR MOTION TO PERMIT TRUSTEE TO ATTEND MEETING ELECTRONICALLY

No request to attend meeting electronically was received.

4. MOMENT OF SILENCE AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

A moment of silence was observed, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

5. MINUTES

5.A. Approval of Minutes of the September 23, 2026 Regular Board Meeting

Trustee Sierra MOVED TO APPROVE the minutes of the September 23, 2026 Regular Board meeting. Motion seconded by Trustee Harant and carried by unanimous roll call vote.

5.B. Approval of Minutes of October 7, 2026 Special Board Meeting

Trustee Sierra MOVED TO APPROVE the minutes of the October 7, 2026 Special Board meeting. Motion seconded by Trustee Silver and carried by unanimous roll call vote.

6. CITIZEN REQUEST TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

None at this time.

7. STAFF REPORTS

7.A. Executive Director

Executive Director Cahill reported on Zootober activities, thanked staff and the AmeriCorps team for their contributions, and presented the District's CAPRA accreditation recognition. She noted that fewer than two percent of parks and recreation agencies nationwide hold this accreditation and recognized the years of staff effort involved. Trustees congratulated the team and discussed the value of documented standards and processes.

7.B. Superintendent of Planning, Design & Construction

Mike Friberg presented the monthly Planning, Design and Construction report and offered to answer questions.

7.C. Chief of Police

Chief Aaron Watkins presented the September 2026 police activity summary, including seven non-crime reports, eight traffic crashes, one traffic stop with a citation, four traffic stops with warnings, 14 ordinance violations, and no parking tickets. No questions were raised.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

8.A. Finance Committee – Approval of Accounts Payable

Finance Committee Chair Trustee Slover reported that the Finance Committee had examined the bills submitted for payment and, on behalf of the committee, MOVED that the President and Secretary be authorized to issue orders on the Treasurer for payment of the accounts payable in the amounts presented. Motion was seconded by Trustee Silver. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

8.B. Planning Committee – Memorial Bench at Robinson Park

Trustee Sierra MOVED TO APPROVE the Memorial Bench at Robinson Park. Motion seconded by Trustee Harant and carried by unanimous roll call vote.

8.C. Planning Committee – Memorial Bench at Kellogg Golf Course

Trustee Silver MOVED TO APPROVE the Memorial Bench at Kellogg Golf Course. Motion seconded by Trustee Harant and carried by unanimous roll call vote.

8.D. Planning Committee – Approved Minutes of September 2, 2026 Meeting

The approved minutes of the September 2, 2026 Planning Committee meeting were presented to the Board of Trustees for review. The minutes were provided as part of the Board meeting materials to keep trustees informed of the Committee's proceedings and activities.

8.E. Springdale Cemetery Management Authority – Approved Proceedings of August 17, 2026 Meeting

The approved proceedings of the August 17, 2026 Springdale Cemetery Management Authority meeting were presented to the Board of Trustees for review. The proceedings were included in the Board meeting materials for informational purposes.

9. NEW BUSINESS

9.A. AmeriCorps Team Presentation

The AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) team, formerly known as Wolf 3, provided a presentation to the Board highlighting its service with the Peoria Park District. Staff explained that the District had been selected through a competitive application process to host the team from September 16 through December 15, 2026.

Team Leader Jackson introduced the members, who came from communities throughout the United States. Members shared their reasons for joining AmeriCorps, including opportunities for community service, professional development, travel, environmental stewardship, and leadership experience. The team explained that AmeriCorps NCCC is a federally funded national service program in which members ages 18–24 participate in projects supporting communities across the country.

The team presented an overview of the projects completed throughout the District, including assistance with event setup and teardown for Peoria Oktoberfest, the Peoria Art Guild Fine Art Fair, Zootober at Peoria Zoo, and Hayrides and Hotdogs at Sommer Farm. Members highlighted their work creating and installing Halloween displays at the Zoo, including the skeleton pathway that received positive feedback from visitors.

Additional projects included maintenance at Camp Wokanda, where members cleaned the Silver Palace and Pump House and split firewood. Along the River Bluff Trail, the team removed obstructions, cleared water bars, and identified maintenance concerns.

Members also discussed their involvement in youth engagement activities, including educational programming during fall break camp. The team developed and facilitated a lesson on prairie restoration, helping children understand the importance of native plants and ecological conservation. Additional youth outreach opportunities were planned.

A significant portion of the team's work focused on natural resource management and prairie restoration. Members described collecting native prairie seeds for use in restoring other prairie areas, removing invasive and competing woody vegetation, and promoting the growth of native grasses and wildflowers. Species addressed included Amur honeysuckle, multiflora rose, autumn olive, and sassafras. The team explained how these restoration efforts help improve habitat conditions and support biodiversity throughout the District's natural areas.

The team emphasized that AmeriCorps NCCC seeks not only to provide meaningful community service but also to develop leadership skills among its members. They expressed appreciation to the Park District for providing opportunities to contribute to the community and participate in the Board meeting.

President Johnson thanked the team for its dedication, enthusiasm, and contributions to the Peoria Park District and the community. Trustees also expressed appreciation for the members' accomplishments and encouraged them to continue pursuing opportunities in community service and natural resource conservation. A trustee offered to serve as a resource as members consider future projects and professional opportunities.

9.B. 2026 Tax Levy Estimate for 2027 Budget

Karrie Ross explained the Truth in Taxation requirements and presented an estimated 10.49% increase for applicable levy components and a 7.18% overall increase when bond and interest were included. A public hearing would be required. Trustees expressed appreciation for the budget explanation and noted the importance of a future discussion of the District’s long-term revenue strategy.

Trustee Slover MOVED TO APPROVE the 2026 Tax Levy Estimate for 2027 Budget. Motion seconded by Trustee Silver and carried by unanimous roll call vote.

9.C. Post-Travel Report Approval for President Johnson Attending the IAPD Governance & Leadership

Vice President Montez MOVED TO APPROVE the Post-Travel Report for President Johnson Attending the IAPD Governance & Leadership. Motion seconded by Trustee Hill and carried by unanimous roll call vote.

9.D. Post-Travel Expenses Approval for Trustees Attending the Annual NRPA Conference in Philadelphia, PA September 29 - October 1, 2026

Trustee Hill MOVED TO APPROVE the Post-Travel Expenses Approval for Trustees Attending the Annual NRPA Conference in Philadelphia, PA September 29 - October 1, 2026. Motion seconded by Trustee Hill and carried by unanimous roll call vote.

9.E. Policy Modification – Equal Employment and Artificial Intelligence

The proposed modifications to the Equal Employment and Artificial Intelligence policies were presented for first reading. No vote was taken.

9.F. Approve Legal Counsel Action to Consult with Illinois Attorney General

President Johnson removed this item from consideration and stated that it would be brought back at the next Board meeting. Trustee Slover expressed disagreement with postponement, noting that questions concerning a potential conflict of interest had been raised earlier in the year and that consultation with the Illinois Attorney General was intended to help resolve the matter. Trustee Sierra stated that multiple trustees had raised questions regarding the issue and expressed appreciation for postponing the item.

10. CALENDAR OF CONSENT ITEMS

10.A. Design Proposal – Owens Center

10.B. RiverPlex Network/Camera Hardware Upgrades

Vice President Montez MOVED TO APPROVE Calendar of Consent items 10.A. and 10.B. Motion seconded by Trustee Harant and carried by unanimous roll call vote.

11. PENDING BUSINESS

None.

12. COMMUNICATIONS

12.A. Thank You

12.B. Patron Communication

A thank you note and patron communication were submitted communications.

13. OTHER BUSINESS

None at this time.

14. ACTION STEPS REVIEW

None noted.

15. ADJOURNMENT

At 7:20 PM Trustee Sierra MOVED TO ADJOURN. Motion seconded by Trustee Hill and carried unanimously on voice vote.

Full discussion can be viewed at the following link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QTGvgiQ_dO4

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Submitted by Alicia Woodworth
Executive Assistant and Board Secretary