

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE OF THE PLEASURE DRIVEWAY AND PARK DISTRICT OF PEORIA, HELD AT 3:00 P.M., TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2023 AT THE NOBLE CENTER FOR PARK DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, 1125 WEST LAKE AVENUE, PEORIA, ILLINOIS.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Trustee and Chair Joyce Harant, Trustee Steve Montez (in at 3:04 pm), and Executive Director Emily Cahill

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**TRUSTEES PRESENT:** Trustees Joyce Harant, Reagan Leslie Hill (v), Steve Montez,  
Note: (v) = attended virtually

**STAFF PRESENT:** Executive Director Emily Cahill, Nick Conrad, Becky Fredrickson (v), Matt Freeman, Chief Todd Green, Scott Loftus, Ernest Starks, Brent Wheeler, and Alicia Woodworth  
Note: (v) = attended virtually

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Julie Ryan of Peoria Grown, joined virtually at 3:23 pm.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Trustee Harant presided and called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm.

**2. ROLL CALL**

**3. MOTION TO PERMIT COMMITTEE MEMBER TO ATTEND MEETING ELECTRONICALLY**

No request to attend meeting electronically was received.

**4. MINUTES**

**4.A. Approval of September 12, 2023 Programming Committee Meeting Minutes**

Executive Director Cahill MOVED TO APPROVE the minutes of the September 12, 2023 Programming Committee meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Trustee Harant and carried on a unanimous aye of those present.

**5. NEW BUSINESS**

**5.A. Peoria Grown Discussion**

Emily Cahill stated that the Peoria Park District has collaborated with Peoria Grown (PG) to support their Market 309 project at Logan Recreation Center since January 2021. An MOU and lease agreement for the group's use of Trewyn Park pavilion was approved and executed in November 2022. PG has been awarded both operational and capital grants to support the activation of the pavilion focused on fresh food access, nutrition, and healthy lifestyles. As they approach 2024, they have asked to expand their hours of operation as contemplated in our MOU. As such, staff seeks authorization to close the pavilion to outside rentals beginning in 2024 to support PG's use and progression in the space.

Emily Cahill went on to say that Peoria Grown has reached a point in their evolution where they are looking to expand the offerings that they use the Trewyn Park pavilion for. Staff would like to have a conversation with the Programming Committee about the possibility of suspending rentals at the pavilion for the future. For 2023, there is a total of 24 rentals there for the entire year. Approximately 14 of those were during a season where the outdoor shelter would probably suffice. This is Peoria Grown's progression that was talked about when the District first started their relationship with Peoria Grown. For them to provide consistent access to fresh produce, they will need more than one day of service. Peoria Grown is also looking to bring on a nutritionist who will conduct not only education programs, but also individual consultations to help people with health and wellness. This relationship is absolutely mission-driven and is something that the Park District can help to support, when it's not something in the District's area of expertise. The Trewyn pavilion would continue to support Head Start which is in the lower level. Head Start could still use the upstairs for their graduation and any other programming they may have there. In addition, programming such as the PHA conducting focus groups with local residents in the upstairs space can still be accommodated.

Due the inconsistent/unpredictable scheduling, private rentals would be most affected. Private rentals would impact the ability for Peoria Grown to develop a consistent schedule for their offerings. In order for Peoria Grown to expand their offerings, the kitchen they use would need to be accredited/licensed by the Peoria County Health Department. With that being the case, private renters could not have use of the kitchen as it would create significant liability and risk for either the Park District or Peoria Grown, depending on who holds the license with the Health Department. Staff feels that considering the low number of private rentals that would possibly be affected, it makes sense to support Peoria Grown's progression and their impact on the community.

Emily Cahill provided a recap for those who may have missed the background information provided earlier. She stated that when the Park District collaborated with Peoria Grown to have them start to use the Trewyn Park pavilion, almost a year ago, they shared their long-term strategic plan. That was to make the Trewyn Park pavilion their hub for not only access to fresh produce, but also programming. They have slowly progressed in 2023 and have their Build Peoria grant so they are making physical changes and upgrades to the building. They are working through the certification process with the Peoria County Health Department to make the kitchen such that they can use it for cooking classes or to prepare grab and go meals for people. Staff-level conversations have been had with Peoria Grown and are now at a point where a conversation needs to be had about the viability of continuing outside private rentals in that space.

Trustee Montez asked if the space could be rented without access to the kitchen. Emily Cahill stated that most people probably wouldn't want to rent the space without the kitchen. Head Start no longer uses the kitchen. Peoria Grown is seeking to have the kitchen certified by the Health Department as a commercial commissary kitchen.

Matt Freeman stated that starting next week and through November, Peoria Grown has four evenings of nutrition classes programming at Proctor Rec Center where the food will be prepared in the Trewyn kitchen. Those are examples of activities that they would then expand to the general public. Emily Cahill stated that to have that kind of access to fresh produce, cooking classes, and nutrition support would have a really great impact to that neighborhood. There will also be yoga and mindfulness programming offered, providing health and wellness from a global perspective, applied to the neighborhood. Peoria Grown has termed it as a wellness hub, where at minimum of 5 days a week, they would be actively programming and serving the public.

Emily Cahill stated that staff is seeking guidance on how to proceed with Peoria Grown's 4-5 days a week of active programming, as it currently does not coexist very well with outside private rentals in that space. Over the course of 2023, it is anticipated that there will be a total of 24 private rentals for the space. Trustee Montez asked what is the typical revenue generated from those rentals. Matt Freeman stated that that information can be provided that would include the number of rentals per year, revenue and expense from each, average costs, etc. One of the challenges the District currently experiences is preparing the space for a rental, then Saturday evening, going in and preparing the space for Peoria Grown to use on Sunday, and vice versa. In order to prepare for rentals, due to the lack of space and storage, set up and tear down is required each time Peoria Grown uses the space.

After looking it up, Scott Loftus stated that the Trewyn pavilion rental fee is \$40/hour, with a required deposit of \$150 that is either refunded or applied toward the total rental charge. Peoria Grown has a key for access and are self-sufficient, taking care of all the set up and tear down each week for their Sunday market.

Emily Cahill stated that Peoria Grown has been a very good partner and is very respectful of the space. Recently, they were featured at the National Recreation and Park Association's (NRPA) annual conference in Dallas, TX. As a recipient of NRPA's "Parks as Community Wellness Hubs" grant, the NRPA funded their trip to Dallas to be able to connect with the 14 other grantees and learn from their unique experiences in addressing food insecurity. Please see *Attachment A*. The District values its collaboration with Peoria Grown. Recognizing there is a gap in food availability in 61603 and 61605, it's not something the Park District has the capacity, expertise or resources to take on. The District has stated it wants to be Peoria Grown's partner, but if their growth is going to be limited, they will need to find a new location/facility, or find other ways to do what they do. Peoria Grown has been very clear that they absolutely love the space at Trewyn and are selling out every week. When they moved from Logan Park to Trewyn, people followed them.

Currently, Peoria Grown operates their market on Sundays and programming on other days. They want to use Trewyn Park as a wellness hub for programming and distribution center for fresh produce. Trewyn is perfectly located and accessible for the targeted residents/patrons in 61603 and 61605, helping address the food desert that currently exists in that area.

Trustee Montez asked how much Peoria Grown pays for use at Trewyn. Emily stated that they pay a monthly rental fee of \$500 for use, maintenance, and cleanup of the space. The \$500 per month more than covers their portion of any utilities (water, electric, etc.) that they may use. They take very good care of the space and are very respectful of and grateful to the Park District for renting the space to them. If they get exclusive rental for the space which would suspend private rentals, their rental fee will be increased at a rate yet-to-be-determined.

If private rentals are suspended at Trewyn, Proctor Rec Center, the FRC gymnasium, Lakeview Rec Center, etc. could be offered in its place. In addition, they could use the Trewyn outdoor shelter which is not considered a rental, but first-come-first-served and would be free.

Trustee Montez expressed great concern in removing private rental opportunities from Trewyn in order to accommodate Peoria Grown, and stated that he hesitates taking a rental service from the neighborhood. Emily Cahill stated that either private rental access will be limited due to Peoria Grown's expansion or services, or programming will be limited if Peoria Grown has to find a new location to offer their food services and wellness programming. All of their programming and services are public, accessible to everyone.

Trustee Montez stated that if staff is looking for input, he hesitates taking away the option of private rentals from the neighborhood. The Park District takes things away from neighborhoods and doesn't replace them, expecting someone else to do that. Brent Wheeler stated that in a sense, something is being taken away from the neighborhood if Peoria Grown isn't allowed to expand their services at Trewyn. Trustee Montez stated that residents of that neighborhood pay taxes for use of the Trewyn facility and he can't support taking that away. Emily Cahill asked Trustee Montez to please understand the impact of that choice, potentially contributing to a food desert in that area. What Peoria Grown offers is mission-driven for the District in every aspect. Trustee Montez refuted that, stating Peoria Grown can find some other place in that area to provide their services and programming.

Emily Cahill asked if the issue stops here, as the District did sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Peoria Grown, with the commitment of supporting growth of their program. She would like some guidance from the Committee in how to proceed. Ultimately, the only way this works for the District to continue rentals is for the District to take on the Health Department's certification. If that were the case, the District would be liable and responsible if any issues arise from the kitchen, however, the only way that Peoria Grown can use the kitchen is if it were certified by the Health Department. Almost all of the private rentals rent Trewyn for access to its kitchen.

At this time, Julie Ryan of Peoria Grown, joined the Committee's discussion virtually. Emily Cahill asked her to please share with Trustees and those in attendance what her vision is for 2024 and beyond for Peoria Grown. Julie stated that the plan is to expand

Trewyn Park into a true wellness hub. Food offerings at Market 309 would be expanded to two days. Data is currently being collected from community members, asking their preferred days and times they would like the market open another day. Having a kitchen on site has been a huge benefit so far and they would like to expand on site nutrition programming and do more neighborhood outreach in these areas. Nutrition classes, health workshops, healthy eating and living programming would be offered at Trewyn. They would like to convert one of the smaller offices in the Trewyn pavilion into a consultation room, as one of the biggest gaps noticed in the past four years is the need for families to get direct and individual help and guidance in health and wellbeing. Many of the neighborhood residents do not have health insurance or access to dietitians to guide them. The goal is that some time next year, free consultations with a dietitian would be offered from that converted office space. They would like to see that every day, Peoria Grown could offer classes, activities, and programming based around wellness and healthy eating and living at Trewyn Park. In their first year, they hope to reach a minimum of 600 – 700 people with new programming. Providing health education classes and programming and access to healthy food are their core goals. Transportation is one of the biggest challenges for families and residents of the community and Trewyn Park is a perfect, centralized, accessible location and has everything Peoria Grown is looking for. Expanding offerings at Trewyn Park will continue to make a huge impact in that community. Trustee Harant thanked July Ryan for her time in talking about Peoria Grown's program and plans for expansion. She expressed her appreciation for all that Peoria Grown has been doing for the community in providing access to education and fresh food the past three years.

Emily Cahill stated that given the number of rentals in 2023, this is not material in how 2024 is budgeted and hopes to find a middle ground on this issue. This would be a mechanism of structurally, what's the District's policy and how to proceed. The conversations would have to be had in November and December as January is when people would start reserving their rentals for the year. As such, the question is, is this something that staff could gather more information and bring to the full Board for a conversation, and if so, when would that be? Trustee Harant stated yes, please place the discussion on the November 15 Regular Board meeting agenda.

Trustee Montez stated that \$6,000 per year in rental fees from Peoria Grown does not seem enough to take to warrant taking Trewyn out of service for private rentals, even if only for 24 rentals. Brent Wheeler stated that he understands the point, and in deciding, one should consider how important is the financial aspect vs. being a partner to this group and bringing the services they provide to the community. Trustee Montez stated he agreed, and that if Peoria Grown is to increase the number of days per week they will use the facility, surely, they would expect to pay more for their lease. But, he still believes that people who live in that area and pay taxes should have rental access to Trewyn.

**5.B. 3<sup>rd</sup> of July Event Discussion**

Emily Cahill stated that since the last conversation, staff has worked to compile some of the pieces of the document - proposed process for ad hoc evaluation of the event, that

was developed together. The target today is to review that list to see what information we have and what we don't. Generally, staff feels that some of the information is compelling enough that they would like to schedule a meeting where all Trustees are invited to attend to share the information and have a discussion and build out a process on this. It could be a Strategy Ad Hoc Committee meeting, Programming Committee meeting, wherever the Committee feels is best.

Trustee Harant stated that the needed data points noted in the document are things the new working group talks through. Those data points are:

- i. Participation numbers
- ii. Revenue/Expenses
- iii. Program structure
- iv. How many police/security present at event? Who else provided support?
- v. How many incidents? Who were being disruptive?
  1. Reports
  2. Body Cam footage
- vi. Employee survey for staff who supported the event?

Trustee Harant stated that the Programming Committee's role is to present the information to the Board that they want for the working group to begin evaluating in January. The Programming Committee isn't expecting the Board to begin the work of the working group. Emily Cahill agreed, stating that item *vi. Employee survey for staff who supported the event* has not been completed, but can be if the Committee so chooses. Trustee Harant asked if the Peoria Police Department staff that worked the event could provide their feedback via a survey or other method. Chief Green stated yes, he'd be happy to serve as conduit to facilitate that process. Trustee Harant stated she thought she had submitted a suggested list of names for members of the stakeholder working group.

Emily Cahill stated that if everyone is agreeable, the list could be established in a Programming Committee meeting scheduled for November or December, and establish and review the data points in advance before presented to the Board in January. Both Trustees Harant and Montez agreed.

**6. PENDING BUSINESS**

None at this time.

**7. OTHER BUSINESS**

Executive Director expressed her gratitude for the Lakeview Park After Dark event. Everyone played a part in making it a very successful event.

Executive Director Cahill stated that she is currently working on the strategic plan document that tracks process, plugging in and building out those things talked about in the Programming Committee i.e., the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July event, Peoria Grown, etc. She hopes to have a draft to present in the next two weeks.

**8. ACTION ITEMS REVIEW**

None noted at this time.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

At 4:43 p.m., Trustee Montez MOVED TO ADJOURN. Motion seconded by Executive Director Cahill and carried on a unanimous aye of those present.

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Respectfully Submitted by Alicia Woodworth  
Executive Assistant and Board Secretary