

**MINUTES OF THE DIVERSITY EQUITY INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE
PLEASURE DRIVEWAY AND PARK DISTRICT OF PEORIA, ILLINOIS, HELD TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2025 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, Pastor Marvin Hightower, Jodi Scott (left at 10:28 am)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sherry Carter-Allen, Devon Hawks, and Brooke Sommerville

TRUSTEES PRESENT: Trustees Joyce Harant, Alexander Sierra, Ron Silver, Mark Slover, and Vice President Reagan Leslie Hill (left at 10:45 am)

STAFF PRESENT: Executive Director Cahill, Brianna Cobb, Scott Loftus (left at 10:52 am), Becky Fredrickson, Chanel Hargrave-Murry, Karrie Ross, Shalesse Pie, Katie Van Cleve, Jennifer Swanson, Spencer Wilson, Attorneys Kevin Day and Justin Gunn, and Amber Eash

1. CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Sierra presided and called the meeting to order at 10:01 am.

2. ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken, with all members present, including two attending virtually.

3. MOTION TO PERMIT COMMITTEE MEMBER TO ATTEND MEETING ELECTRONICALLY

4. MINUTES

4.A. Approval of August 19, 2025 DEIA Committee Meeting Minutes

Trustee Slover MOVED TO APPROVE the August 19, 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

5.A. DEIA Directional Proposal Review

Trustee Slover presented an overview of his Directional Proposal, intended to complement Pillars 3 and 4 by suggesting broader regional collaboration, skills development efforts, and contractor-focused support strategies. The proposal outlined potential partnerships with training providers, local government, and economic development organizations.

Members agreed the Park District plays a supporting, not leading, role in regional workforce efforts.

Several members raised concerns that PPD lacks capacity to lead new regional initiatives and should instead align with existing efforts (City workforce initiatives, CareerLink, EDC, Racial Justice committee work, etc.).

Staff emphasized the need to include barriers such as misdemeanor records, which often prevent qualified individuals from securing union or contractor employment.

Pastor Hightower and others urged caution about duplicating existing efforts and stressed including historically underserved populations with significant systemic barriers.

Trustee Sierra expressed concern about the proposal's use of terms such as "mandate," which could conflict with the Park District's actual practice of applying aspirational goals rather than quotas.

Several members wanted to ensure public-facing documents accurately reflect PPD's impacts and do not overstate negative effects (e.g., cost increases, contractor loss) without evidence.

Members agreed that while the Park District already collaborates regionally in many ways, a clarified action plan could help formalize alignment with broader community initiatives.

Trustee Sierra will work with staff and legal counsel to revise language in the proposal to avoid inaccurate or overly strong terminology.

Proposal elements may be incorporated into future Annual Action Plans after refinement of Pillar 3 language.

5.B. Contractor Survey Review and Discussion

The Committee reviewed the draft Post-Project Contractor Survey, originally developed to complement the workforce dashboard and to provide contextual qualitative data regarding contractors' ability to meet DEIA goals.

Members debated timing: whether surveys should be conducted at the end of each project (original intent) or distributed broadly to all contractors immediately to establish a baseline.

Staff recommended administering surveys at project completion, ensuring higher response rates and relevance to specific projects.

Members raised concerns about contractor engagement, the need for clear communication of purpose, and ensuring the survey supports—not burdens—contractors.

Discussion included concerns about inconsistent data if conducted by email alone; members stressed the importance of follow-up conversations.

The Committee acknowledged the need to frame the survey in a way that demonstrates purpose, value, and partnership, including incorporation into pre-bid communications.

5.C. Procurement Policy Process and Clarification

Executive Director Cahill reviewed the document outlining distinctions between policy and process, responding to recent questions about responsibilities and voting requirements. The document clarifies which elements are Board-adopted policy versus internal administrative processes.

Trustee Sierra highlighted the importance of reviewing the March 2023 DEIA Policy, particularly the need to define “good faith effort” for future evaluation and enforcement.

Members noted this clarification will help support future decisions on DEIA contracting practices.

5.D. Pillars Redraft Status Check

Executive Director Cahill provided context for the working draft update of the DEIA Commitment Document, noting that it reflects prior committee input and includes revised language across all pillars. The draft currently includes Pillars 1–3 but does not yet integrate the DEIA definitions or the previous Pillar 4 sections.

Trustee Sierra emphasized that the document is not under consideration for approval; instead, it is presented for continued refinement of terminology, focus areas, and clarity before a future recommendation to the full Board.

The Committee then reviewed each pillar.

Pillar One: Equitable Access to Parks, Facilities, and Programming

Trustee Sierra summarized the commitments under pillar one, including equitable investments, community collaboration, cultural competency, accessible outreach, and reduction of administrative barriers.

Members requested clarification on what “reducing administrative obstacles” means. Staff explained barriers may include transportation, internet access, literacy challenges, and accessibility issues. Examples were provided such as in-person scholarship requirements and availability of computers and staff assistance at recruitment events.

Youth Career Exploration: Discussion centered on Pillar 1, Item 5. Members questioned whether “career exploration and skill building” should be characterized as youth-specific. Staff explained that while programming originated in youth spaces, current and future programming may serve broader age ranges.

Members suggested adding qualifying language to clarify inclusion of youth-through-adulthood opportunities without restricting future programming.

Consensus was that Pillar 1 remains appropriate for these items but should include descriptors that clearly link them to Park District programming, distinguishing them from workforce development employment initiatives.

Pillar Two: Focus on the PPD Workforce

Discussion focused on ensuring inclusive language and clarity around targeted demographic groups.

Members raised concerns that the current phrasing “racial minorities” is too narrow and does not fully encompass persons with disabilities, sexual orientation, or other protected classes.

Legal counsel advised use of defined terms in the opening paragraph—such as “minorities,” “underrepresented groups,” or “protected statuses”—and then referencing that defined term consistently throughout the document.

Discussion acknowledged challenges in tracking certain demographic data (e.g., disability status) but affirmed a desire to be more explicit and inclusive in the document’s intent.

Committee recommended broadening terminology to ensure coverage of all underrepresented demographics without listing only select groups within certain strategies.

Pillar Three: Promote DEIA Across Contractors and Suppliers

The Committee reviewed draft strategies addressing contractor engagement, data collection, identifying barriers, and regional collaboration.

Members discussed similarities between Pillar 2 (workforce) and Pillar 3 (contractors). Staff clarified Pillar 2 focuses internally on PPD’s workforce, while Pillar 3 applies externally to contractors and suppliers.

Several members expressed concern that the strategies in Pillar 3 appear sequential and interdependent but are formatted as separate strategies.

Members stressed the need for clearer articulation of how qualitative/quantitative data will be used to identify barriers and then determine appropriate collaboration or referrals.

Substantial discussion addressed how PPD can support contractors without becoming a workforce development agency.

Members agreed the document must describe the Park District’s role and boundaries clearly, noting that actions such as technical assistance or referrals should be collaborative rather than directive.

6. NEW BUSINESS

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

See discussion in item 5.D.

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

Shalesse Pie presented the September 2025 Workforce Stats Report. Further discussion in item 5.D.

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

See discussion in item 5.D.

6.D. Pillar Four: Support Community Workforce Development

General discussion on this item was incorporated throughout Items 5.A. and 5.D.

7. PENDING BUSINESS

None at this time.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

None at this time.

9. ACTION ITEMS REVIEW

No specific action items were noted at this time.

10. NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, November 18, 2025 at 10:00 AM

11. ADJOURNMENT

At 11:37 am the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by Alicia Woodworth, Executive Assistant and Board Secretary
Based on notes from Assistant Board Secretary Amber Eash