

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE PLEASURE DRIVEWAY AND PARK DISTRICT OF PEORIA, ILLINOIS HELD AT 4:30 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2025 AT THE BONNIE NOBLE CENTER FOR PARK DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, 1125 W. LAKE AVENUE, PEORIA, ILLINOIS.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Vice President and Chair Reagan Leslie Hill, Trustee Ron Silver (in at 4:35 pm), and Executive Director Emily Cahill

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

TRUSTEES PRESENT: Trustees Steve Montez, Ron Silver, Mark Slover, Vice President Reagan Leslie Hill, and President Robert Johnson

STAFF PRESENT: Executive Director Emily Cahill, Matt Freeman, Becky Fredrickson, Mike Friberg, Mary Harden, Scott Loftus, Karrie Ross, Kristi Shoemaker, Jennifer Swanson, Attorney Kevin Day (in at 4:58 pm), and Alicia Woodworth

1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice President Hill called the meeting to order at 4:31 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 Minutes of September 10, 2025 Planning Committee Meeting

Executive Director Cahill MOVED TO APPROVE the minutes of the September 10, 2025 Planning Committee meeting. Motion seconded by Vice President Hill and carried unanimously by roll call vote.

5. NEW BUSINESS

5.A. Memorial Bench at FPNC

Jenny Swanson stated that staff received a request from Mary Brennan to place a memorial bench at Forest Park Nature Center (FPNC) on the Cardinal Trail in memory of a loved one. The deceased spent a considerable amount of time at Forest Park Nature Center along with other Peoria Park District facilities, and Mary thinks this would be a fitting tribute. I worked with the Mrs. Brennan to confirm her interest in the memorial bench, and communicated with FPNC staff to determine possible acceptable locations. Ultimately Mrs. Brennan decided to pursue a memorial bench on the Cardinal Trail at FPNC. The bench will also include a standardized plaque, with language agreed upon by the District and family. The bench will also include a standardized plaque, with language agreed upon by the District and family. As such, staff recommends approval of this request. Staff will ensure the bench and plaque matches the Memorial and Tribute guidelines. All expenses will be incurred by Mrs. Mary Brennan.

Trustee Silver MOVED TO PROVIDE CONSENSUS to advance the memorial bench request to Full Board for approval. Motion seconded by Executive Director Cahill and carried unanimously by roll call vote.

5.B. Owens Center Update

Executive Director Cahill provided an update on the Owens Center renovation project, noting that two related items would be presented on the upcoming Regular Board agenda. The first item is a contract with McKinstry Architects for the initial schematic design phase of a comprehensive Owens Center renovation project. The second item is a contract with a site engineering firm to address site-related improvements.

Executive Director Cahill explained that staff is recommending a phased, step-by-step approach to the Owens Center renovation. A primary driver of the project is the need to replace the existing ice plant, which currently relies on R-22 refrigerant that is no longer permitted. The schematic design phase will help determine the full scope of renovations, estimated costs, and opportunities to modernize the facility to improve the patron experience.

Discussion followed regarding potential interior and exterior improvements. Interior concepts discussed included reconfiguration of the lobby and transition areas, possible expansion or relocation of locker rooms, improved patron circulation, enhanced concession or gathering spaces, and better visibility into the ice rinks. Trustees discussed how increasing the number of locker rooms could reduce congestion in the lobby and improve overall functionality during peak usage times.

Exterior considerations included potential site improvements following the removal of the former Family Aquatic Center. Staff noted that proposed site work could improve parking, circulation, and overall visibility of the Owens Center from surrounding roadways.

The estimated cost for the schematic design phase was reviewed, along with the proposed funding sources. Staff explained that a portion of the costs would be funded through Owens Center operating funds, including the Ice Plant General Administration account, with the remaining balance funded through bond proceeds. Executive Director Cahill emphasized that using operating funds at this stage would help preserve bond capacity for later phases of the project.

Grant funding opportunities were also discussed, including potential energy transition or other state and federal grants, though staff noted that availability of such funding can vary.

No formal action was taken, as the update was provided for informational purposes only.

5.C. Discussion: Next Steps Parcel #13-13-203-011

Mike Friberg explained that the Park District acquired Parcel Identification Number (PIN) 13-13-203-011 by donation from Edward Sutkowski in the summer of 2025, along with a second, larger parcel. The parcel under discussion consists of approximately 2.83 acres and had previously been cleared, graded, and prepared for multifamily residential development, with utilities already in place.

Mr. Friberg reviewed the statutory and internal considerations required for divestment of Park District property. Statutorily, the Illinois Park District Code allows the District to sell property not exceeding three acres without a referendum, provided certain conditions are met. Internally, staff evaluates environmental impact, operational considerations, community need, future expansion potential, operating expenses, location, and overall value to the District.

Staff noted that the parcel has no significant habitat requiring conservation and currently incurs operational expenses, including shared costs with a neighboring condominium association. The parcel is separated from the adjacent, larger District-owned parcel by a steep ravine and has little functional relationship to the land the District intends to retain. Proceeds from a potential sale could be used to support future development of the larger parcel.

Mr. Friberg further stated that Mr. Sutkowski placed no restrictions on the donated land and expressed no objection to the District selling this parcel. Staff shared that there had been informal interest from developers in the past and recommended testing the market by listing the parcel for sale with a local real estate agent.

Committee members discussed the parcel's location, prior preparation for development, estimated value, and lack of recreational utility for the District. Consensus was expressed that selling the parcel aligns with the District's strategic and operational interests.

6. PENDING BUSINESS

None at this time.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

Executive Director Cahill informed the Committee that the trial related to the Hallor property is scheduled to move forward the following week. She noted that local media outlets have requested to attend the proceedings and that the matter may receive public coverage. Legal counsel will continue to represent the District, and additional information can be provided as appropriate.

Staff also provided a brief update on the Central Park Pool property, noting that title work had recently been received and forwarded to legal counsel for review. No significant issues were identified in the initial review, and discussions with the school district are expected to continue.

8. ACTION STEPS REVIEW

None noted at this time.

9. ADJOURNMENT

At 4:59 pm, Trustee Silver MOVED TO ADJOURN the meeting. Motion second by Vice President Hill and carried on unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted by Alicia Woodworth
Executive Assistant and Board Secretary