OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE PLEASURE DRIVEWAY AND PARK DISTRICT OF PEORIA, ILLINOIS, HELD AT 5:00 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2025 HELD AT THE BONNIE W. NOBLE CENTER FOR PARK DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, 1125 WEST LAKE AVENUE, PEORIA, IL

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

TRUSTEES ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Executive Director Emily Cahill, Brianna Cobb, Matt Freeman, Becky Fredrickson, Scott Loftus, Shalesse Pie, Karrie Ross, Jennifer Swanson, Mike Eddlemon, Mary Harden, Mike Friberg, Yoginee Nawale, Spencer Wilson, Kadar Heffner, Ryne Schafer, Attorneys Kevin Day and Jocelyn Arrendondo, Miles Howley, and Alicia Woodworth

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Johnson presided and called the meeting to order at 5:07 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken. All Trustees were present.

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

No requests were received to attend electronically.

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 October 22, 2025 Regular Board Meeting

Trustee Slover MOVED TO APPROVE the Minutes of the October 22, 2025 Regular Board Meeting. Motion seconded by Trustee Harant and carried unanimously on roll call vote.

6. CITIZEN REQUEST TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Jamie Messmore addressed the Board stating: I request updates to the Mossville Soccer Complex. As someone who personally utilizes the facility three to four times a week, I have watched the field and parking lot conditions deteriorate significantly in the last few years. It's a highly utilized facility with more than 120,000 annual visitors, 30,000 of those being unique visitors. For some of them, it's their only impression of Peoria and is unfortunately a negative one. I understand that there are many competing budget priorities, but with even a minor investment, the experience for those who use the facility, whether it be regularly or intermittently, could be drastically improved. Additionally, with added maintenance, there is opportunity to utilize the space for additional activities and ultimately result in a positive economic impact for the Peoria area, as has been demonstrated in neighboring communities such as Washington, Metamora, and Pekin. I understand there have already been conversations and an application of grant funding for this project. Thank you for your prompt action and I look forward to the next steps and being a part of giving the thousands of Peoria kids who use the complex a safe and maintained space to be proud of. Thanks for the opportunity and your willingness to consider this project.

7. STAFF REPORTS

7.A. Executive Director

Executive Director Cahill pointed out the One Membership. Unlimited Adventures Explore More Membership flyer. This membership includes four destinations: Peoria Zoo, Peoria PlayHouse, Forest Park Nature Center, and Luthy Botanical Garden for one membership price.

7.B. Superintendent of Planning, Design & Construction

Becky Fredrickson provided the October 2025 Project Report, noting significant construction activity. No questions were raised by Trustees.

7.C. Chief of Police

Interim Police Chief Eddlemon presented the October 2025 Police Report and noted that October was a busy month for the Department due to the high volume of events occurring across District parks. He reported that all staff “pitched in” and performed well, and that no major security or police concerns were recorded during the month.

Chief Eddlemon shared that crime statistics were trending slightly down but generally even year-over-year. He reported that the Department currently has three full-time officers, not including himself, with one open position. Upon filling the vacancy, the Department will return to four full-time officers. Responding to Trustee questions, he clarified that while he does occasionally patrol, that work constitutes only a small percentage of his time and is done primarily to assist an officer working alone, to observe problem areas firsthand, and to better understand the size and operational needs of the District.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

8.A. DEIA Committee – Minutes of August 19, 2025 Meeting

Trustee and DEIA Committee Chair Sierra presented the approved minutes of the August 19, 2025 DEIA Committee meeting and invited questions or comments from the Board.

Chair Sierra highlighted for the Board the continued focus on the action items section within the DEIA Committee’s work. He emphasized that, given recent community interest and ongoing internal initiatives, the Committee is prioritizing closing out outstanding action items before the end of the year. He specifically noted that the Committee expects to bring forward updates regarding progress toward the DEIA Commitment Document, including next steps for Board consideration and implementation.

9. NEW BUSINESS

9.A. Contract: Design for Peoria PlayHouse Improvements

Becky Fredrickson stated that the Peoria Park District was awarded grant funds from the Gilmore Foundation for the renovation of the Peoria PlayHouse Children’s Museum. Those funds will be used to enclose an area of the porch to allow for the relocation and expansion of the Real Tools exhibit and the addition of a new grocery exhibit. DCEO grant funds have also now been awarded allowing for a more comprehensive design for the revitalization of the facility and its exhibits. This proposal is for exhibit design services. Becky Fredrickson noted that staff’s recommendation was contingent upon final attorney review of minor insurance and indemnification language.

Trustee Harant MOVED TO APPROVE the Contract for Design for Peoria PlayHouse Improvements. Motion seconded by Vice President Hill and carried unanimously on roll call vote.

9.B. Post-Travel Expenses Approval for President Johnson Attending IAPD's Best of the Best Awards Gala on Friday, October 24, 2025 in Wheeling, IL

Trustee Sierra MOVED TO APPROVE the Post-Travel Expenses Approval for President Johnson Attending IAPD's Best of the Best Awards Gala on Friday, October 24, 2025 in Wheeling, IL. Motion seconded by Vice President Hill and carried unanimously on roll call vote.

9.C. Approval of 2026 Operating Budget

Prior to consideration of the 2026 Operating Budget, Executive Director Cahill and staff provided follow-up information requested at a previous meeting regarding the proposed 2026 increase in Trewyn Park Pavilion rental rates, from $40/hour to $50/hour. Staff gave rationale for the proposed rate adjustment, noting:

-Trewyn Pavilion is a rental-only indoor facility, requiring staff to be physically present at every rental.
-The facility’s unique operational needs result in a high per-hour cost to the District.
-At the current $40/hour, rental revenue is projected at $8,000 annually, while the cost to operate is approximately $83.87 per hour, totaling around $16,774, even before setup/teardown labor costs.
-Staff stated that the proposed $10 increase was intended to keep the rate consistent with comparable District rentals, such as Proctor Recreation Center.

Staff reiterated the organizational goal of improving cost recovery for rentals of private spaces, noting that tax dollars ideally should not fully subsidize private events. Staff emphasized that this does not apply to programs or community events, which they acknowledged are appropriately subsidized.

Trustee Harant asked for clarification on how rental rates align with other District facilities and expressed that as long as rates are consistent, she did not oppose the increase.

Trustee Slover emphasized achieving consistency across rental products and questioned whether it made sense for Trewyn to remain priced below Proctor.

Trustee Sierra raised concerns with categorical price equity, noting that equitable does not always mean “the same.” He highlighted that:

-The median household income in 61605 is approximately $24,000,
-A $10/hour increase can meaningfully impact families in the surrounding neighborhood,
-The District must be sensitive to affordability within economically disadvantaged areas.

Trustee Sierra noted that while Trewyn’s usage includes visitors from all over the city, the facility’s location means pricing changes are felt most acutely by South Side residents.

Trustee Sierra also drew a distinction between program subsidies—which the District intentionally uses to expand access—and private rental fees, stating that increasing a rental rate is not the same as adjusting program fees.

Trustee Silver expressed concern about subsidizing private events, stating that subsidies should support District programs and services rather than private parties.

Trustee Sierra responded that using the term subsidy in this context does not capture the full value of public access, particularly in lower-income areas.

Trustee Montez raised concerns regarding the District's philosophy surrounding pricing, subsidies, and accessibility in lower-income neighborhoods. He questioned whether the District was shifting toward a "business model mentality," stating that the Park District is not designed to function like a private business and that cost-recovery principles should not overshadow the District's historic commitment to community programming and equitable access. He asked whether the Board was unintentionally redefining its long-standing philosophy by applying the term subsidy to a neighborhood-based rental rate, and challenged the notion that maintaining the $40/hour rate constituted an inappropriate financial subsidy.

Trustee Montez emphasized that subsidies have always played a meaningful and intentional role in the Park District's mission, especially in program delivery, and argued that using the same term for rental pricing obscures its purpose. He cautioned that if the District began treating all indirect costs as subsidy indicators, the Board would find that a significant portion of District programs and services are also subsidized—often at far higher levels—raising larger philosophical questions about how the District defines its role, impact, and service priorities. He underscored the importance of recognizing income disparities within the 61605 zip code, reiterating that a $10/hour increase in a neighborhood with a median household income around $24,000 has disproportionate effects compared to other parts of the city.

In response, Executive Director Cahill clarified that staff's use of the term "subsidy" refers simply to the difference between revenue generated and the taxpayer support required to operate a facility or program, not to a shift in philosophy. She noted that the District regularly tracks per-participant and per-acre subsidies in its budget documents and that discounting and accessibility mechanisms already exist within rental policy—particularly for nonprofits and community groups—to support equitable access. She stated that the District attempts to balance affordability with cost trends and operational realities, and that staff was seeking Board direction rather than prescribing a policy outcome.

President Johnson spoke to the philosophical point, reminding the Board that when he became Board President in 2017 the District faced significant financial strain, requiring difficult decisions and service reductions. He emphasized that while he supports expanded services and access, the District must remain financially stable to maintain and grow programming citywide—including on the South Side. He acknowledged the validity of Trustee Montez's equity concerns but stressed the importance of preserving the District's fiscal health so that it can continue providing meaningful support and programs, particularly in 61605.

Vice President Hill expressed support for affordability considerations and stated she trusted Trustee Sierra's assessment as the elected representative for the Southern District.

Trustee Harant acknowledged the difference between program equity and private rentals, but supported allowing Trewyn to remain at $40 due to the minimal impact on the overall budget.

In addition, Trustee Harant stated that she had no objection to the District maintaining reserves within the Golf Fund, noting she "wouldn't have anything against having a surplus" and understood why it was being proposed and how it would be used in the future. She clarified that her concern was not about the existence of a reserve, but about ensuring a correct understanding of how the surplus would be applied. She initially believed the reserve might be directed solely toward golf programs associated with the new Golf Learning Center. Executive Director Cahill confirmed that, under District policy, any surplus remains in the Golf Fund but is not restricted strictly to programming—it is used to bring the fund to a healthy reserve position and to support future golf-related needs more broadly. With this clarification, Trustee Harant acknowledged the explanation and indicated she understood the policy framework around the reserve.

Trustee Slover noted the District could not make all decisions based on subsidy levels, because the District subsidizes numerous programs and facilities, including major amenities such as the Zoo.

Executive Director Cahill reiterated that staff was not using "subsidy" in a negative way, but simply communicating the actual cost vs. revenue of the rental operation.

Through discussion, the Board acknowledged:

1. The financial impact of holding Trewyn's rate at $40/hour was minimal within a $53 million District budget.
2. The increase to $50/hour could create an unnecessary barrier for families in 61605 wishing to rent the facility for celebrations and community events.
3. The District maintains the ability to revisit rental rates in future years or treat Trewyn separately based on neighborhood demographics and Board priorities.
4. Cost recovery goals must be balanced with the District's broader goals of accessibility, community building, and equity.

As such, Trustee Sierra MOVED TO APPROVE the 2026 Operating Budget with the Modification that in 2026, Trewyn Rental Fees Remain at $40/hour. Motion seconded by Vice President Hill and CARRIED as follows: Trustee Harant – Aye, Trustee Montez – Nay, Trustee Sierra – Aye, Trustee Silver – Nay, Trustee Slover – Nay, Vice President Hill – Aye, President Johnson – Aye. (Results: 4 Ayes; 3 Nays)

9.D. Capital Improvement Plan Presentation

Executive Director Cahill and Becky Fredrickson presented an overview of the District's Capital Improvement Planning process and provided a summary of 2025 capital accomplishments, 2026 bond issue requests, and the need for structured, long-term prioritization.

Staff reviewed completed and in-progress 2025 capital projects, including:
-Glen Oak Park inclusive restroom & shelter improvements
-Golf Learning Center renovation
-Lakeview Park Splashpad

-Franciscan Recreation Complex playground
-Columbia Park improvements
-Chartwell Park OSLAD grant application
-RiverPlex Arena floor replacement
-HISRA parking lot improvements
-Lakeview Family Aquatic Center demolition
-Glen Oak Park solar project
-Luthy Botanical Garden boiler replacement
-Outfield fence at Woodruff Field
-Interior painting at Proctor Recreation Center
-RI Greenway culvert and trail repairs
-Path replacements at Cassidy, Gwynn, RiverFront, and Charter Oak Parks

Staff reported that more than $14 million in capital requests were submitted for 2026, but only $5 million can be funded through the annual General Obligation Bond Issue.

Planning staff prioritize projects based on:
-Safety, legal, and ADA requirements
-Critical infrastructure
-Projects tied to grants or outside funding
-Amenity upgrades where feasible

Examples of recommended 2026 GO Bond-funded projects include:
-Underground storage tank replacement at ESC
-Lakeview elevator and Proctor lift replacements
-Noble Center chiller replacement
-Mechanical & IT equipment upgrades
-Bradley Park tennis court rebuild
-RiverPlex IT room relocation & skylight recoating
-Glen Oak Park pickleball lighting

Projects funded from other sources in 2026 include:
-Solar projects (GLC and ESC) using designated over-reserves
-Paving and lighting from over-reserves
-Zoo memorial reserves for Aussie improvements
-Grants and donations for PlayHouse exhibits
-State funds for Grand View Drive Pavilion relocation
-DCEO grant application for Mossville Soccer irrigation
-OSLAD grant application for Chartwell Park improvements

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Framework
Staff presented an educational overview of best-practice CIP elements, including:
-Multi-year planning
-Alignment with the Strategic Plan and asset management
-Transparent prioritization criteria
-Clearly identified funding sources
-Annual review and update process

Next Steps / Board Direction

Staff requested Board direction to:

1. Approve the 2026 Bond Issue Authorization
2. Form an ad hoc Board Committee to support staff in developing a formal, annualized Capital Improvement Policy and prioritization process, ensuring consistency for future bond-year decisions.

No formal vote occurred under this agenda item, as this was a presentation for discussion and direction.

9.E. Reallocation of Bonded Funds

Becky Fredrickson stated that Each year the Park Board approves the allocation of bonded funds for specific projects. Occasionally external factors arise and the funds are not needed for those specific projects, or the funds are not able to be spent on the assigned projects within the allotted time frame. Factors can range from external funding sources covering the cost of the project to limited man-power, contractors, or resources needed to complete the project. When these situations arise, staff requests that these specific dollars be reallocated toward other projects needing funding. After recently reviewing bonded accounts, staff recommends the re-allocation of several accounts listed.

With the Park District nearing completion of the Golf Learning Center and some final expenses, staff would request that the funds listed below be reallocated to the Golf Learning Center Renovation project. The funds will be used to help cover the replacement of the exterior range lights to LED fixtures, the installation of additional security fencing for the facility per the Chief's request, the necessary upgrades to the new starter shed for full 3 season usage by staff, improvements to the off-site parking lot for staff, and modifications to the safety netting system to better protect patrons. The purchase of the exterior light fixtures will require Park Board approval. Staff will bring a recommendation to a future Board meeting for this purchase.

As such, staff recommends re-allocating the following bonded accounts to be used toward the Golf Learning Center Renovation project as noted.

Trustee Silver MOVED TO APPROVE the Reallocation of Bonded Funds. Motion seconded by Trustee Slover and carried unanimously on roll call vote.

9.F. Approval of 2026 Bond Issue Budget

Trustee Sierra MOVED TO APPROVE the 2026 Bond Issue Budget. Motion seconded by Trustee Harant and carried unanimously on roll call vote.

10. CALENDAR OF CONSENT ITEMS

None at this time.

11. PENDING BUSINESS

None at this time.

12. COMMUNICATIONS

None at this time.

13. OTHER BUSINESS

President Johnson stated that he wished to offer a brief comment. He emphasized that all Trustees share the responsibility of ensuring a strong and successful Park District and noted that achieving this requires working well together and maintaining mutual respect. He acknowledged that each Trustee brings individual interests and perspectives, but stressed the importance of remaining cordial, professional, and collaborative with one another, with staff, and with constituents. President Johnson encouraged the Board to continue fostering a positive, respectful environment so their partnership may remain strong and continue to support the success of the Park District.

13.A. Approval of Motion to Convene into Closed Session Under Illinois Open Meetings Act Section 2(c)(2) Concerning Collective Negotiating Matters Between the Public Body and its Employees or Their Representatives, or Deliberations Concerning Salary Schedules for One or More Classes of Employees

At 7:09 PM Trustee Harant MOVED TO CONVENE into Closed Session Under Illinois Open Meetings Act Section 2(c)(2) Concerning Collective Negotiating Matters Between the Public Body and its Employees or Their Representatives, or Deliberations Concerning Salary Schedules for One or More Classes of Employees. Motion seconded by Trustee Silver and carried unanimously on roll call vote.

At 7:53 PM President Johnson reconvened the Regular Board meeting.

14. ACTION STEPS REVIEW

None noted at this time.

15. ADJOURNMENT

At 7:55 pm Trustee Slover MOVED TO ADJOURN. Motion seconded by Trustee Slover and carried unanimously on roll call vote.

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

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Respectfully Submitted by Alicia Woodworth
Executive Assistant and Board Secretary