OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING OF THE STRATEGY AD HOC COMMITTEE/BOARD OF THE WHOLE OF THE PLEASURE DRIVEWAY AND PARK DISTRICT OF PEORIA, ILLINOIS, AT 4:30 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2025 HELD AT THE BONNIE NOBLE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, 1125 WEST LAKE AVENUE, PEORIA IL

TRUSTEES PRESENT: Trustees Laurie Covington, Joyce Harant, Reagan Leslie Hill, Steve Montez, Vice President Sierra (in at 4:57 pm), and President Robert Johnson (left at 5:08 pm)

TRUSTEES ABSENT: Trustee Timothy Bertschy

STAFF PRESENT: Executive Director Emily Cahill, Brianna Cobb, Nick Conrad, Becky Fredrickson, Matt Freeman, Scott Loftus, Karrie Ross, Jenny Swanson, Attorney Kevin Day, Attorney Justin Gunn, Max Lakes, Mike Friberg, Cassie Robbins, Kristi Shoemaker, and Alicia Woodworth.

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Johnson presided and called the meeting to order at 4:35 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

3. MOTION TO PERMIT TRUSTEE TO ATTEND MEETING ELECTRONICALLY

Trustee Sierra requested to attend the meeting electronically due to employment purposes. Vice President Hill MOVED TO ALLOW Trustee Sierra attend the meeting electronically. Motion seconded by Trustee Montez and carried on the following roll call vote: Trustees Covington, Harant, Montez, Vice President Hill, and President Johnson. (Results 5 Ayes; 0 Nays)

4. MINUTES

4.A. Approval of Minutes of January 15, 2025 Strategy Ad Hoc Committee Meeting

Trustee Harant MOVED TO APPROVE the minutes of the January 15, 2025 Strategy Ad Hoc Committee meeting. Motion seconded by Trustee Montez and carried on the following roll call vote: Trustees Covington, Harant, Montez, Vice President Hill, and President Johnson. (Results: 5 Ayes; 0 Abstain; 0 Nays)

5. POLICY/PROCESS UPDATES

6. NEW BUSINESS

6.A. City of Peoria Abatement Ordinance

Mike Friberg stated that in April of 2021, the City of Peoria passed an Urban Decay Abatement Ordinance per enabling legislation by the Illinois State Legislature. This ordinance has the following key features:

- Areas of urban decay were mapped and designated.
- Developers building new single-family homes in these areas can receive a total property tax abatement on the value of any new homes built. The value of the land is not included in the abatement.
- The abatement lasts for 10 years.

The City has not received any applicants for this program to date.

In August of 2024, the Illinois State Legislature amended the statute to include renovations of homes. The City of Peoria wishes to amend their ordinance to allow renovated homes to receive tax abatement. The proposed amendment includes the following key features:

- An expansion of the urban decay district boundaries.
- Renovations of single-family or townhomes are now included.
- The abatements will last 10 years.
- The program will be limited to 20 years.
- A state income tax rebate program will be available based on changes in value of the land (as described in the state statute).

In January 2025, the City, as required by law, established an advisory board consisting of members of tax-levying districts (including the school district, park district, airport authority, etc.) with the goal of having this board provide a recommendation to the Peoria City Council. Land Manager Michael Friberg represented the Peoria Park District at this meeting. All representatives declined to vote until feedback from their respective boards could be received. A second meeting has been set for February 18th. Once the advisory board vote is received, it will be forwarded to the City Council. Per statute, the City Council is not bound by the vote of the advisory board.

As such, staff is requesting guidance on this issue. If appropriate, staff requests authorization to vote the board consensus at the Urban Decay advisory board meeting on February 18, 2025.

After discussion, Trustees in attendance gave consensus to Mike Friberg to represent the Park District and vote “yes” at the 2.18.25 Urban Decay Advisory Board meeting.

6.B. Springdale Savanna Update

Becky Fredrickson stated that staff was recently contacted by Springdale Cemetery concerning potential improvements to the scattering garden area. Park District staff met with them on site where there are two areas they would like to add a handrail next to existing concrete steps for easier access.

After brief discussion, Trustees in attendance gave consensus to staff to provide a handrail for steps.

6.C. Planning – Memorial Bench – Camp Wokanda

Jenny Swanson stated that staff received a request from Ms. Jenna Bahaj to place a memorial bench at Camp Wokanda in memory of a long-time runner of the Chill Billy and Cry Me A River races that start and end at Camp Wokanda. Staff worked with the Ms. Bahaj to review available memorial options in the District, but due to the sentimental relationship the runner had with Camp Wokanda, Ms. Bahaj wishes to do a bench at that location. 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 Ms. Jenna Bahaj.

After brief discussion, Trustees in attendance gave consensus to submit this item to the full Board for approval.

6.D. Bradley Park Statue Update

Executive Director Cahill stated that the Peoria Park District Board of Trustees commissioned artwork by Preston Jackson to be placed in Bradley Park. The scope and subject of this artwork is the history of Native Americans and their contributions to Peoria and its evolution. Artist Jackson has reached out to staff stating that "In order to tell this story, the size of the sculpture and it's casting cost have expanded beyond the $100,000 commission price. To adequately and effectively complete the project, the price of the sculpture needs to increase to $125,000." At a recent site visit, Michael Wiant, renowned archeologist and former Director of Dickson Mounds Museum after viewing the piece in progress, stated to Preston, "your genius has woven a thousands-of-years-long storyline into a visual masterpiece that encourages reflection and conversation everywhere the eye lands and the mind is engaged. It is also a tribute and celebration of the Indigenous Nations who continue to enrich our lives. This magnificent sculpture could serve as a "textbook" for seminars on Indigenous history and present-day life in the heart of North America and beyond and how we choose to shape the future." There are sufficient funds in the project budget to cover this requested overage.

As such, in light of the significance of this piece and the available funds, staff requests approval of a change order to increase the fees paid to Preston Jackson to complete this important work.

After brief discussion, Trustees in attendance gave consensus to submit this item to the full Board for approval.

7. PENDING BUSINESS

7.A. Programming – July 3rd Event Discussion Continued

Executive Director Cahill stated that on Thursday, February 6, she met with President Johnson and Vice President Hill regarding an interest in considering Juneteenth as a possible date for fireworks in Glen Oak Park as an alternative to July 3. At that meeting, they talked about the need to gather community leaders already working in the space to celebrate this important holiday and after getting consensus from the Board, President Johnson asked staff to facilitate a meeting. On Friday, February 7, staff was able to convene a discussion with representatives of the NAACP, Yani Collective, and Southside Community Center. Six members of the Board of Trustees and staff were also in attendance.

An hour-long discussion resulted in the following information:

*In 2025, the NAACP and Yani Collective have events planned for June 14.
*Southside Community Center is working on their plan, but hope to facilitate an event again at Trewyn Park, along with showing of the documentary "Juneteenth Faith and Freedom" and possible a concert featuring Lacrae.

*Heritage Ensemble also has a concert on either the Friday or Saturday of the weekend before Juneteenth.

The collective agreed that it was most appropriate to host events in celebration of the holiday leading up to or on the day of the holiday. With the scheduling of Steamboat on June 14, along with the events above, the group agreed that it would make sense for the District to focus their considerations on an event with fireworks on the holiday itself.

There was also significant interest in collaborating on promotion of the full calendar of celebration and in building out a shared marketing plan and collateral materials to support engagement and celebration of Peoria. It was further agreed that, in addition to those present, if staff is directed to facilitate a Juneteenth event, East Bluff organizations will be added to any future planning meetings. Next steps included the agreement that If the Board of Trustees provides consensus direction that an event should be planned and executed on June 19, then staff will reach out to set a follow-up meeting with leaders to build a plan for promotion and sharing of resources across all events.

As such, staff seeks Board direction on whether they should begin the planning and bidding process for fireworks to be held at Glen Oak Park in 2025 and the firm date on which those fireworks should be offered.

In addition, Executive Director Cahill stated that staff was recently contacted by a drone company to see if there was any interest in a Juneteenth drone show rather than fireworks. This may be another option to consider as part of the event. It would be a customized show, specific to PPD and Juneteenth. Based upon the conversation last Friday, there was some consensus from those in attendance that the celebration should occur on Juneteenth, Thursday, June 19, and not on an alternate date or weekend.

President Johnson asked why a drone show, rather than fireworks, was not discussed at last Friday's meeting with community members concerning Juneteenth? Why bring it up now? He thought everyone had agreed on fireworks and now something different is being brought up. Executive Director Cahill stated that staff was contacted just yesterday by the same drone company that provided the drone show for the past two Park-a-Palooza, inquiring if the Park District was interested in a Juneteenth drone show. Rather than just dismiss it, staff wanted to give the opportunity to discuss the possibility at tonight's Strategy Ad Hoc meeting. Staff is not recommending a drone show, but rather offering to get a quote if the Board would like. The District is committed to move forward with Juneteenth and this is just another option to consider for the Juneteenth event. President Johnson stated that a drone show was never discussed and as President, he does not like learning about things later on and he's fed up with this. It's not that he doesn't want drones, he's just upset that he is just now learning about this option. Executive Director Cahill stated that the drone company had just contacted staff about the possibility and she thought the Board would want to discuss that option if interested.

At this time, President Johnson left the meeting, resulting in Vice President Hill presiding over the meeting.

Remaining trustees in attendance continued the discussion of fireworks vs. drones for the Juneteenth event. In conclusion of the discussion, consensus was given to staff to get a quote for both fireworks and a drone show to be held on Thursday, June 19. This information is to be presented at the next Board meeting. In addition, staff is directed to contact those in attendance in last Friday's meeting their thoughts on fireworks vs. a drone show, compile that info, and send to the Board for review.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

8.A. Approval to Convene into Closed Session Pursuant to Section 2(c)(5) The purchase or lease of real property for the use of the public body, including meetings held for the purpose of discussing whether a particular parcel should be acquired.

At 5:18 pm Trustee Harant MOVED TO CONVENE into Closed Session Pursuant to Section 2(c)(5) The purchase or lease of real property for the use of the public body, including meetings held for the purpose of discussing whether a particular parcel should be acquired. Motion seconded by Trustee Montez and carried on the following roll call vote: Trustees Covington, Harant, Montez, Vice President Hill, and President Johnson. (Results: 5 Ayes; 0 Abstain; 0 Nays)

At 5:40 pm Vice President Hill reconvened the Strategy Ad Hoc Committee meeting.

9. ACTION STEPS REVIEW

1. Staff is to obtain a quote for both a fireworks show and drone show for Juneteenth to present to the board for their consideration.
2. Staff is to contact attendees in last Friday's meeting to obtain their thoughts on fireworks vs. drone show for Juneteenth and report back to the Board the findings.

10. ADJOURNMENT

At 5:44 pm, Trustee Sierra MOVED TO ADJOURN. Motion seconded by Trustee Montez and carried on the following roll call vote: Trustees Covington, Harant, Montez, Sierra, and Vice President Hill). (Results: 5 Ayes; 0 Nays).

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Respectfully Submitted by Alicia Woodworth
Executive Assistant and Board Secretary