

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE HELD AT 3:00 P.M., MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2023 AT THE NOBLE CENTER FOR PARK DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, 1125 WEST LAKE AVENUE, PEORIA, ILLINOIS.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Trustee and Chair Alexander Sierra and Executive Director Emily Cahill

MEMBERS ABSENT: Trustee and Vice Chair Kyle Bright

TRUSTEES PRESENT: Trustees Joyce Harant and Alexander Sierra

STAFF PRESENT: Executive Director Emily Cahill, Brent Wheeler (v), Chanel Hargrave-Murry, Jonelle McCloud, Amanda Green, Mike Miller (v), Jess Main, Scott Loftus, Jenny Swanson, and Alicia Woodworth

Note: (v) = Attended Virtually

OTHERS PRESENT: None

1. CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Sierra presided and called the meeting to order at 3:05 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

3. MINUTES

3.A. Approval of December 5, 2022 Programming Committee Meeting Minutes

Executive Director Cahill MOVED TO APPROVE the minutes of the December 5, 2022 Programming Committee Meeting Minutes. Motion seconded by Trustee Sierra and carried on a unanimous aye of those present.

4. NEW BUSINESS

4.A. Camps Program Review

Jess Main, Out of School Camp Coordinator, provided a camp program overview stating that there are 5 summer camp locations: Lakeview, Proctor, Sommer Farm, RiverPlex, and Peoria Zoo. Camp is offered to kiddos age 5-13 with week-long sessions spanning from the week of Memorial Day to the second week of August and two weeks in fall, winter and spring break camps offered at Lakeview. Campers make new positive connections with peers and staff, try new things, and have fun exploring multiple PPD program offerings.

High Level Challenges:

- Buses cost approximately \$300 per bus per trip
- Limited bus driver availability based on their staffing levels
- Difficulty in booking trips in advance of camp while waiting to ensure PPD has proper staffing
- Staff: Camper ratios are reduced on field trips, requiring more staff to ensure adequate safety and supervision. The ratio for a 7-year-old camper is 1:8, if on a swimming trip it is 1:5.

Staffing Challenges:

- Ensuring there is enough quality, trained staff to meet minimum staff: camper ratios to safely and effectively run programming
- Competing with other local entities for employees
 - Other places may pay more and be “easier”.
 - Not every person desire to work with kids and have the responsibility of caring for them.
 - Many high school and college students expressed desire to work somewhere year-round, such as a restaurant, to avoid needing to obtain new employment during school year.
 - Studies show this generation is waiting until April/May/June to apply for camp jobs.
- Keeping staff motivated and engaged all summer while doing a hard, tiring job.

Camps Challenges:

- Some campers exhibit exceptionally difficult behaviors
 - Bullying others/staff, running away, hitting/biting others, throwing things, general disrespect and refusal to listen when they do not want to be there
 - This has been an extremely common trend across camps nationwide since the pandemic
- This places extra strain on young counselors that have minimal experience
 - Has caused staff to quit mid-summer or chose not to return another season
- Necessitates having more staff available to assist with difficult behaviors

Camp staff participates in in-person training on the following topics:

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| -Customer Service | -Mandated Reporting |
| -Harassment | -Pool Safety |
| -Professionalism | -Facilitating Open Ended Play |
| -Behavior Management | -Work Place Safety |
| -Conflict Resolution | -Facilitating Team Building |
| -Diversity and Inclusion | -Field Trip Safety |
| -Camper Safety | -General Policies and Procedures |

Impact/Focus

Camps Programming Collaborations:

Summer Camp and Peoria Park District

- Forest Park Nature Center
- Peoria Zoo/Luthy/Glen Oak Park
- Gwynn Family Aquatic Center
- Peoria PlayHouse
- Owens Center

Community Organizations

- Hult Center for Healthy Living
- Girl Scouts of Central Illinois
- PAWS Giving Independence
- Goodwill Industries
- Center for Prevention of Abuse
- Neighborhood House

Schools Out Camps

- STEAM with Education Manager
- RiverPlex Aquatics
- Peoria PlayHouse
- Owens Center
- Forest Park Nature Center
- Peoria Zoo

Usage Data

Zoo Camp 2022

- 5 week-long sessions
- Each session limited to specific grade levels
- Each week at capacity
- In 2023, offering 6 summer sessions and 1 spring break session

Campers

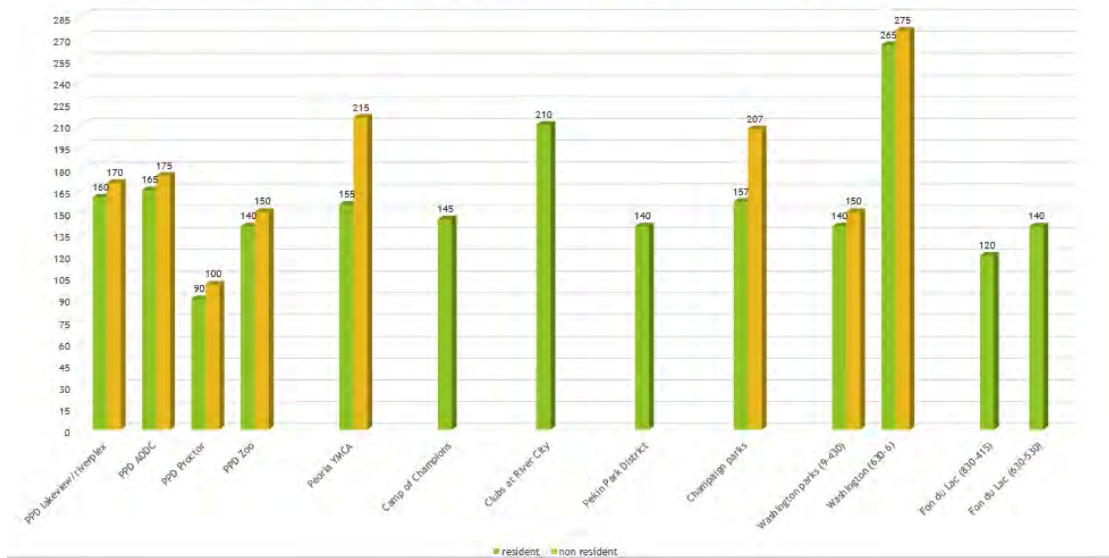
CAMP YEAR	TOTAL REGISTRATIONS	UNIQUE CAMPERS	RESIDENT REGISTRATIONS %	NON-RESIDENT REGISTRATIONS %
2022	2153	502	65%	35%
2021	2262	481	67%	33%
2020	640	181	74%	26%
2019	3905	809	68%	32%
2018	3505	798	64%	36%

Financial Information

Staff Wages:

- 2022 hourly counselor wages were increased to start at \$15/hour to attract more quality counselors.
 - Returning staff earn \$0.25 more per hour
 - Supervisors begin at \$17/hour
- 2023 pay rate will remain the same

2022 Weekly Camp Registration Fee Comparison



PPD Camp Fees 2022 vs 2023

CAMP	2022	2023
PROCTOR	90 / 100	100
LAKEVIEW	160 / 170	170
RIVERPLEX	160 / 170	170
ANCIENT OAKS	165 / 175	180
ZOO K/1 - HALF DAY	120 / 130	165
ZOO 2-5	130 / 140	190
ZOO 2-5 EXTENDED HRS	140 / 150	220
ZOO 6-8	175 / 185	220

Policy/Advocacy Opportunity

In 2023 Camps will be pursuing accreditation from the American Camp Association



Purpose of ACA Accreditation:

- ▶ In 2023 Camps will be pursuing accreditation from the American Camp Association
- ▶ Accreditation educates camp directors in the administration of key aspects of camp operation, particularly those related to program quality and the health and safety of campers and staff
- ▶ Accreditation establishes guidelines for needed policies, procedures, and practices
- ▶ Accreditation assists the public in selecting camps that meet industry-accepted and government-recognized standards

Value of Accrediting Our Camps:

- ▶ Accreditation is evidence that our camps meet industry standards
- ▶ Demonstrates that we take responsible steps toward the health and safety of campers and staff
- ▶ Provides an additional marketing opportunity - to promote our achievement of excellence and the highest recognition from the only national accrediting body of camps
- ▶ Creates guidelines and operating procedures for staff, providing consistency across all locations and seasons and for staff turnover
- ▶ Standards provide specific actionable guidance so we don't have to guess
- ▶ Confirms we were successful in a voluntary peer-review process
- ▶ Accreditation is the standard in a court of law

Accreditation Process

- ▶ Apply for accreditation the fall prior, attend numerous workshops and info sessions
- ▶ Review 175 Standards. Update policies and procedures as needed to be compliant
- ▶ Many written policies are due for review in April
- ▶ Summer- on site visit to all 5 camp locations to see camp in action and review remaining policies/procedures
- ▶ November- accreditation determination is made

Accredited Day Camps

- ▶ NATIONWIDE: 1,029 accredited day camps
- ▶ ILLINOIS: 100 accredited day camps
- ▶ WITHIN 50 MILES: 2 accredited day camps

- ▶ Accredited Illinois Park District Day Camps:

- ▶ Crystal Lake Park District
- ▶ Park District of Oak Park
- ▶ Wheaton Park District
- ▶ Palos Heights Parks and Recreation

Trustee Sierra stated he would like to revisit conversations with Arts Partners to explore collaborative efforts in offering fine arts-related camp opportunities. In order to align with preplanning of camp themes, Trustee Sierra requested that staff, by 4th quarter 2023, report to this committee the arts agencies they have reached out to explore possible collaborative efforts in offering fine arts-related summer camp opportunities, regardless of what those organizations may already offer on their own.

Trustee Sierra stated that he attended a DEIA-related session at last month's IAPD conference which spoke about the possible negative connotations of the terms "non-residential" and "residential" that could have on the immigrant and refugee populations. Emily Cahill stated that that policy language is no longer used however, "out-of-district" and "in-district" could be used when distinguishing between the two. The terms "non-residential" and "residential" were used in previously-printed programming marketing materials. Once depleted, a reprinting of those materials will include the new terms "out-of-district" and "in-district".

Marketing Overview

Jenny Swanson provided a marketing overview of the marketing efforts and evaluation for camps and sports for winter 2022 – Spring 2023. Please see *Attachment A*. Approximately 15,000 Camp & Sports Guides were sent to PPS 150 along with specific message emails January and February. The digital flyer was sent to all PPS 150 students as well. Other tactics that are ongoing are WEEK/WMBD advertising, website sliders, PPD TV displays, staff email footers, online display ads, Traveler Advertisement, and social media.

4.B. Commitment to Vibrancy Draft

Emily Cahill provided a draft of the Peoria Park District's Commitment to Vibrancy document. *Please see Attachment B*. She stated that as part of the District's strategic efforts, the goal of developing a Commitment to Vibrancy document that would be a counterpart to the Commitment to Diversity Equity Inclusion and Accessibility and the Commitment to Environmental Sustainability was discussed in the last Strategic Ad Hoc Committee meeting. Staff's strategic goal is that in the first quarter of 2023 is to

in the other commitment documents. This vibrancy document is only in draft form currently and intended to start the conversation so that it can be built out and compliment and be a part of the larger strategic focus for 2023 and beyond. Strategic plans and focus would be built around these commitment documents in how the Park District is operated and how it wants to serve the community.

As such, the District's Commitment to Vibrancy focus on four key components (pillars): connection, resiliency, health, and inspiration. Each has points of emphasis that highlights the kind of work that can be done under each of those components.

Trustee Sierra expressed his pleasure with the vibrancy document and that staff had done a great job in considering the desires of all Trustees. It is applicable to all committees, especially in their current structure in place. He looks forward to moving forward with this document and combining it with the other commitment documents.

6. PENDING BUSINESS5

None at this time.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

Amanda Green, Aquatics Manager, provided an update on lifeguard recruitment efforts for this summer. The total number of lifeguards needed to fully staff the pools this summer is 56. Currently, the District has 19 committed to lifeguard this summer, with the majority of that number coming from current staff. Last summer, several students completed the lifeguard certification program and worked at the Park District however, only one returned so far this year from that group. The current recruitment strategy includes utilizing staff to recruit through a staff referral bonus, contacting local swim clubs and school athletic directors, actively recruiting for lifeguards at District job fairs, and actively promoting on social media. Amanda stated that the PPD Marketing team has captured some amazing images used in promoting the PPD workforce and specifically, lifeguard positions. In addition to the many efforts, collaborative recruitment efforts continue with Bradley University, Illinois Central College, etc. Brent Wheeler stated that efforts are underway in working with area schools to give students credits for taking the lifeguard class during the school day. This would possibly be in place starting next fall.

Trustee Harant inquired as to what programming is currently offered at the Franciscan Recreation Center (FRC) and if rentals are available. Scott Loftus stated that currently, FRC is available for rentals, specifically the gym. Conversations have occurred with a few groups to possibly rent the gym for basketball tournaments in the evening. Currently, open pickleball is offered on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Angela Martiens is working on securing further programming that will fit in the gymnasium in mornings and evenings, as it gets very hot in the summertime without air conditioning. Access to the kitchen is available on the weekends. On March 1 an open house will be held at FRC as well.

Trustee Sierra congratulated Jonelle McCloud on the Roll Back to the 70's event held at Proctor Recreation Center in honor of Black History Month. It was very enjoyable and the kids appeared to have a great time.

7. ACTION ITEMS REVIEW

1. Provide outreach report for 2023 summer camp performing arts collaborations for 4th quarter this year.
2. Email to the Committee and Trustees the campers' word cloud from the survey the kiddos took.

8. ADJOURNMENT

At 4:42 p.m., Executive Director Cahill MOVED TO ADJOURN. Motion seconded by Trustee Sierra and carried on a unanimous aye of those present.

Respectfully Submitted by Alicia Woodworth
Executive Assistant and Secretary to the Board



Peoria Park District Marketing Efforts & Evaluation Camps and Sports Winter 2022-Spring 2023

GOALS:

1. Inform the public about variety of camp and sports programs within the District.
2. Inform residents about early resident registration period.
3. Other important messaging topics: Scholarships, Camp and Sports Open House.

TACTICS:

1. Distribute [Digital Flyer](#) to all PPS 150 students via peachjar and remarkable times highlighting resident registration, scholarship programs with a digital link to Camp and Sports Open House. Target Deadline: Sent December 2022.
2. Distribute [Camp and Sports Guide](#) to PPS 150 students + Peoria-area parochial schools. Also have available at all PPD locations. Target deadline: January 11-12, 2023.
3. [Camp and Sports Mailer](#) sent to all PPD households with children ages 4-12 years old, sent in the child's name. Highlighted offerings and informed about Camp and Sports Open House. Target deadline: Mailed January 26, 2023.
4. [Social Media](#) Posts on all PPD Pages. Multiple posts talking about viewing camp and sports guide, resident vs. non-resident registration period, camp open house, etc. Target deadline: December-February 2023 + ongoing.





TACTICS, CONTINUED:

5. Camp and Sports E-Mails:

Industry Average: 34% open rate + 1.33% click rate

January 2023 E-Mail. Subject: "Make Way for Play!"

Inclusion: main topic. Sent January 3, 2023

Metrics: Sent 38k, 11k open (34%), 177 clicks on Camp/Sports and Open House

January 2023 Mid-Month E-Mail. Subject: "Join Us for Our Camp & Sports Open House"

Inclusion: subject/only topic. Sent January 19, 2023

Metrics: Sent 38k, 10k open (31%), 253 (1%) clicks

February 2023 E-Mail. Subject: "Love the way you play!"

Inclusion: main topic. Sent February 3, 2023

Preliminary Metrics: Sent 38k, 10k open (31%), 18 clicks on Camp/Sports and Open House

Past Campers E-Mail. Subject: "Camp & Sports Open House- This Monday!"

Inclusion: subject/only topic. Sent February 4, 2023

Preliminary Metrics: Sent 333, 142 open (43%), 7 (2%) clicks

6. Other tactics, ongoing: Inclusion on printed Winter Postcard, WEEK/WMBD Advertising, Website Sliders, PPD TV Displays, Staff e-mail footers, Online Display Ads, Traveler Advertisement, Social, E-Mail.



Camps & Sports

Don't Miss Out On Summer Fun!

Peoria Park District Camps & Sports are a great place for kids to be kids!

Peoria Park District residents can register for camps starting on Monday, January 9. Non-Resident registration opens January 16.

View the Camps and Sports Guide Now at: PeoriaParks.org/playbook

Ask About Scholarships!

Through Peoria Park District Scholarships, everyone is able to access high quality parks and recreation activities, regardless of income.

Visit PeoriaParks.org/Scholarships to learn more.

Watch for Camps & Sports Guide coming home with your child in January.

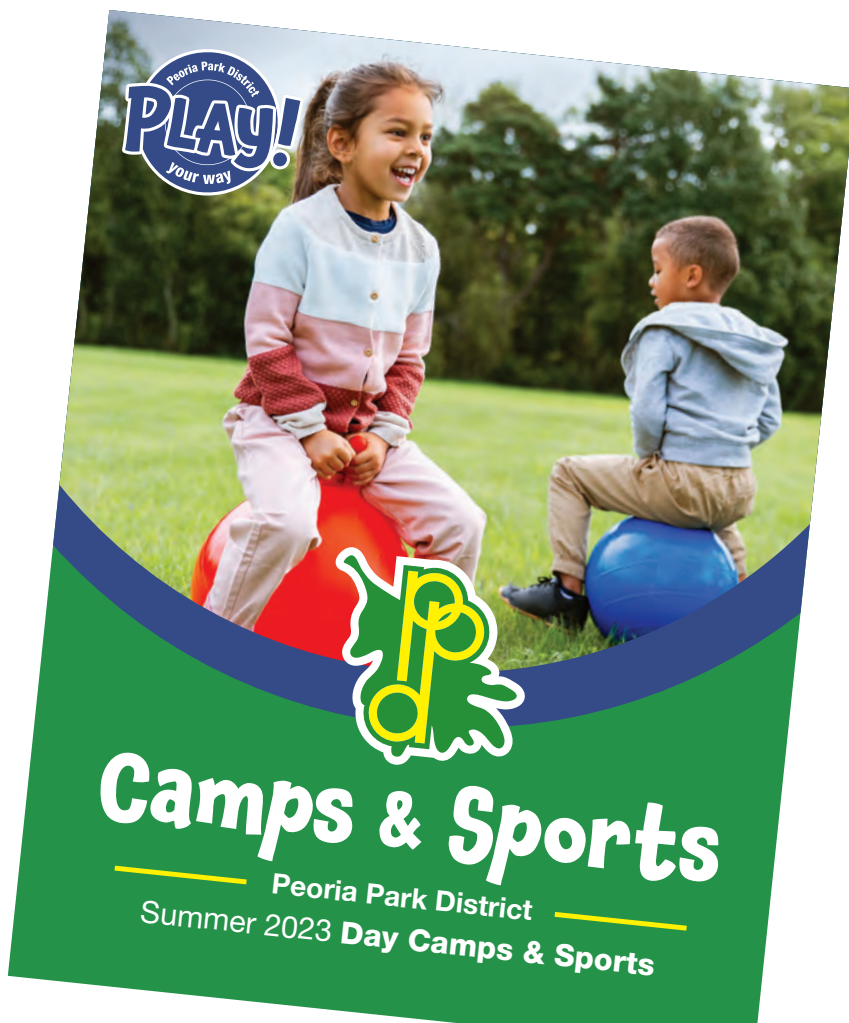


View the Camps and Sports Guide
Now at: PeoriaParks.org/playbook

Learn more at
PeoriaParks.org



Camp & Sports Guide



LAKEVIEW SUMMER CAMP: AGES 5-12
1013 W LAKE AVE • 681-3546

Location: Lakewood Recreation Center
 Fees: \$170 per week (Week 7 and Week 8: \$130 due to holidays).
 Camp hours: 7:30am-5:00pm

Indiana Summer Camp offers a diverse camp experience for all. Campers will make new friends and try new and exciting activities such as arts and crafts, group ball, archery, canoe, swim, field trip, and so much more! Each week will follow a theme and will include all the same diverse activities led by friendly, trained counselors. At the Indiana Navigation Center there is plenty of room to play both inside and outside. Campers will have a great time with lots of new adventures!

Date(s)	Code	Week
May 20 - June 2 nd	FMC02-100201	Under the Tree - Promote, maintain, develop, and stabilize all successful look ups for "Promo" - May 20 to May 28
June 5 - 9	FMC02-100202	Pushdown - Promote to date on the lowest "level" back to top
June 12 - 16	FMC02-100203	Boost Off - View on boosting off to explore new growth look ups for "Boost"
June 19 - 23	FMC02-100204	Superstar - Will you be the next movie, rock, sports, or video game star? (none of your talents)
June 26 - 30	FMC02-100205	Ultimate 4 Days Ultimate - (Are you brave when it comes to be the next ultimate night success?) Are you able to be the best?
July 3 - 7 th	FMC02-100206	Challenge Games - Can you build mental in your head? Promote the 4th of July competing for your country - "No money on July 4"
July 10 - 14	FMC02-100207	Game Time - Compete for your favorite classic games, and win big new award
July 17 - 21	FMC02-100208	Secret Agents - Will you accept the secret mission? Use your secret agent spy gear skills to complete the mission!
July 24 - 28	FMC02-100209	Deluge - Expand from lakes and rivers and boats, all night! Explore the wild world of...
July 31 - August 4	FMC02-100210	Wacky Water - Cool down with wacky water games all week!
August 5 - 11	FMC02-100211	Survive - Can you collect the value amongst? Complete a mission and all...



RIVERPLEX SUMMER CAMP: AGES 5-12
600 NE WATER ST • 681-3546

Location: Riverflex
Fees: \$170 per week (Week 1 and Week 6: \$136 due to holidays).
Camp hours: 7:30am-5:00pm

Riverflex Summer Camp has everything for a well-rounded camp experience! Campers will join their friends, old and new, for all their favorite activities, including arts and crafts, sports, games, water activities, archery, nature, field trips, and so much more!

Each week's activities will be themed and will include all the classics led by friendly, trained counselors. Campers will get the best of both worlds utilizing the inside of the lifeguard as well as the outside lifeguard open space and walking trails. Campers will have the most fun while learning and trying new things!



Dates	Code	Week
May 30 - June 2*	PWC02106-01	Surfer Expedition: Seas and Agers and basins, oh my! Explore the wild around oil. *No camp on May 20
June 5 - 9	PWC02106-02	Secret Agents - Will you accept this secret message? Use your secret agent and spy skills to complete the mission!
June 12 - 16	PWC02106-03	Under the Sea - Pirates, mermaids, sharks, and whales all around! Look out!
June 19 - 23	PWC02106-04	Blaze QF - We're blasting off to explore outer space! Look out for aliens!
June 26 - 30	PWC02106-05	Survivor - Can you outlast the other campers? Complete 6 mental and physical challenges to see who can last 60!
July 3 - July 7**	PWC02106-06	Holidays - From 4th of July to Valentine's, celebrate it all in this fun-filled week! **No camp on July 4.
July 10 - 14	PWC02106-07	Prehistoric - Discover one on the fossil Travel Back in time.
July 17 - 21	PWC02106-08	Wacky Water - Cool down with wacky water games all week!
July 24 - 28	PWC02106-09	Superheroes - Will you be the next Iron Man, Spider-Man, or other game star? Show us your talents!
July 31 - August 6	PWC02106-10	Ultimate Ninja Warrior - Do you have what it takes to be the next ultimate ninja warrior? Put your skills to the test!

Check out **Camps & Sports 2022**

Describe mas sobre campamentos y deportes 2022



Make your **Summer FUN-TASTIC** with Peoria Park District

Diviértete este verano con Peoria Park District

Camps & Sports 2022
Campamentos & Deportes 2022



**Camps**

More than just childcare
Peoria Park District Camps are a great place for kids to be kids! Daily activities use play to challenge their minds and bodies, keeping them active and engaged.

Más que solo cuidado de niños. ¡Los campamentos de Peoria Park District son un gran lugar para que los niños sean niños! Las actividades diarias utilizan el juego para desafiar sus mentes y cuerpos, manteniéndolos activos y motivados.

**Sports**

More than just a game
Getting your kids involved in a Peoria Park District sport will foster skills like teamwork, the importance of practice, and working towards a goal.

Los deportes son más que un juego. Involucrando a sus niños en un deporte del Peoria Park District formaran habilidades del trabajar en equipo, la importancia del ensayo, y el trabajar hacia una meta.

Join us for a Camps & Sports Open House
Acompañanos para una presentación de Campamentos y Deportes

Begin planning your Summer Adventure! Join us for a camp and sports open house on Monday, March 7, from 4:00pm - 6:30pm at the Noble Center in Lakeview Park! One winner will be drawn for a \$150 camp credit. Registrations before March 31st will receive reduced rates!

¡Empezar a planear su verano de aventura! ¡Acompañanos el lunes, 7 de marzo, en Noble Center por Lakeview Park, entre las 4:00pm - 6:30pm para una presentación de campamentos y deportes! Se sorteará un ganador por \$150 en crédito de campamento. ¡Las inscripciones antes del 31 de marzo recibirán tarifas reducidas!



Programming is subject to change. Visit PeoriaParks.org for the most current information.
La programación es sujeta a cambiar. Visiten PeoriaParks.org para información mas curiente.



For more information visit PeoriaParks.org
Visiten PeoriaParks.org para mas información





PEORIA PARK DISTRICT
NOBLE CENTER
1125 W. LAKE AVE.
PEORIA, IL 61614



January 2023 E-Mail

January 2023

THERE'S MORE TO EXPLORE

- ABOUT PEORIA PARKS
- VIEW OUR PLACES
- VIEW OUR PROGRAMS
- UPCOMING EVENTS

Make Way for PLAY!

Plan to play the Park District Way with Camps & Sports

Register for Camps & Sports

Discover fun ways to reach your goals, and play your way with Peoria Park District's Camps and Sports.

Registration: Residents can register starting **Jan 9**.
Non-Resident registration opens **Jan 16**.

[View all Camps & Sports](#)

Open House

Feb 6 | 4:00 – 6:30 PM

Visit with our camps and sports coordinators and learn about all our offerings to find the perfect one for your children! One lucky attendee can even win a \$150 camp credit!

[Learn More](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

7 JAN	Guided Hikes: Winter Wonder Walk FOREST PARK NATURE CENTER
7 JAN	DIY Maple Syrup Workshop CAMP WOKANDA
14 JAN	Chill Billy Camp Kickstart

[View Calendar](#)

Peoria Park District Photo Contest

Take your best shot!

[Register Now](#)

NO INITIATION

[Join Today](#)

We are committed to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility. [Click Here](#)

1125 W. Lake Avenue, Peoria, IL 61614 (309) 682-1200

January 2023 Mid-Month E-Mail

January 2023

THERE'S MORE TO EXPLORE

- ABOUT PEORIA PARKS
- VIEW OUR PLACES
- VIEW OUR PROGRAMS
- UPCOMING EVENTS

Join Us for Our Camp & Sports Open House

Monday, Feb 6 | 4:00 – 6:30 PM

Visit with our camp and sports coordinators on Monday, February 6, from 4:00 - 6:30 pm at the Noble Center in Lakeview Park and learn about all our exciting offerings to find the perfect activities for your children!

Attendees can sign up for a chance to win a \$150 camp credit just for attending!

[View all Camps & Sports](#)

We are committed to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility. [Click Here](#)

1125 W. Lake Avenue, Peoria, IL 61614 (309) 682-1200

Past Campers E-Mail

February 2023

THERE'S MORE TO EXPLORE

- ABOUT PEORIA PARKS
- VIEW OUR PLACES
- VIEW OUR PROGRAMS
- UPCOMING EVENTS

Join Us for Our Camp & Sports Open House

Monday, Feb 6 | 4:00 – 6:30 PM

Visit with our camp and sports coordinators on Monday, February 6, from 4:00 - 6:30 pm at the Noble Center in Lakeview Park and learn about all our exciting offerings to find the perfect activities for your children!

Attendees can sign up for a chance to win a \$150 camp credit just for attending!

[View all Camps & Sports](#)

We are committed to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility. [Click Here](#)

1125 W. Lake Avenue, Peoria, IL 61614 (309) 682-1200

February 2023 E-Mail

February 2023

THERE'S MORE TO EXPLORE

- ABOUT PEORIA PARKS
- VIEW OUR PLACES
- VIEW OUR PROGRAMS
- UPCOMING EVENTS

Love the way you PLAY!

Sun & Fun here we come!

We're warming up to Spring, but there's still lots to do this month with PPD!

Join us for a Camp and Sports Open House on **Monday, February 6!** Those in attendance at the Open House can register to win a \$150 camp credit! Plan your summer of play and fun at PeoriaParks.org

[Learn More](#)

THREE THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

Weddings
at Peoria Park District

The Peoria Park District has many facilities that make great wedding ceremony and reception venues. Say "I Do" with the District!

[Learn More](#)

Be My Cockroach Valentine

Donate to Peoria Zoo and symbolically name a Madagascar Hissing Cockroach in honor of someone you love...or hate.

[Learn More](#)

Dance with the District

Last chance to register for February class! Registration available through next week.

[Learn More](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

9 FEB	Yoga, Wine, & Chocolate LUTHER BOTANICAL GARDEN
17 FEB	Roll, Bounce... Back to the 70's Black History Celebration PROCTOR RECREATION CENTER
19 FEB	Vino van Gogh LUTHER BOTANICAL GARDEN

[View Calendar](#)

NO INITIATION

[Join Today](#)

We are committed to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility. [Learn More](#)

1125 W. Lake Avenue, Peoria, IL 61614 (309) 682-1200



Peoria Park District Commitment to Vibrancy Established Winter 2023

The Peoria Park District is committed to our mission *to contribute to healthy and vibrant communities by responsibly using our resources to offer high quality parks, recreation, and education experiences to those who live, work, or play in our District.*

Many of the elements in the District's mission are clear and direct, but the concept of vibrancy can be defined in many ways and measurements. Today, in local urban planning, it is commonly tied to the intensity of activities offered, the diversity of land-use configurations, and the accessibility of a space or place. Most readily, these suggestions for scope most naturally tie to consistent and convenient access to green space and walking trails, accessible and engaging events and programming, and ongoing services and supports that engage and promote health and wellness.

As the District seeks to focus its efforts to have the most impact possible on the positive trajectory of the communities we serve, our staff and elected Board of Trustees are committed to continuing its tradition of providing important building blocks to engage and inspire people to live healthier, happier lives. With this document, the District seeks to provide a framework for evaluation of these efforts.

To that end, the District's Commitment to Vibrancy focuses on four key components:

Connection
Resiliency
Health
Inspiration

FIRST, CONNECTION: The tie that binds communities is all about connection; and linking people goes beyond our infrastructure. Social engagement is essential to the increased connectivity between people, places and things that can impact quality of life and develop loyalty to a community and sense of place... and the spaces and places cared for and provided by park and recreation agencies like ours provide the backdrop for these connections.

Our Peoria Park District owns or manages nearly 9000 acres of land. This land is used to provide access to green space across our network of regional and neighborhood parks.

The quality of life in the Peoria region is significantly impacted by the Peoria Park District and its long-standing commitment to providing access to high quality parks, facilities, and programs that offer spaces for engagement.

If you've lived in Peoria your whole life, you might still not think about how big that number is or you might take that 9000 acres of stewarded land for granted and think that every community is like this one. But in fact, it isn't.

The typical parks and recreation agency in the United States maintains an average of 9.9 acres of park land for every 1000 residents it serves. By contrast, the Peoria Park District maintains more than 66 acres of park land for those 1000 residents. This is significant.... and it positively impacts the quality of life for those who live in our communities.

Looking forward, the District must focus on how to not only improve the connections that it helps to build and their impact, but also on how to tell this story and advocate for the role of parks and recreation as a building block for economic and population growth in the Greater Peoria area.

Points of emphasis will include:

1. Develop a dashboard to better collect and share data regarding usage and reach of the District.
2. Gather and evaluate feedback from users to include a survey disseminated every other year in the community.
3. Refine the arguments for the impact of parks and recreation on the quality of life in the communities we serve.
4. Evaluate the benefits of seeking accreditation through either or both state and national associations that would help to enhance and support a positive reputation and build our capacity for sharing our story.
5. Improve collaboration with public officials focused on highlighting the Peoria Park District in the efforts to attract and retain new residents and economic development.

SECOND, RESILIENCY: Resiliency is reflected in the ability to adapt to change in ways that allow faster recovery from environmental, social or economic shifts. At its foundation, the notion of resilience acknowledges that communities will face change – sometimes dramatic change – and that they must be prepared to not only survive the challenge, but to use these as opportunities to get better during these difficult times.

In the last ten years, our Peoria communities have changed and the District is working to change with it. With a smaller, more agile workforce, combined with growth in its inventory, the District

must find ways to use its resources diversify and stabilize its revenue sources to include investments and partnerships with the private sector.

Likewise, as climate change is causing more volatile weather events, the District is especially susceptible to incidents that could impact our ability to provide consistent, quality services and must be prepared to shift quickly and effectively.

To make solid plans for responsiveness, the District must focus its efforts on better data collection and evaluation in order to ensure that it is meeting the needs of those it serves. Data points must include both inputs from those who access the District's supports and those who don't.

Points of emphasis will include:

1. Update financial policies that focus on sustainability of the District financially through responsible stewardship of investments and reserve balances.
2. Develop a more specific curriculum focused on the impacts of climate change on our communities.
3. Revisit and reaffirm processes for acquisition of resources AND divestment of assets where it supports long-term impact on the communities.
4. Similarly, analysis of programs should also be considered that allows for innovation and impact through modification of program inventory to meet the changing needs of our communities.

THIRD, HEALTH: In addition to providing for all of our basic needs — shelter, food and the space to move around freely — healthy communities work to ensure residents benefit from access to education, housing, jobs, the ability to live without fear of violence, freedom from environmental hazards, and access to a meaningful built environment.

In addition to spaces and places focused on improving physical health, the District's outdoor amenities support mental health as shown during the pandemic.

Education has been a hallmark of District programming and is highlighted by our support of GED education in the 61605 zip code, as well as quality out-of-school programming that features STEAM and life skill training. An added emphasis on workforce development, especially career exposure and engagement, is a newer space for the District, but one that can have significant impact.

At its very core, the District must have positive impact on health and wellness to be an effective part of the communities we serve. Its willingness to expand its work to emphasize education and violence prevention make it an innovator in this space.

Points of emphasis will include:

1. Develop a workforce development continuum that starts with exposure to careers, followed by education and engagement, will be a key focus of our work to show our youngest patrons that they can “be anything” that they want to be.
2. Evaluate the impact of the “Summer of Fun” effort and recommendations on its role in future access to vibrant programming for youth in our communities.
3. Create a campaign to highlight the impact that parks and recreation has on mental health to include collaboration with local health providers to engage and encourage use of our many assets.
4. Formalize education goals and expectations for programming across the District, with emphasis on utilizing the expertise of Peoria PlayHouse Children’s Museum staff across our variety of programs.
5. Build an inventory of programs that compliment each other and allow for clear communication to the public for their participation.

AND LAST, BUT CERTAINLY NOT LEAST, INSPIRATION: In the most livable of cities, arts and culture blend with bustling business, shopping, and entertainment districts to create desirable places to live, work and play. These cities inspire and connect inhabitants, while promoting the healthy lifestyles that make them places where people enjoy spending time and achieve prosperity. Not just in our nation, but around the world, people are moving to urban cores, drawn there by a desire to belong and engage with communities of distinctive, authentic character.

There are so many possible elements of the Peoria Park District’s past, present, and future that fit in this description! The District strives to be authentic and distinct in its supports of our communities. It works daily to enhance the lives of those who live, work and play here. Inspiration can come in the form of programming, events, or facilities supported by the District that would not otherwise be in a community of our size. It can come through collaboration or provision of space for private initiatives that meet shared goals.

Because of the depth and breadth of the work we do in this space, it is critical that the District manage its resources and creativity in ways that are most beneficial to our community and that call upon the energy and supports that can come with collaboration.

The District must focus on finding that mechanism that will help it to effectively evaluate its program offerings such that it is able to allocate resources to those endeavors that have the greatest impact. That statement must honor that impact comes in different forms, the identification of which must be the first step in creating a consistent process for prioritization.

Points of emphasis include:

1. Facilitate the First Annual Park-A-Palooza in 2023 and work to build on it in future years with the help of tourism grant funds as available.
2. Build a quality, consistent evaluation process for programming that encourages participant feedback. This evaluation process should be founded in an overall focused consideration of how program resources in the District have the greatest impact.
3. Continue to seek out public-private partnerships that will support innovation and sustainable programs and opportunities for those who live, work, and play in the communities served by the District.
4. Inspire and encourage of the PPD workforce through training and fostering of an internal culture that values innovation, creativity, and collaboration.

Annually, the Peoria Park District leadership is committed to developing an action plan tied to these points of emphasis and will present them to the District's programming committee and to the Board of Trustees for review. Depending on the data points, progress reports will be provided to both groups at least quarterly.

In 2023 Camps will be pursuing accreditation from the American Camp Association



Purpose of ACA Accreditation:

- ▶ In 2023 Camps will be pursuing accreditation from the American Camp Association
- ▶ Accreditation educates camp directors in the administration of key aspects of camp operation, particularly those related to program quality and the health and safety of campers and staff
- ▶ Accreditation establishes guidelines for needed policies, procedures, and practices
- ▶ Accreditation assists the public in selecting camps that meet industry-accepted and government-recognized standards

Value of Accrediting Our Camps:

- ▶ Accreditation is evidence that our camps meet industry standards
- ▶ Demonstrates that we take responsible steps toward the health and safety of campers and staff
- ▶ Provides an additional marketing opportunity - to promote our achievement of excellence and the highest recognition from the only national accrediting body of camps
- ▶ Creates guidelines and operating procedures for staff, providing consistency across all locations and seasons and for staff turnover
- ▶ Standards provide specific actionable guidance so we don't have to guess
- ▶ Confirms we were successful in a voluntary peer-review process
- ▶ Accreditation is the standard in a court of law

Accreditation Process

- ▶ Apply for accreditation the fall prior, attend numerous workshops and info sessions
- ▶ Review 175 Standards. Update policies and procedures as needed to be compliant
- ▶ Many written policies are due for review in April
- ▶ Summer- on site visit to all 5 camp locations to see camp in action and review remaining policies/procedures
- ▶ November- accreditation determination is made