

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE PLEASURE DRIVEWAY AND PARK DISTRICT OF PEORIA, ILLINOIS, HELD AT 6:30 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2026 HELD AT THE BONNIE W. NOBLE CENTER FOR PARK DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, 1125 WEST LAKE AVENUE, PEORIA, IL

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

TRUSTEES ABSENT: Trustee Mark Slover

STAFF PRESENT: Executive Director Emily Cahill, Matt Freeman, Becky Fredrickson, Scott Loftus, Shalesse Pie, Karrie Ross, Jennifer Swanson, Willie Howe, Kadar Heffner, Mike Friberg, Tammy Johnson, Chanel Hargrave-Murry, Michael Dixson, Kyle Deeter, David Gray, Jonelle McCloud, Cassie Robbins, Julie Craghead, Jacob Kuban, Attorneys Kevin Day and Justin Gunn, Miles Howley, and Alicia Woodworth

OTHERS PRESENT: Peoria Police Sergeant Stevie Hughes

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Johnson presided and called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken.

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 February 11, 2026 Regular Board Meeting

Trustee Sierra MOVED TO APPROVE the Minutes of the February 11, 2026 Regular Board Meeting. Motion seconded by Vice President Montez and carried on the following roll call vote: Trustee Harant – Aye, Trustee Hill – Aye, Trustee Sierra – Aye, Trustee Silver – Abstain, Vice President Montez – Aye, President Johnson – Aye. Results: 5 Ayes; 1 Abstain.

6. CITIZEN REQUEST TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

None at this time.

7. STAFF REPORTS

7.A. Executive Director

Executive Director Cahill introduced Lieutenant Stevie Hughes of the Peoria Police Department, who is assisting the Park District during the vacancy in the Chief of Police position and supporting the transition to new law enforcement reporting software.

Lieutenant Hughes provided a brief overview of his background and experience.

Director Cahill also highlighted:

- Upcoming Black History Month programming at Proctor Center
- Peoria PlayHouse community event

- Transition of police reporting systems
- A news story honoring former Park District Police Officer Avery Powell Jr., which was shown later in the meeting.

Following introduction of Lieutenant Stevie Hughes and operational updates, Trustee Sierra requested clarification regarding the District’s hiring strategy for the Chief of Police and Public Safety Director positions.

Director Cahill explained that:

- The District is currently interviewing a local candidate for Chief of Police.
- If that pathway is unsuccessful, the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police offers an executive search option, which would involve a national search and associated cost.
- Staff prefers to fully vet the local candidate before initiating the executive search process.

Trustee Sierra asked whether contracting either role was under consideration. Director Cahill stated that contracting out the positions is not being pursued and that the intent is to maintain these as Park District-employed leadership positions.

Further discussion occurred regarding:

- The timing of posting the Public Safety Director position.
- Whether the Public Safety Director would report to the Chief of Police.
- The overall necessity of the Public Safety Director role.

Director Cahill clarified:

- The Public Safety Director position has not yet been posted because staff prefers to hire the Chief first and allow that individual to participate in refining the job description.
- The Chief and Public Safety Director would not report to each other; both would serve in administrative leadership roles.
- The Public Safety Director position is intended to focus on broader facility safety, emergency preparedness, training, risk mitigation, and strategic safety planning, areas that extend beyond traditional law enforcement responsibilities.

President Johnson expressed concern regarding the rationale for the position and referenced other institutions that do not utilize a Public Safety Director structure. He indicated he would like to continue discussion on the necessity and structure of the role at a future meeting.

Trustee Montez asked for clarification regarding reporting relationships. Director Cahill confirmed that the Police Chief would not report to the Public Safety Director and reiterated that the positions would operate collaboratively but independently within the administrative leadership structure.

7.B. ICJIA Update

Staff presented an update on the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA) Violence Prevention and Reduction Grant.

The District has received \$1 million annually to expand youth and family programming.

Presentations were provided by multiple staff members detailing program impacts, including:

Summer of Fun Pass

- Over 40 school partnerships
- More than 12,000 admissions during Summer 2025

- Increased access to Zoo, PlayHouse, Aquatic Center, Golf Learning Center, and Owen Center

Dream Squared (Proctor Center)

- 62 students enrolled
- Academic growth data:
 - Regular attendees increased reading by 13% and math by 18%
 - Sporadic attendees increased reading by 5% and math by 2%
- STEAM lab programming
- Splash Squad swim initiative (youth swim instruction; adult swim classes planned)

Community Events

- Streets Belong to Me (2,000 residents served; 1,000+ backpacks distributed)
- Worldwide Day of Play (5,000+ residents served; 28 resource organizations)
- 400 Glow Wild tickets distributed through ICJIA funding

Youth Sports Programming

- Girls flag football league
- Fishing programs (100+ fish caught; expanded partner agencies)
- Pitch, Hit & Run growth from 20 to 100 participants
- Daily PE programming serving over 1,000 youth

Urban Park Beautification

- 30,000 sq. ft. of enhanced green space
- Native plantings and conservation zones
- Survey results:
 - 68% satisfied or extremely satisfied with landscaping improvements
 - 83% would recommend parks

Trustees discussed:

- Environmental education exposure for urban youth
- Potential future environmental program expansion
- Community survey data and year-over-year tracking

Power Lunches Workforce Pipeline

- Now in all District 150 middle schools
- Expanded to Pleasant Hill (District 62)
- 400+ students secured internships or summer jobs
- Partnerships with 30+ organizations

Internship Program

- 12 interns placed this cycle
- 3 hired into part-time roles
- Paid internships across multiple departments

President Johnson emphasized the importance of environmental exposure and long-term workforce pipeline development.

Trustee Sierra noted that his earlier board discussions regarding urban forestry initiatives resulted in expanded vegetation projects and expressed appreciation for staff responsiveness.

Director Cahill stated advocacy efforts would continue at Parks Day at the Capitol (May 5), and funding is currently projected to remain level in FY27 appropriations discussions.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

8.A. Finance Committee – Approval of Accounts Payable

Trustee and Finance Committee Vice Chair Silver stated that the Finance Committee has examined the bills and MOVES that the President and the Secretary be authorized to issue orders on the Treasurer for the several amounts. Motion seconded by Vice President Montez and carried unanimously on roll call vote.

9. NEW BUSINESS

9.A. Jennifer Smith d/b/a Renew Sport and Therapeutic Massage Lease Agreement at RiverPlex

Trustee Sierra MOVED TO APPROVE the Lease Agreement with Jennifer Smith d/b/a Renew Sport and Therapeutic Massage at the RiverPlex. Seconded by Trustee Silver. Motion carried unanimously on roll call vote.

9.B. Corn Stock Theatre – Operating Agreement

Trustee Sierra MOVED TO APPROVE the Corn Stock Theatre Operating Agreement. Seconded by Trustee Harant. Motion carried unanimously on roll call vote.

9.C. Policy Changes Based on Union Contracts

This item was presented for first read.

9.D. Post-Travel Reports for Trustees to Attend the 2026 IAPD/IPRA Conference in Chicago, IL January 29-31, 2026

No report presented at this time.

9.E. Canopy Strategic Partners Letter of Agreement

Director Cahill presented the proposed Letter of Agreement for an Economic Impact Study focused on Peoria Zoo and Peoria PlayHouse. Trustee Silver asked whether the study would include operational projections or pro forma financial modeling.

Director Cahill clarified that:

- The study is not an operating pro forma.
- It will measure community economic ripple effects from visitation, employment, and spending.
- The study is intended to support capital campaign messaging and broader economic storytelling.

Trustee Silver inquired whether the study could include other Glen Oak Park amenities such as the amphitheater or lagoon.

Director Cahill responded:

- The study is limited to revenue-admission facilities due to measurable attendance data.
- Expansion could be considered in the future.
- Event-based or open-access facilities are more difficult to evaluate due to data limitations.

Trustee Harant suggested exploring collaboration with tourism entities or national park models for broader economic impact metrics. Director Cahill acknowledged the suggestion and indicated that similar benchmarking data is collected through NRPA reporting.

Trustee Hill MOVED TO APPROVE the Letter of Agreement with Canopy Strategic Partners. Seconded by Trustee Harant. Motion carried unanimously on roll call vote.

9.F. Central States Media Six-Month Workforce Profile Submission

Staff presented the six-month workforce profile report.

Trustee Sierra asked how the current report compares to the prior submission.

Staff explained:

- Original workforce: 0 minority employees.
- Second report: 3 minority hires added.
- Current report: Total workforce increased by three employees (white females), leaving minority representation numerically unchanged but proportionally reduced due to overall workforce growth.

Trustee Harant asked whether turnover data is available. Staff indicated turnover percentages were not provided.

Trustee Sierra stated that:

- The Board had requested these reports to ensure vendor alignment with District DEIA priorities.
- The Board should consider how it intends to evaluate and utilize this information moving forward.

10. CALENDAR OF CONSENT ITEMS

10.A. Janitorial and Paper Supply Products Bid 2026

10.B. 2026 Event Sound and Lighting Services

10.C. Bid - Concrete Pavement Replacement - Equipment Service Center

10.D. Bid - Peoria PlayHouse Renovation

Trustee Sierra requested item 10.A. be pulled for separate consideration. He asked for clarification regarding multiple vendor awards within the bid package.

Staff explained:

- The bid included multiple line items.
- Awards were made to vendors based on lowest responsible bid per item.
- This approach is typical for supply-based bid structures.

Staff further noted that compostable liner options were explored as part of sustainability efforts.

Trustee Sierra MOVED TO APPROVE Calendar of Consent Item 10.A. Motion seconded by Vice President Montez and carried unanimously on roll call vote.

Trustee Silver requested item 10.B. be pulled for separate consideration. Trustee Silver stated that upon reviewing the bid documentation he noticed that multiple company profiles and certifications appeared to be included and asked whether this structure was typical for this type of procurement or if it reflected a different bidding process than previously used. Staff explained that the bid package included multiple vendors because the procurement covered a variety of equipment, services, and technical support elements related to event sound and lighting. Vendors were able to submit bids for specific portions of the services depending on their capabilities and areas of specialization. As a result, the recommendation included multiple vendors that were determined to be the lowest responsible bidders for the various service categories. Staff further clarified that this type of multi-vendor structure can occur for supply or service packages where different companies specialize in particular components of the work.

Trustee Sierra MOVED TO APPROVE Calendar of Consent Item 10.B. Motion seconded by Trustee Harant and carried unanimously on roll call vote.

Trustee Harant MOVED TO APPROVE Calendar of Consent Items 10.C. and 10.D. Motion seconded by Trustee Silver and carried unanimously on roll call vote.

11. PENDING BUSINESS

None.

12. COMMUNICATIONS

12.A. Thank You

A thank you note from the Peoria Housing Authority was received.

13. ACTION STEPS REVIEW

None noted at this time.

14. OTHER BUSINESS

14.A. Approval to Convene into Closed Session Pursuant to Section 2(c)(1) The Appointment, Employment, Compensation, Discipline, Performance, or Dismissal of Specific Employees of the Public Body.

A Closed Session was not held.

15. ADJOURNMENT

At 7:30 PM Trustee Hill MOVED TO ADJOURN. Motion seconded by Trustee Sierra and carried unanimously on voice vote.

Full discussion can be viewed at the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M8xizn3yxXo>

Submitted by Alicia Woodworth
Executive Assistant and Board Secretary