

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE PLEASURE DRIVEWAY AND PARK DISTRICT OF PEORIA, ILLINOIS, HELD AT 6:00 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2025 HELD AT THE BONNIE W. NOBLE CENTER FOR PARK DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, 1125 WEST LAKE AVENUE, PEORIA, IL

TRUSTEES PRESENT: Trustees Timothy Bertschy, Laurie Covington, Joyce Harant, Steve Montez, Alexander Sierra, Vice President Reagan Leslie Hill, and President Robert Johnson

TRUSTEES ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Executive Director Emily Cahill, Nick Conrad, Scott Loftus, Becky Fredrickson, Matt Freeman, Mike Friberg, Karrie Ross, Jennifer Swanson, Attorney Kevin Day, Attorney Justin Gunn, Miles Howley, and Alicia Woodworth

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Johnson presided and called the meeting to order at 6:08 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

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

No Trustees requested to attend the meeting electronically.

4. MOMENT OF SILENCE AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

5. MINUTES

5.A. Approval of Minutes of the February 12, 2025 Regular Board Meeting

Trustee Harant MOVED TO APPROVE the Minutes of the February 12, 2025 Regular Board Meeting. Motion seconded by Trustee Sierra and carried on the following roll call vote: Trustees Bertschy, Covington, Harant, Montez, Sierra, Vice President Hill, and President Johnson. (Results: 7 Ayes; 0 Abstain; 0 Nays).

6. STAFF REPORTS

6.A. Executive Director

Executive Director Cahill celebrated and thanked everyone that participated in the Black History Month performance last week at Proctor Recreation Center. Jonelle McCloud, her team and participating kiddos did an amazing job! It was recorded using new equipment provided by an amazing donor and as soon as it's available, a link to the video will be shared with everyone.

Executive Director Cahill pointed everyone to the link for the Bradley Park Sculpture on the agenda under Executive Director Staff Reports. There are photos that were provided by artist Preston Jackson where the sculpture is on its way to the foundry. It will be several months as it goes through that process but this was a big milestone that was met.

Executive Director Cahill pointed out that the Board meal tonight was provided by the Park District's food and beverage manager at Peoria Zoo and is the meal that is an example of the kinds of foods that will be provided starting this Saturday with the Glow Wild Lantern Festival. The Glow Wild event will run 5:30 – 8:30 pm every Friday, Saturday and Sunday beginning March 1 through April.

Executive Director Cahill reported that the District has begun the hiring process for seasonal employees, with a job fair held Saturday, March 8 at Proctor Recreation Center.

7. COMMITTEE REPORTS

7.A. Finance Committee/Board of the Whole – Approval of Accounts Payable

The Finance Committee/Board of the Whole Presents the Accounts Payable for Approval

Trustee Bertschy stated that the Finance Committee/Board of the Whole met and reviewed the accounts payable materials that are provided in the agenda materials and based upon that, the Finance Committee/Board of the Whole voted to approve payment of the accounts.

For that reason, as Chair of the Finance Committee/Board of the Whole, Trustee Bertschy MOVED TO APPROVE the accounts payable that were shown in the agenda materials. Motion seconded by Vice President Hill and carried on the following roll call vote: Trustees Bertschy, Covington, Harant, Montez, Sierra, Vice President Hill, and President Johnson. (Results: 7 Ayes; 0 Abstain; 0 Nays).

8. NEW BUSINESS

8.A. Post-Travel Reports for Trustees Attending the 2025 IAPD/IPRA Conference in Chicago, IL January 22 - January 26, 2025

As required by state law and Peoria Park District policy, pretravel cost estimates for trustees who may have expressed interest in attending the 2025 IAPD/IPRA Annual Conference in Chicago, IL January 23-25, 2025, were Board approved on November 13, 2024. Trustees are to complete the process by providing a post-travel audit of expenses that are to be presented to the Board for consideration.

Per this process, the following post travel reports are presented for approval:

Trustee Tim Bertschy Did Not Attend

Trustee Laurie Covington Did Not Attend

Trustee Joyce Harant Did Not Attend

Trustee Steve Montez Attended, Post Travel Report to be provided at 3.12.25 Board meeting

Trustee Alexander Sierra Did Not Attend

Vice President Reagan Leslie Hill Did Not Attend

President Robert Johnson Attended, Post Travel Report Attached

President Johnson stated that there was a mistake on his travel report and he will be providing his receipts from the trip. Trustee Montez stated that he will provide his receipts from the trip for reimbursement.

As such, Trustee Sierra MOVED TO DEFER this item to the next Board meeting on March 12 for approval of President Johnson's post travel report and Trustee Montez's reimbursement. Motion seconded by Trustee Harant and carried on the following roll call vote: Trustees Bertschy, Covington, Harant, Montez, Sierra, Vice President Hill, and President Johnson. (Results: 7 Ayes; 0 Abstain; 0 Nays).

8.B. Strategic Plan Review

Executive Director Cahill stated that provided is the 2024 Strategic Plan review and the 2025-27 Strategic Plan. *Please see Attachments A & B.* Of note is that all of the 2024 Strategic Plan pillars and activities track with the three Park District Commitments: Commitment to DEIA, Commitment to Environmental Sustainability, and Commitment to Vibrancy.

The strategy for 2024 included:

Priority 1: Allocate sufficient staff and financial resources to build strategies focused on re-imagination of PPD Golf, Peoria Zoo/Glen Oak Park, and Owens Ice Center to focus on modern, innovative approaches that engage and inspire, while also improving revenue generation potential that can support the long-term sustainability of the Peoria Park District.

Objectives: Build out and facilitate a strategic approach and process timeline for the following major projects facing the District in 2025-2027:

1. Opening of the GLC project in PPD Golf.
2. Implementation of a capital campaign effort focused on Peoria Zoo that contemplates connectivity and growth in Glen Oak Park
3. Replacement of the ice plant at Owens Center with a focus on how to use this construction project to expand the capacity of the facility to serve the community
4. Identify capital investment strategies that have the potential to generate revenues that allow for shifting of tax subsidy across the District in longer-term sustainable ways to locations/efforts that do not have similar capacities.

Priority 2: Establish clear and measurable expectations for District performance in all sectors.

Objective: Determine clear metrics and procedures for assessing what “success” looks like in the Peoria Park District and communicate the same.

Action Steps:

1. Set clear, measurable goals for performance and develop strategies for evaluation and accountability.
 - Facilitate subject-matter specific meetings to assess performance and provide cross-departmental support and access to District leadership and expertise.
 - Improve internal communication strategies that encourage inputs and feedback, as well as encouragement and recognition of successes, while also providing a collaborative opportunity for dealing with challenges.
2. Organize and communicate a process for administrative procedure/policy that is accessible and clear.
 - Catalog current policy and organize in a consistent format and structure.
 - Identify policy that needs to be updated/clarified.
 - Build out process for ongoing maintenance of procedure/policy documents.

Priority 3: Promote our value to our community.... and each other.

Objectives: Provide evidence of our value through shows of credibility (Putting policy commitment into practice and CAPRA accreditation) and ease of engagement (software

upgrades/coordination). Inform and engage staff in this process and find opportunities to support their individual growth in ways that benefits both them and the District.

Action Steps:

1. Strategically identify and build timeline for implementation of operational changes that amplify our commitments to DEIA, environmental sustainability, and vibrancy.
2. Complete the CAPRA self-assessment process in 2025, with the goal of hosting an on-site accreditation visit in spring 2026.
3. Prioritize software upgrades that support user access and transparency, as well as data evaluation and tracking.
4. Support individual staff growth through the development and implementation of a district-wide Learning Management System (LMS) and a tuition reimbursement process.

8.C. Juneteenth Drone Show/Fireworks

Nick Conrad stated that following Board direction at the February 12th Strategy meeting, staff solicited proposals for firework and drone light shows to be held on Thursday, June 19th at Glen Oak Park based on the approved budget dollars for the event. Proposals were received from five vendors for the project; three for a drone light show and two for a fireworks show.

Staff has solicited quotes as follows and seeks direction on the type of display to be facilitated at the 2025 Juneteenth event: Should Board direction be to proceed with fireworks to headline the event, staff recommendation would be to utilize Mad Bomber Fireworks Productions for a cost of \$28,000. A fireworks display would be approximately 15-20 minutes long synchronized to music. Should Board direction be to proceed with a drone light show, staff's recommendation would be to utilize Chicago Drone Light Shows for a cost of \$28,000. A drone show will be approximately 15 minutes long with 7 customizable designs consisting of 250 drones synchronized to music.

Trustee Bertschy MOVED TO PROCEED with a Drone Light Show Utilizing Chicago Drone Light Shows with Mad Bomber Fireworks Productions for a Drone Show at a Cost of \$28,000. Motion seconded by Trustee Sierra and carried on the following roll call vote: Trustees Bertschy, Covington, Harant, Montez, Sierra, Vice President Hill, and President Johnson. (Results: 7 Ayes; 0 Abstain; 0 Nays).

9. CALENDAR OF CONSENT ITEMS

9.A. Bid – Columbia Park Shelter

9.B. Proposal – 2025-2026 Fuels

President Johnson MOVED TO APPROVE Calendar of Consent item 9.A. Motion seconded by Trustee Sierra and carried on the following roll call vote: Trustees Bertschy, Covington, Harant, Montez, Sierra, Vice President Hill, and President Johnson. (Results: 7 Ayes; 0 Abstain; 0 Nays).

Trustee Sierra MOVED TO APPROVE Calendar of Consent item 9.B. Motion seconded by Trustee Bertschy and carried on the following roll call vote: Trustees Bertschy, Covington, Harant, Montez, Sierra, Vice President Hill, and President Johnson. (Results: 7 Ayes; 0 Abstain; 0 Nays).

10. PENDING BUSINESS

None at this time.

11. CITIZEN REQUEST TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

None at this time.

12. COMMUNICATIONS

12.A. Peoria Lakes Communication

Executive Director Cahill stated that this item will also be included on the next Strategy Ad Hoc Committee meeting agenda where Mike Friberg will provide some history and background in order to discuss.

13. OTHER BUSINESS

Trustee Harant requested that she would like to request that a Strategy Ad Hoc Committee meeting, she would like to discuss committee structure. Due to the Planning and Programming Committees being placed on hiatus this year, she does not feel the current structure is very effective with all of the issues and projects needing further discussion.

Trustee Bertschy stated that tonight, Executive Director Cahill made a presentation on the Park District's Strategic Plan, in which she mentioned under Core Commitments and Pillars. Number one is listed as Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility. As such, he wants to comment. The last month or so, we've seen in our country a coordinated and well thought out attack against principles of DEIA. It is, in his opinion, against the spirit of America, it is irreligious, it is mean spirited, it is cynical, and on. Trustee Bertschy expressed his pride at having the opportunity to serve on the board of an organization that is not afraid in today's world to speak out in its support of diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility, and that it rejects this attack that's taking place and rejects the philosophy that is behind this. As board members, everyone has their differences from time to time, but he considers himself fortunate to serve on a board and serve with staff members that celebrate diversity, that recognizes the need for equity in our community, and is committed to achieving that equity. We see today many other actors in our country and community, whether they're political or corporate, that feel a need to back away from prior commitments to what's right, namely, principles of diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility, and he is particularly proud that the Peoria Park District is not doing so, and will not do so. Tonight, we have talked about the Park District's recommitment to the pillars of DEIA and have said that we consider them to not just be important values, but the Park District's values. The Park District says it is committed to these and are not abandoning them. In fact, far from abandoning them, the Park District will pursue them even further and again, make it the number one core commitment and pillar. Trustee Bertschy stated that he wants the community to be well aware that is where the Park District stands and that is where trustees stand and that is where staff stands, and these are principles that we all will not back off from.

13.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.

President Johnson requested this item be postponed until the next Board meeting on March 12, 2025.

14. ACTION STEPS REVIEW

1. Make edits to the strategic plan as discussed.
2. Staff will reach out to the Juneteenth group to set up a next meeting.

15. ADJOURNMENT

At 7:27 pm Trustee Sierra MOVED TO ADJOURN. Motion seconded by Vice President Hill and carried by unanimous aye of those present.

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

Respectfully Submitted by Alicia Woodworth
Executive Assistant and Board Secretary



COMMITMENT TO DEIA

Pillar One: Equitable Access to Parks, Facilities and Programs

2024 Progress Notes:

As part of an established calendar for program development, the District's Signature and Community Events Steering Committee (Cahill, Swanson, Conrad, Loftus) will review all proposed programs and events on at least a quarterly basis and evaluate for geographic spread and reduction of internal conflicts. They work with programming and events teams to balance the calendar prior to finalizing the District's calendar of events on at least a quarterly basis.

In 2024, the District celebrated the opening of the fully inclusive Glen Oak Playground and also completed the replacement of the slate roof project at the Peoria PlayHouse Children's Museum. District staff also oversaw improvements at Peoria Zoo tied to AZA accreditation including the development of outdoor spaces for swift foxes, spider monkeys, and lemurs.

HISRA staff and patrons were engaged in the design and development of the Glen Oak Playground. HISRA staff were a part of the team that has informed the design of the accessible restrooms that will be built adjacent to the new playground in 2025.

Status of rental working group? Staff are in the process of streamlining all rental contracts throughout the District. The plan is to roll out some of the newly designed contracts by Q1 2025.

In Q4, staff from Peoria Zoo, PPD administration, and IT to stay on track for a February 1, 2025, go live date for implementation of RecTrac software at Peoria Zoo.

Outstanding Action Items:

Strategy 2.3: Develop and implement a process for evaluating asset management and job costing tracking to reduce administrative burden and cost.

NOTE: This will be folded into the software analysis and resource allocation identified in the 2025-2027 plan.

Strategy 3.1: Build out and implement a plan for purchase of and use of Track Chairs.

NOTE: Staff has submitted two grant applications to underwrite the purchase and first year operational support of Track Chairs. One was denied; one is outstanding.

Pillar Two: Focus on the PPD Workforce

2024 Progress Notes:

In 2024, the District combined the Peoria PlayHouse Be Anything! event with WorldWide Day of Play. Staff had a post event meeting in June 2024 and has already begun to plan for the 2025 event, with the goal of providing more clear promotion of the Be Anything! auction as a fundraiser to support the PlayHouse. The effort to grow the visibility of this work continues to be a priority of the District. It is highlighted on the District's newly revamped website and a cross-departmental group meets at least monthly to support event and program planning.

In Q4, select staff participated in the filming of commercials that will be used to promote the diverse, vibrant opportunities that come with PPD employment.

2024 also saw the prioritization of supports for middle school and early high school students to consider the PPD as their "first" employer. 6 students from the Mayor's Summer Youth Internship Program participated in a multi-week career exposure experience that included support of multiple District locations and programming types. Over the course of 2024, District staff engaged with nearly 5,000 youth across our service area with education and information about workforce opportunities with the Peoria Park District

Grounded in the planning efforts that took place in 2024, staff has developed a Counselor In Training program for youth ages 14-15 that is being promoted in the Camps and Sports Guide for Summer 2025.

A new District-wide patron service training was unveiled in Spring 2024, with refinements continuing. This training was offered in both in-person and online/on-demand formats.

Brianna Cobb and Cody Haines have led a team effort to implement Learning Management Software that is housed in our Paycom time tracking software and will allow for on-demand training and more accountable tracking of onboarding and annual training requirements. This will officially launch with staff on January 15, 2025.

An employee resource group was established for staff under the age of 30, which has met twice and offers trainings that are self-selected by participants.

Pillar Three: Actively Promote and Encourage the Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness of PPD-Funded Contractors and Suppliers

2024 Progress Notes:

Many efforts in this pillar were operationalized in 2024, including:

- identification of general categories of goods and service regularly purchased and any projected procurements by year.
- development of annual diverse spend reports (operationalized the provision of this by end of Q1 each year)
- compliance with HB453
- monthly Qualifying Construction Contract reporting provided to DEIA Committee
- development of a checklist for staff to include touchpoints with contractors including mid-project follow up on workforce goals
- Updating of PPD's M/WBE Business Directory using multiple sources including State of Illinois, City of Peoria, MDBC, IDOT, other diverse vendor business directories, and diverse vendor data from reports published by other park districts and governmental units
- Creation of a user-friendly form-fillable registration database for vendors at <https://vendors.peoriaparks.org/>

Staff also collaborated with the Board of Trustees to revise EEO forms that are included in bid packages to include emphasis on utilization analysis and affirmative actions by vendors.

Pillar Four: Support Community Workforce Development

2024 Progress Notes:

Staff worked to capture video and photos to be used in forward facing promotions in Q1/Q2 2025. These assets will be used in strategies to show the variety of career paths available in the District.

COMMITMENT TO ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Pillar One: Protection of the Biosphere

2024 Progress Notes:

Staff reviewed and revised the District's land acquisition and divestment policies.

Jacob Mol completed nature preserve management plans to the Nature Preserve Commission for review and approval

Staff developed and implemented a management plan for the Springdale Savanna. In December 2024, staff met with the new leadership of Springdale to review operations. Staff recommended operations with the current plan for 2025 until the Springdale director is more established before considering any changes.

Staff completed more prescribed burns in 2024 than in the prior 10 years combined.

Staff built out a clear strategy for engaging interpretive and educational signage in parks that promotes restoration and its benefits. Children's interactive signage was placed in Glen Oak Park, Tawny Oaks, Detweiller Riverside, Trewyn Park, and Forest Park Nature Center. Staff is also working to place signs in areas where recent ecological restoration explaining what is taking place.

Progress was made at Newman, Grand View Drive, and Bradley Park. Staff has added a new layer in GIS to identify and track no mow areas.

Staff also learned to use and implemented the use of a new seed drill.

Staff was also able to build out measurable goals for volunteer stewardship of some PPD restoration areas. In 2024, volunteer workdays were promoted and conducted that supports Tawny Oaks, Camp Wokanda, and Grandview Drive, among others. In Q3, staff hosted volunteer work days for RLI in Glen Oak Park doing invasive species removal on hillsides and for Caterpillar, whose staff worked on Robinson Park hill prairies.

Staff operationalized requirements for maintaining level one arboretum status at Donovan Park.

In Q3, the Park Board of Trustees approved a consultant proposal to provide a plan for mitigation efforts of climate change across District operations. This work will begin in 2025.

Outstanding Action Items:

Staff will evaluate and make a recommendation for the transitioning of the Merkle Ford house/property.

Staff will also evaluate and make a recommendation for the Tawny Oaks house, which required major septic system repairs this fall in advance of the NCCC students living there during their support of the District.

A statistic focused on restoration efforts will be added to the 2025 PPD monthly impact report.

Pillar Two: Environmental Education and Interpretation

2024 Progress Notes:

Staff developed an inventory sheet that tracks all sustainability programming across the District. A rubric was created to determine whether or not each program meets “sustainability targets”. An overview of this effort was provided to the District’s Programming Committee in September.

Staff from EIS and Marketing collaborated on the Forrest environmental awareness and anti-littering campaign.

Strategies for utilizing Friends groups were development and continues to be refined. Agreements that define scope of work and liability will be implemented for all groups.

Staff have developed a draft MOU with Friends of Illinois Nature Preserves, which when finalized, could be used as a template for other groups.

EIS staff and the marketing team created a video entitled “What Earth Day Means To Me” which was shared on social media and at an April Park Board meeting.

Pillar Three: Conservation of Energy

2024 Progress Notes:

In 2024, staff utilized grant funding to establish sustainable perennial flower beds at RiverPlex, Logan, Morton Square Park, Gwynn Park, Trewyn Park, Proctor Recreation Center and Logan Park. Staff is also building strategies to transition the PlayHouse landscaping to include pollinator friendly perennial plants and annuals.

In April, the Park Board of Trustees approved purchase of groundskeeping equipment for Golf that included two hybrid gas/electric models. Many parks have switched to battery/electric leaf blowers, string trimmers, and chain saws.

An electric utility vehicle was added to both the RiverFront and Zoo fleets.

In Q3, the Park Board of Trustees approved the purchase of a fully electric delivery van to be used by Purchasing staff to make inter-office deliveries.

Outstanding Action Items:

After completion of consultant work on conservation of energy, build out a plan to track energy cost savings.

Pillar Four: Use of Environmentally Sensitive and Safe Products

2024 Progress Notes:

In 2024, staff completed a trial use of Fiesta, an iron-based organic herbicide that kills broadleaves at Bradley Park and with Rec Maintenance team. In Q4, this trial was expanded to Donovan Park. Staff will assess usability for broader use in 2025.

Staff worked to develop a centralized, universal tracking sheet for chemical use which will be implemented as of January 1, 2025 across all departments.

Purchasing staff led by Nicole Staley developed an assessment tool for the eco-friendliness of consumable products used across the District. This is in the data collection phase and will result in recommendations for change in use in 2025.

Pillar Five: Reduction and Proper Disposal of Waste

2024 Progress Notes:

Staff has built out a plan for composting at Krause. Signs were posted letting staff know where to put landscape waste by size and type. In Q4, leaves and landscape debris were sorted.

Staff implemented a community accessible wood chip and mulch distribution effort in Q2. Mulch was provided to patrons at Glen Oak, Gwynn, FRC, Kellogg and Detweiller Parks.

Outstanding Action Items:

As a result of staff turnover and leave of absence, goals for composting and bio-char will be implemented in 2025.

Staff was unable to gather data related to District recycling from GFL and will reassess this opportunity in 2025.

Commitment to Vibrancy

Pillar One: Connection: Build opportunities for engagement and relationship-building tied to PPD efforts.

2024 Progress Notes:

Staff was able to budget to transition the Volunteer Coordinator from a part-time to full-time dedicated position beginning in January 2025.

In 2024, the Volunteer Coordinator was able to facilitate a restoration effort on Grand View Drive along with a Parks on Tap event.

Staff also hosted a Volunteer Appreciation Event at Peoria Zoo during National Volunteer Week that had 71 attendees!

The Signature Events Working Group met at least monthly. With the departure of Brent Wheeler, this structure was modified and is now led by Nick Conrad and Scott Loftus with the support of Director Cahill.

A more inclusive signature event sponsorship program was implemented in 2024 and will be refined for 2025.

Signature events are promoted year-round on the District's restructured website!

A staff survey focused on technology needs was completed in Q2 and as part of the 2025 budget process, staff evaluated the viability of implementing Microsoft 365. A hybrid approach was established for 2025.

Outstanding Action Items:

Efforts to build a naming policy were not completed. This may be revisited in 2025.

Pillar Two: Resiliency: Improve our ability to adopt to change in ways that support faster recovery from economic, social or environmental shifts.

2024 Progress Notes

In 2024, the Zoo master plan was updated by Ace Torre Designs and schematic design is nearly complete.

A fundraising consultant was retained to complete both a Development Assessment and a Feasibility Study for Zoo/PZS. Recommendations regarding structure were provided to staff/board volunteers in October 2024. These include restructuring of staff and the need for clarity in operational agreements between the entity. Staff and Board are working on these recommendations in anticipation of a February 2025 presentation of feasibility study findings.

An RFQ for architect/engineering for the ice plant renovation and other improvements at Owens Center was published in late Q4.

Development of major giving/development strategies was integrated into the fundraising consultant evaluation mentioned above. Efforts will refocus in 2025.

The District's Legacy Fund was the focus of the District's fall fundraising/awareness campaign.

Pillar Three: Health: Support access to education, housing, jobs, safety, and equitable allocation of resources to support a healthier community.

2024 Progress Notes

In August 2024, staff presented metrics for quantitative analysis of the sustainability of the RiverPlex.

These included, but are not limited to, OSF's termination of its lease at the facility, loss of the OSF mission grant, a membership decline of 10 percent or more, increased subsidy levels, additional major capital needs, or the termination of the joint operating agreement with the Greater Peoria Family YMCA.

Staff also focused on improving the safety of community public events and hosted public input sessions and community survey data requests tied to July 3. Results were presented to the Park Board of Trustees on June 24 and rules were posted at the July 3 Streets Belong to Me event setting forth clear expectations for behavior.

These rules and expectations have been applied to other PPD events as well.

A matrix assessing safety, sustainability, and accessibility of major events was also developed and implemented for use in event planning and evaluation.

A programming working group has been established to review and reduce internal competition and maximize opportunities for engagement and promotion. This group met in Fall 2024 and reviewed first quarter events and activities and will begin to meet monthly with this focus.

Pillar Four: Inspiration: Prioritize our role as a culture builder in our community on providing a great place to live, work and play.

2024 Progress Notes:

One of 2024's highlights was the expansion and growth of Mobile Recreation. With the leadership of Michael Dixon and the recreation team, this program, which is facilitated in collaboration with the Greater Peoria Family YMCA, maintained a regular presence across six neighborhood parks in under-represented parts of Peoria.

Efforts to inspire were catalogued and presented to the Park Board of Trustees for 2023. This will be revisited and shared for 2024 in Q1 2025.

Outstanding Action Items:

Play it Forward sustainability will be addressed in athletics working group which meets bi-monthly.

Peoria Park District Strategic Plan
Year(s) Covered: 2025–2027

1. Mission and Values

The Peoria Park District's mission is to contribute to healthy and vibrant communities by providing high-quality parks, recreation, and education experiences. The district's values include:

- **Professionalism:** Being well-trained and proficient
 - **Respect:** Being considerate of others and honest in interactions
 - **Accountability:** Being transparent and responsible for decisions
 - **Innovation:** Being open to new approaches that achieve better outcomes
 - **Safety:** Providing safe spaces for those who work, learn, or play in the district
 - **Equity:** Focusing on equitable access to parks, facilities, and programs
-

2. Core Commitments and Pillars

1. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility

Peoria Park District Staff and Board believe that diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility are central to our mission. Diversity of race, color, gender, disability, age, and culture in our employees and those we work with is important to fairly represent the same diversity in our communities. The differing perspectives available from a diverse workforce are important to solving the complex expectations of those who live, work and play with us.

2. Environmental Sustainability

The Peoria Park District has been, and will remain, a leading force in the preservation of historical, cultural, and natural environments of the communities. As guardians of a quality environment, the Peoria Park District promotes and practices the conservation, preservation, and restoration of our unique natural heritage.

3. Vibrancy

The Peoria Park 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.

3. Strategic Priorities

Priority 1: Allocate sufficient staff and financial resources to build strategies focused on re-imagination of the Golf Learning Center/PPD Golf, Peoria Zoo/Glen Oak Park, and Owens Ice

Center to focus on modern, innovative approaches that engage and inspire, while also improving revenue generation potential that can support the long-term sustainability of the Peoria Park District.

- **Objective:** Build out and facilitate a strategic approach and process timeline for the following major projects facing the District in 2025-2027:
 1. Opening of the GLC project in PPD Golf.
 2. Implementation of a capital campaign effort focused on Peoria Zoo that contemplates connectivity and growth in Glen Oak Park.
 3. Replacement of the ice plant at Owens Center with a focus on how to use this construction project to expand and modernize the facility.
 4. Identify other capital investment strategies across the District that have the potential to generate revenues that reduce the District's overall reliance on tax subsidy to maintain its current inventory of community supports in long-term sustainable ways.
- **2025 Action Steps:**
 1. PPD Golf:
 - GLC
 - Finalize Operating Agreement with food/beverage provider.
 - Formalize staffing plan and operating structure for the facility
 - Establish clear marketing objectives for the facility to support engagement and revenue generation, while also capturing more golfers across other PPD locations.
 - Sustainability
 - Evaluate and develop strategies to reduce reliance on public water sources.
 - Build timeline and identify funding sources for irrigation modifications/updates.
 2. Peoria Zoo/Glen Oak Park
 - Evaluate feedback provided by Skystone Partners in February 2025 related to feasibility of capital campaign.
 - Build a fundraising plan and timeline in accordance with recommendations.
 - Review and revise organizational structure of Peoria Zoo to support this effort and to support effective collaboration and revenue generation.
 - Revise PZS/PPD Annual Operating Agreement and revenue share to support selected structure.
 - Identify and implement opportunities to provide shared programming across Glen Oak Park facilities to engage communities.
 - Establish capital plan and timeline for updates at Peoria PlayHouse Children's Museum. This should be developed with the goal of enhancements to a daylong destination experience at the forefront.
 3. Owens Ice Center

- Determine clear scope of work for capital project that modernizes not only the physical ice plant, but also the visitor experience, such that revenue generation is amplified where possible.
 - Select and facilitate work with architect/engineer to finalize plan.
 - Finalize budget and work with finance staff to build out a timeline and plan for issuance of Alternate Revenue Bonds in 2026.
 - Work with Municipal Advisor to ensure that District uses best practice to limit fees and long-term impact on District financial position.
 - Use M/A resource to evaluate and implement other sustainable financial practices as identified.
- 4. Work with the Board of Trustees to set expectations/goals for use of District bond issue, state and federal grant dollars, private fundraising and other sources that will support maintenance of existing amenities, while also evolving to meet the changing needs of our community and providing new opportunities for engagement that include ways to generate sustainable revenue.
- **Metrics for Success/Work Product:**
 1. Performance vs. established pro forma budget for GLC.
 2. Progress made on above action steps to include specific goals for revenue generation at Peoria Zoo focused on memberships, fundraisers, and capital fundraising as established through restructuring discussion. This expectation related to revenue generation should be tailored to other facilities/programs as well.
 3. Prioritized capital needs list with goals for funding sources not limited to District bond issue.

Priority 2: Establish clear and measurable expectations for District mission-driven efforts in all sectors.

- **Objective:** Determine clear metrics and procedures for assessing what “success” looks like in the Peoria Park District and communicate the same.
- **Action Steps:**
 1. Set clear, measurable goals for performance and develop strategies for evaluation and accountability.
 - Build out an annual process for establishing, non-budgetary targets for quality and quantity of efforts. These targets should track with service provided and their connection to the District’s commitments.
 - Facilitate subject-matter specific meetings to assess performance and provide cross-departmental support and access to District leadership and expertise.
 - Improve internal communication strategies that encourage inputs and feedback, as well as encouragement and recognition of successes, while also providing a collaborative opportunity for dealing with challenges.

2. Organize and communicate a process for administrative procedure/policy that is accessible and clear.
 - Catalog current policy and organize in a consistent format and structure.
 - Identify policy that needs to be updated/clarified.
 - Build out process for ongoing maintenance of procedure/policy documents.
- **Metrics for Success:**
 1. Documented goals for all departments/programs across District that are outside of budget process; review of and response to these goals.
 2. Progress in establishment of administrative procedure establishment, communication, and understanding as reported in fall annual staff survey.

Priority 3: Promote our value to our community.... and each other.

- **Objectives:** Provide evidence of our value through shows of credibility (Putting policy commitment into practice and CAPRA accreditation) and ease of engagement (software upgrades/coordination). Inform and engage staff in this process and find opportunities to support their individual growth in ways that benefits both them and the District.
- **Action Steps:**
 1. Strategically identify and build timeline for implementation of operational changes that amplify our commitments to DEIA, environmental sustainability, and vibrancy.
 2. Complete the CAPRA self-assessment process in 2025, with the goal of hosting an on-site accreditation visit in spring 2026.
 3. Prioritize software upgrades that support user access and transparency, as well as data evaluation and tracking.
 4. Support individual staff growth through the development and implementation of a district-wide Learning Management System (LMS) and a tuition reimbursement process.
- **Metrics for Success:**
 1. Documented operational changes that tie to the pillars in each of the District's three commitment areas.
 2. Completed CAPRA self-assessment.
 3. Identified and implemented timeline for software acquisition/updates.
 4. Data related to LMS participation and staff feedback on impacts of the same.
 5. Tracking of retention impact of LMS and tuition reimbursement.

4. Implementation Plan: In first quarter of 2025, after review and feedback of the Board of Trustees, staff will develop a targeted timeline for process and work product development

5. Monitoring and Reporting/Communications

- Progress will be shared as part of quarterly updates and year-end reports that review impact of efforts and action steps or modification of goals that are identified as part of the process. These updates will be shared on the District's website.
- As necessary to achieve improvement, staff and board will connect with relevant stakeholders to gather input and feedback.