

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE PLEASURE DRIVEWAY AND PARK DISTRICT OF PEORIA, ILLINOIS HELD AT 4:00 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 2026 AT THE BONNIE NOBLE CENTER FOR PARK DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, 1125 W. LAKE AVENUE, PEORIA, ILLINOIS.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Trustee and Committee Chair Joyce Harant, Trustee Ron Silver, and Executive Director Emily Cahill

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

TRUSTEES PRESENT: Trustees Joyce Harant, Reagan Leslie Hill (in at 4:09 PM), Alexander Sierra, Ron Silver, Mark Slover, Vice President Steve Montez, and President Robert Johnson

STAFF PRESENT: Executive Director Emily Cahill, Nick Conrad, Matt Freeman, Becky Fredrickson, Scott Loftus, Jennifer Swanson, Mike Friberg, Mary Harden, Tammy Johnson, Willie Howe, Attorney Justin Gunn, and Alicia Woodworth

OTHERS PRESENT: Johnny Leeb of Tara Consulting Group on behalf of Verizon Wireless

1. CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Harant called the meeting to order at 4:02 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

3. MOTION TO PERMIT COMMITTEE MEMBER TO ATTEND MEETING ELECTRONICALLY

No request to attend meeting electronically was received.

4. MINUTES

4.A. Approval of Minutes of February 11, 2026 Planning Committee Meeting

Executive Director Cahill MOVED TO APPROVE the minutes of the February 11, 2026 Planning Committee meeting. Motion seconded by Trustee Harant and carried unanimously by roll call vote as follows: Trustee Harant – Aye, Trustee Silver – Abstain, Executive Director Cahill - Aye. Results: 2 – Aye; 1 – Abstain.

5. NEW BUSINESS

5.A. Permanent Easement in Robinson Park on Mossville Road

Mike Friberg presented a request from the Peoria County Highway Department to remove and replace an aging culvert under Mossville Road. The culvert currently causes inefficient drainage flow from Robinson Park due to its alignment.

The project requires a permanent easement of approximately 31 feet by 182 feet of park property to allow for proper culvert alignment, improved water flow, roadway setback, and ongoing maintenance access. Compensation offered by Peoria County is \$2,100 based on standard appraisal methods.

Discussion included clarification of the location, drainage issues, and alignment improvements.

Trustee Silver MOVED TO PROVIDE CONSENSUS to staff to move this item to the full Board for approval. Motion second by Executive Director Cahill and carried on unanimous voice vote.

5.B. Disc Golf at Leslie Rutherford Park

Mike Friberg presented a proposal from Ledgestone Disc Golf and the Peoria Frisbee Club to develop disc golf facilities at Leslie Rutherford Park.

The proposal includes:

- Design and construction funded by partner organizations
- Park District responsibilities limited to mowing and providing a portable restroom
- Potential use for public play and tournaments

Staff noted that Leslie Rutherford Park provides adequate space while minimizing impacts to high-quality natural areas. The project would coexist with current uses, including the Cricket Association.

Discussion included:

- Site suitability and flooding considerations
- Potential impacts to existing users
- Tree preservation and erosion concerns
- Parking logistics and anticipated demand
- Benefits of increased park activity and visibility

Trustee Silver MOVED TO DIRECT STAFF to proceed with development of a formal agreement. Motion second by Executive Director Cahill and carried on unanimous voice vote.

5.C. Communication Tower Lease – Lakeview Park

Becky Fredrickson introduced Johnny Leeb of Tara Consulting Group, representing Verizon Wireless, to present a preliminary proposal regarding the potential placement of a communications tower within Lakeview Park.

Mr. Leeb explained that Verizon Wireless has identified a service gap in the area and is seeking a suitable location for a new communications facility. As part of their standard process, publicly owned land is evaluated first to provide community benefit and minimize reliance on private land acquisition.

Mr. Leeb outlined the proposed project as follows:

- The installation of a monopole communication tower approximately 200 feet in height
- A leased compound area of approximately 75 feet by 75 feet
- The compound would consist of a gravel surface, fenced enclosure, and a concrete pad foundation
- The site would be designed to accommodate Verizon equipment initially, with space available for additional carriers to co-locate

He noted that Verizon typically partners with a tower development company that constructs and owns the infrastructure, allowing Verizon to focus on installing communications equipment.

Mr. Leeb described the construction and site requirements, which would include:

- Engineering studies, environmental review, and permitting
- Potential rezoning approval
- Installation of a gravel or paved access drive, which would be a non-exclusive easement allowing shared use by Park District staff
- Minor grading work to address site elevation and drainage conditions

He further explained that the tower compound would occupy an area currently consisting of grass and would be located in a portion of the park that is difficult to access due to a nearby creek, making it less suitable for other recreational uses.

Regarding operations and maintenance, Mr. Leeb indicated that site visits for maintenance are typically infrequent (approximately once per month).

Financial terms discussed included:

- Estimated lease revenue of \$800 to \$900 per month
- A long-term lease term (anticipated up to 95 years) due to the significant upfront investment required by the developer
- A proposed annual escalation rate of approximately 1.5%, with acknowledgment that this figure is negotiable

Mr. Leeb noted that the Park District would incur no construction or installation costs, as all development would be funded by the tower company.

Committee members asked several questions, including:

- The physical footprint and size of the concrete base and gravel compound
- The visual impact of a 200-foot tower and potential mitigation through landscaping
- The long-term value of the lease, particularly in relation to inflation and escalation rates
- Whether alternative designs or camouflaging options were available
- Comparisons to existing tower agreements within the District

Mr. Leeb acknowledged that the tower would be visible and would resemble a standard monopole structure, though landscaping buffers could be installed over time to reduce visual impact from surrounding roadways.

Following discussion, the Committee expressed general interest in exploring the opportunity further while noting concerns related to aesthetics and long-term financial considerations.

Following discussion, the Committee reached consensus to allow staff to proceed with further evaluation and negotiation. A formal agreement will be brought back to the Board for approval.

5.D. Land Rental Rates

Mike Friberg presented an overview of current land rental practices for recreational use agreements, noting that existing rates are outdated and significantly below market value.

Several methodologies were reviewed, including:

- Farmland value comparisons
- Administrative cost recovery
- Recreational land rates
- Flat fee structures
- Combination model (base fee plus per acre rate)

Discussion highlights included:

- Recognition that current rates (including some \$0 agreements) are not sustainable
- Need to balance fairness to partners with responsible use of public assets
- Consideration of administrative workload and ongoing support
- Differentiation between exclusive and shared use

The Committee expressed general support for:

- A combination fee structure
- Establishing a more reasonable rate (discussion referenced approximately \$500 annually for ~4 acres)
- Gradual implementation of increases

No formal action was taken. Staff was directed to refine the approach and return with a recommendation.

5.E. Solar Renewable Energy Certificates (SRECs)

Becky Fredrickson presented information on the Illinois Shines program and the opportunity to sell Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) generated by Park District solar arrays.

Participation would:

- Generate approximately \$170,000 in incentives
- Require relinquishing the ability to claim renewable energy use toward sustainability goals

Discussion included:

- Trade-offs between financial benefit and sustainability reporting
- Potential use of proceeds for future sustainability initiatives

Trustee Silver MOVED TO PROVIDE CONSENSUS to recommend to the full Board to sell the SRECs. Motion second by Executive Director Cahill and carried on unanimous voice vote.

5.F. MLK Park Improvements

Becky Fredrickson presented a conceptual plan in partnership with the City of Peoria for improvements to Martin Luther King Jr. Park, supported by a potential \$477,000 grant.

Proposed improvements include:

- Shelter relocation or replacement
- Basketball court repairs
- New swings
- Adult fitness equipment
- Pathway improvements

Discussion included:

- Accessibility challenges and ADA considerations
- Site layout and preservation of existing trees
- Interest in restroom facilities (not included in grant)
- Importance of public engagement prior to final decisions

Trustees expressed strong support for improvements and emphasized community input.

5.G. Trewyn Park Pavilion Update

Becky Fredrickson reported on public engagement efforts related to Trewyn Park improvements. Outreach at the Peoria Grown Market showed strong support, with 53 participants indicating approval.

Staff noted:

- A public hearing is scheduled for March 25 Board Meeting
- The hearing fulfills historic preservation requirements

6. PENDING BUSINESS

None at this time.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

None at this time.

8. ACTION STEPS REVIEW

- Continue evaluation of communication tower proposal
- Develop land rental rate structure
- Advance MLK Park planning and public engagement
- Proceed with disc golf agreement development
- Prepare items for full Board consideration

9. ADJOURNMENT

At 5:30 pm, Trustee Silver MOVED TO ADJOURN the meeting. Motion second by Executive Director Cahill and carried on unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted by Alicia Woodworth
Executive Assistant and Board Secretary