

**MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE PLEASURE DRIVEWAY AND PARK DISTRICT OF PEORIA, ILLINOIS HELD AT 3:30 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 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, Ron Silver, Mark Slover, and President Robert Johnson

**STAFF PRESENT:** Executive Director Emily Cahill, Matt Freeman, Becky Fredrickson, Scott Loftus, Jennifer Swanson, Mike Friberg, Willie Howe, Tammy Johnson, Kristi Shoemaker, and Alicia Woodworth

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Trustee Harant called the meeting to order at 3:31 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 March 11, 2026 Planning Committee Meeting**

Discussion was held regarding language contained in the March 11, 2026 Planning Committee meeting minutes related to participation in the Illinois Shines program and the sale of SRECs associated with solar systems. Committee members discussed clarifying the wording to better reflect the intent of the motion and recommendation to the Board. It was noted that the intent was to proceed with participation in the Illinois Shines program and to sell the SRECs rather than utilize them as credits. Staff agreed to revise the wording accordingly prior to publication of the minutes.

Trustee Silver MOVED TO APPROVE the minutes of the March 11, 2026 Planning Committee meeting as amended. Motion seconded by Executive Director Cahill and carried unanimously by roll call vote.

**5. NEW BUSINESS**

**5.A. Discussion Re: Environmental Sustainability Goals Process**

Trustee Harant requested discussion regarding the Park District's environmental sustainability efforts, goals, and future planning process. Executive Director Cahill explained that the Park District's initial work with consultants had concluded and staff was now beginning the process of evaluating recommendations and consolidating sustainability-related information from various departments.

Becky Fredrickson stated that the consultants had established 2024 baseline metrics regarding energy usage, including kilowatt hour production from solar systems and overall facility energy consumption. She explained that staff intends to review historical data further to better understand trends in energy use and identify opportunities for improvement. She also noted that sustainability efforts extend beyond facilities and utilities and include broader environmental stewardship initiatives.

Staff discussed plans to involve the Conservation Working Group, including Kristi Shoemaker and Jacob Kuban, in developing a more comprehensive sustainability framework. It was explained that much of the Park District's sustainability work is currently occurring across multiple departments and divisions, but metrics and data have not yet been consolidated into one comprehensive plan.

Executive Director Cahill referenced other governmental agencies and park districts that have completed sustainability plans, including Urbana Park District, noting that their process involved research, community surveys, and Board input sessions over several months. She stated that staff would like additional time to conduct internal research, gather data, and determine how best to measure and quantify sustainability efforts before presenting recommendations to the Board.

Discussion also included climate resilience and long-term planning for plant species and landscape management. Committee members and staff discussed how changing climate conditions may impact future planting decisions, invasive species management, and stewardship practices. Staff noted that research is already underway regarding changing growing zones and the use of plant species better suited for warmer climates.

The Committee also discussed pesticide and herbicide use throughout the Park District. Staff explained that recordkeeping for herbicide applications has recently been standardized across the Park District, including parks, Environmental and Interpretive Services, and golf operations, allowing for more accurate tracking and measurement of product usage. Staff further noted that evolving technologies and products are helping reduce environmental impacts while maintaining operational needs.

Staff also discussed partnerships with outside research organizations, including studies conducted by the Illinois State Geological Survey related to herbicide drift in nature preserves.

Trustee Harant expressed appreciation for the discussion and indicated interest in continued updates as staff further develops sustainability planning efforts.

**5.B. Easement – Bielfeldt Park for Peoria Heights Water**

Mike Friberg presented preliminary information regarding a potential easement request associated with the Illinois Route 29 project and the Village of Peoria Heights water system.

He explained that Peoria Heights Water intends to replace water mains along Route 29 and would like to install a new water main from the Peoria Heights water tower through the north property line of Bielfeldt Park to connect with the new infrastructure along Route 29. Staff emphasized that the request remains in very early stages and that no surveys, plats, or easement documents had yet been prepared.

Mr. Friberg stated that the proposed alignment along the property line would minimize impacts to recreational uses within the park and noted that supporting infrastructure improvements for the Village would likely be beneficial. Committee members discussed that no formal action was necessary at this time and that future Board consideration would occur once detailed plans and easement documents are submitted.

**5.C. Memorial at Donovan Park Request**

Executive Director Cahill presented a request from a community member seeking permission to install a “wind phone” memorial within Donovan Park. Staff explained that a wind phone is a disconnected telephone intended to provide individuals a place for reflection and emotional healing, particularly for those grieving the loss of a loved one.

Executive Director Cahill noted that the request would fall under the Park District’s memorial artwork and statuary policy and explained that the donor would fund the installation, including the phone structure and associated signage.

Staff discussed concerns regarding placement of the memorial within Donovan Park, particularly related to accessibility, security, and potential vandalism. As an alternative, staff recommended consideration of placement within the therapy garden at Luthy Botanical Garden, where the setting would provide a more secluded, accessible, and protected environment.

Committee members discussed the importance of selecting an appropriate location that would allow visitors privacy and reflection while remaining accessible to individuals with mobility limitations. Committee members also noted that Donovan Park’s open landscape and terrain may present challenges related to access and monitoring.

Staff explained that the final design would require Park District approval to ensure the structure would be durable, safe, and appropriate for the selected location.

Following discussion, Committee consensus supported moving forward with the concept and recommended placement at Luthy Botanical Garden rather than Donovan Park.

**6. PENDING BUSINESS**

None at this time.

**7. OTHER BUSINESS**

None at this time.

**8. ACTION STEPS REVIEW**

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

At 5:03 pm, Trustee Silver MOVED TO ADJOURN the meeting. Motion second by Executive Director Cahill and carried on unanimous voice vote.

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Respectfully Submitted by Alicia Woodworth  
Executive Assistant and Board Secretary