

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE OF THE PLEASURE DRIVEWAY AND PARK DISTRICT OF PEORIA, ILLINOIS HELD AT 11:00 AM ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 20, 2026 AT THE BONNIE W. NOBLE CENTER FOR PARK DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, 1125 WEST LAKE AVENUE, PEORIA, IL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Trustee and Chair Alexander Sierra, Trustee and Vice Chair Joyce Harant, and Executive Director Emily Cahill

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

TRUSTEES PRESENT: Trustees Joyce Harant and Alexander Sierra

STAFF PRESENT: Executive Director Emily Cahill, Matt Freeman, Scott Loftus, Greg Walker, and Alicia Woodworth

1. CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Sierra called the meeting to order at 11:00 AM.

2. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Trustee and Chair Alexander Sierra, Trustee and Vice Chair Joyce Harant, and Executive Director Emily Cahill

Members Absent: None

3. MOTION TO PERMIT COMMITTEE MEMBER TO ATTEND MEETING ELECTRONICALLY

No requests were made for electronic attendance.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF APRIL 15, 2026 PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE MEETING

Trustee Harant MOVED TO APPROVE the minutes of the April 15, 2026 Programming Committee Meeting. Motion seconded by Executive Director Cahill and carried on a unanimous aye of members.

5. WORK SESSION DISCUSSION

5.A. Evaluation of Public Input: Golf (Talk About it Tuesday May 2026)

Staff reviewed comments and suggestions received from participants during the May Talk About It Tuesday public engagement session focused on golf operations, facilities, and programming. Each comment was reviewed individually, and staff provided updates regarding actions taken, feasibility considerations, and potential next steps.

Topics discussed included:

- Improved identification of nine-hole and eighteen-hole leagues on league schedules.
- Reinstallation of 100-yard marker posts that had previously been removed from golf courses.
- Concerns regarding the steep slope adjacent to Hole No. 15 at Newman Golf Course and possible safety implications associated with golf cart usage.
- Opportunities to develop a middle school golf tournament and increased youth golf participation.
- Requests to reopen night golf programming at Donovan Golf Course.
- Affordability and accessibility considerations related to the Golf Learning Center.
- Improved communication regarding school golf matches and practices occurring at District golf courses.
- Exploration of the First Tee youth golf development program and its potential relationship to existing District youth golf initiatives.

- Promotion of beginner golf opportunities and use of the Golf Learning Center as an introduction to the game.

5.B. Categorization and Prioritization of Identified Items

Following review of public comments, the Committee discussed how identified items should be categorized and prioritized moving forward.

Discussion focused on grouping comments into several general categories:

Operations and Customer Communication

- League schedule improvements.
- School match scheduling notifications.
- Public-facing communication tools.
- Online reporting and tracking of public feedback.

Course Maintenance and Facility Improvements

- Replacement of yardage markers.
- Evaluation of conditions at Hole No. 15 at Newman Golf Course.
- Golf cart storage and lost-property concerns.
- Future investment considerations related to The Loop short course.

Accessibility and Participation

- Affordability of Golf Learning Center programming.
- Scholarship opportunities and reduced-cost participation.
- Development of an accessibility philosophy for golf facilities.
- Strategies to reduce barriers associated with cost, time commitment, and participant intimidation.

Youth Development and Community Partnerships

- Middle school tournament opportunities.
- Expansion of youth golf programming.
- School partnerships.
- Evaluation of First Tee programming.
- Opportunities to connect golf participation with broader youth engagement and violence-prevention initiatives.

5.C. Recommendation Development & Next Steps

Executive Director Cahill explained that staff had compiled and categorized comments received during the May Talk About It Tuesday public engagement session focused on golf operations, facilities, and programming. Staff reviewed each item and provided updates regarding implementation status, feasibility, and next steps.

Golf Operations and Course Amenities

Golf staff reported that league schedules will be revised to clearly identify whether leagues are nine-hole or eighteen-hole leagues. Future league sheets will include a visible designation next to each league name to improve patron understanding and scheduling.

Staff discussed public feedback regarding removal of the 100-yard marker posts on golf courses. While the markers had been removed as part of an effort to modernize course appearance and reflect increased use of GPS technology, feedback indicated many patrons continue to rely on visible yardage markers. Staff acknowledged the change had created challenges for some golfers and announced plans to reinstall the markers.

Committee members reviewed comments regarding Hole No. 15 at Newman Golf Course and concerns related to golf cart usage on the steep slope adjacent to the tee area. Staff explained that significant grading, retaining walls, and capital investment would be required to terrace or redesign the area. While no recent accidents had been reported, trustees discussed whether additional signage directing golfers to remain on the cart path should be installed. Staff indicated signage could be added and further consultation with golf course architects may be appropriate when future master planning efforts occur.

School and Tournament Opportunities

Staff reported they had contacted the individual who suggested creating a middle school golf tournament and planned to meet with him to better understand his proposal and discuss possible opportunities for youth golf participation.

The Committee briefly discussed a suggestion to reopen the night golf program at Donovan Golf Course. Staff indicated the concept would require significant investment and was not being recommended at this time.

Accessibility and Affordability of Golf Learning Center Programming

The Committee engaged in an extensive discussion regarding accessibility at the Golf Learning Center (GLC), including affordability, participation barriers, and long-term operating philosophy. Staff noted that GLC pricing is competitive within the regional market and currently includes rates of approximately \$30–\$35 per hour depending on the day and time. Committee members discussed future possibilities such as off-peak pricing, promotional opportunities, family-oriented programming, coupons, or reduced-rate access periods once operating patterns become established.

Trustee Sierra emphasized that the District should ultimately develop an accessibility philosophy for the Golf Learning Center similar to other District facilities. Executive Director Cahill agreed that accessibility goals should become part of the facility's long-term operational planning after sufficient usage data has been collected. Staff explained that, because the facility had only recently opened, additional time was needed to evaluate traffic patterns, peak usage periods, and community demand before recommending specific accessibility initiatives.

School Golf Matches and Communications

Staff discussed suggestions to improve communication regarding school golf practices and matches occurring on District golf courses. Future league and scheduling materials will more clearly identify when school teams are utilizing courses so patrons can better understand course availability.

First Tee and Youth Golf Development

The Committee reviewed public comments encouraging affiliation with the First Tee program. Staff explained that First Tee is a nonprofit youth development organization that uses golf to teach life skills, character development, and values.

Discussion focused on the District's current youth golf offerings, including junior golf instruction, scholarship opportunities, the Add-A-Junior program, school partnerships, and PGA Junior League participation. Staff reported strong enrollment in PGA Junior League and noted that additional introductory youth golf opportunities are already available through District programming.

Committee members discussed whether elements of the First Tee model could complement existing programs. Staff agreed to further review the organization and compare its offerings with current District initiatives before making any recommendations.

The Committee also discussed broader opportunities to partner with schools, community organizations, and youth-serving agencies to increase exposure to golf and lifelong recreation opportunities.

Golf Learning Center and The Loop

Staff and Committee members discussed strategies for utilizing the Golf Learning Center as a gateway to golf participation. Staff reported early indications that patrons are using Toptracer technology and subsequently transitioning onto traditional golf courses.

Executive Director Cahill highlighted the importance of "The Loop" short-course facility as an intermediate step between practice and traditional golf. Discussion focused on how The Loop can reduce intimidation, lower time commitments, and provide a more accessible introduction to golf. Staff described a potential progression model in which new participants experience Toptracer activities, move to traditional practice areas, then utilize The Loop before transitioning to full-length golf courses.

Committee members discussed future opportunities for beginner-focused packages, introductory programming, and integrated experiences designed to encourage long-term participation in golf.

Additional Golf Feedback

Trustee Harant requested staff follow up regarding comments she had received concerning golf scorecards and usability concerns. Staff agreed to contact the patron and determine whether any further modifications are warranted.

The Committee also discussed comments regarding personal belongings being left in golf carts due to the dark color of storage compartments. Staff indicated future cart purchases will include color modifications and agreed to evaluate additional visual reminders or other methods to reduce lost property incidents.

Public Input Process and Reporting

Committee members reviewed the process for tracking public comments and providing updates through quarterly reports and online resources. Staff demonstrated how public feedback is currently being documented and discussed opportunities to create more transparent, real-time public-facing updates.

The Committee discussed use of QR codes, website enhancements, and other tools to increase public awareness of feedback opportunities and ongoing responses to community suggestions.

Community Violence Prevention and Strategic Partnerships

Executive Director Cahill provided an update regarding recent discussions with the City of Peoria concerning community violence prevention initiatives. Staff reported that a meeting was being coordinated involving City leadership, Park District leadership, and local law enforcement representatives.

Committee members discussed the importance of establishing a collaborative framework that includes schools, municipal partners, law enforcement agencies, and community organizations. Discussion focused on coordinated responses, communication, legislative advocacy opportunities, and identification of shared community goals.

Staff indicated that feedback received during recent community conversations would be incorporated into a refined presentation outlining potential objectives, partnerships, and next steps before future discussions with City officials occur.

Strategic Planning and Committee Priorities

Trustee Sierra expressed interest in revisiting previously adopted strategic planning documents and ensuring committee work remains aligned with the District's established priorities and commitments.

Executive Director Cahill discussed prior strategic planning efforts, annual work plans, and challenges associated with balancing long-term objectives against emerging community issues and organizational priorities. Committee members discussed reviewing strategic planning materials at a future meeting to evaluate progress and identify programming-related priorities moving forward.

Staff also noted that CAPRA site visitors recently commended the District's extensive public engagement efforts, including the Talk About It Tuesday initiative, and highlighted those efforts as a significant organizational strength.

6. PENDING BUSINESS

None

7. OTHER BUSINESS

None

8. ACTION STEPS REVIEW

- Implementation of revised league schedules identifying nine-hole and eighteen-hole leagues.
- Reinstallation of golf course yardage markers.
- Evaluation of public-facing reporting tools and online feedback tracking.

9. ADJOURNMENT

At 12:18 pm, Trustee Harant MOVED TO ADJOURN. Motion seconded by Executive Director Cahill and carried on a unanimous aye of members present.

Submitted by Alicia Woodworth
Executive Assistant and Board Secretary