

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, MAY 27, 2026 HELD AT THE BONNIE W. NOBLE CENTER FOR PARK DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, 1125 WEST LAKE AVENUE, PEORIA, IL

TRUSTEES PRESENT: Trustees Joyce Harant (v), Reagan Leslie Hill (in at 6:45 PM), Alexander Sierra (in at 6:47 PM), Ron Silver, Mark Slover, Vice President Steve Montez, and President Robert Johnson
Note: (v) = Attended Meeting Electronically

TRUSTEES ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Executive Director Emily Cahill, Brianna Cobb, Nick Conrad, Matt Freeman, Scott Loftus, Shalesse Pie, Karrie Ross, Jennifer Swanson, Willie Howe, Chief Aaron Watkins, Mary Harden, Attorneys Justin Gunn and Jocelyn Arredondo, Austin Detmers, and Alicia Woodworth

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Johnson presided and called the meeting to order at 6:37 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken and all Trustees were present.

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

Trustee Harant requested to attend the meeting electronically due to personal illness. Vice President Montez MOVED TO PERMIT Trustee Harant attend the meeting electronically due to personal illness. Motion seconded by Trustee Silver and carried unanimously on roll call vote.

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 May 13, 2026 Regular Board Meeting

Vice President Montez MOVED TO APPROVE the May 13, 2026 Regular Board Meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Trustee Silver and carried unanimously on roll call vote.

6. SPECIAL RECOGNITION

President Johnson recognized National Peace Officers Memorial Day and Police Week, noting that each year on May 15 the American flag is flown at half-staff in honor of law enforcement officers who have died in the line of duty. He expressed appreciation for the dedication and sacrifices made by police officers and security personnel who serve the community.

President Johnson specifically recognized the four Park District officers who lost their lives in the line of duty during the District's 130-year history:

- Constable Arthur Smith (End of Watch June 12, 1922)
- Constable Charles Devore (End of Watch July 2, 1924)
- Officer David Gold (End of Watch August 4, 1937)
- Officer Charles Barton (End of Watch August 24, 1938)

A moment of reflection was observed in their memory. President Johnson thanked Park District Police and Security personnel for their commitment to protecting park patrons and staff and invited those present to stand and introduce themselves. Officers and security staff shared their names and years of service with the District.

7. CITIZEN REQUEST TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

A RiverPlex patron addressed the Board regarding a theft incident involving her jacket and keys at the RiverPlex. She commended Park District staff, security personnel, and housekeeping staff for their assistance in recovering her property and locating the suspect. She encouraged consideration of additional security measures and improved air circulation along the indoor track during summer months.

8. STAFF REPORTS

8.A. Executive Director

Executive Director Cahill presented the April Key Performance Indicators (KPI) report and reviewed the purpose of the report as a tool to provide the Board with operational performance metrics and organizational updates.

8.B. Chief of Police

Lieutenant Steve Hughes presented the April 2026 Police Report, summarizing department activity and emphasizing the value of proactive patrol and traffic enforcement. He thanked the Board and staff for the opportunity to assist during the department's leadership transition.

9. COMMITTEE REPORTS

No Committee Reports were presented.

10. NEW BUSINESS

10.A. Consideration and Action on a Resolution Expressing Official Intent Regarding Certain Capital Expenditures to be Reimbursed from Proceeds of an Obligation to be Issued by the District

Karrie Ross presented a reimbursement resolution related to the planned Owens Recreation Center renovation project. She explained that the resolution would permit the District, if it chose to do so in the future, to reimburse itself for eligible project expenses paid with existing funds prior to a future bond issuance.

She clarified that adoption of the resolution would not obligate the District to issue bonds, reimburse expenses, or proceed with the project. Rather, it would preserve the District's ability to seek reimbursement for eligible expenditures should a future bond issue occur.

Trustee Silver asked whether the resolution required reimbursement or simply provided the option to do so. Ross confirmed that the resolution only provided the option and imposed no obligation on the District.

Trustee Silver also inquired about the District's current debt levels. Ross reported that approximately \$2.1 million in outstanding debt remained from previous issuances and that the District issued an additional \$5 million in bonds earlier in 2026, resulting in approximately \$7.1 million in total outstanding principal. She noted that the District currently utilizes only a small

portion of its available general obligation bonding authority and remains well below statutory debt limits.

Trustee Sierra asked whether adoption of the reimbursement resolution required the District to reimburse project expenditures or merely preserved the option to do so. Karrie Ross explained that the resolution would preserve the District's ability to reimburse eligible expenditures from future bond proceeds, but would not obligate the District to reimburse itself, issue debt, or proceed with the Owens Recreation Center project. Trustee Sierra also inquired about the District's current debt position and how it compared to similarly sized municipalities. Ross reported that the District currently has approximately \$7.1 million in outstanding principal debt and remains well below its statutory debt capacity, utilizing approximately 14% of its available general obligation bonding authority. Discussion followed regarding the District's historical debt practices and the need for flexibility to incur design, engineering, and other project-related costs prior to any future bond issuance. Ross explained that reimbursement resolutions are commonly used on large capital projects to preserve the ability to recover eligible expenditures from future bond proceeds should the Board later authorize debt financing.

Discussion followed regarding the Owens Recreation Center renovation project. Ross explained that design and development work is already underway and that future project-related expenses may be incurred before a bond issuance occurs. The reimbursement resolution would preserve flexibility to recover those expenditures if the Board later elected to finance the project through bonds.

Trustee Slover MOVED TO APPROVE. Motion seconded by Trustee Silver and carried unanimously on roll call vote.

10.B. HR Policy Updates

Trustee Sierra MOVED TO APPROVE. Motion seconded by Trustee Hill and carried unanimously on roll call vote.

10.C. Public Safety Presentation

Staff presented a public safety strategy focused on activation and engagement, coordinated partnerships, safety technology and operational enhancements, and community communication. The presentation highlighted existing programming, public safety partnerships, deployment of solar-powered security cameras, development of an internal suspension/ejection tracking application, evaluation of traffic patterns and lighting, and future opportunities for youth engagement and volunteer involvement. No Board action was required. A copy of the presentation is attached at the end of these minutes.

11. CALENDAR OF CONSENT ITEMS

11.A. Bid – Markwoodlands Park Improvements

11.B. Bid – Markwoodlands Playground

11.C. Bid – Cassidy Park Tennis Court Repairs

Trustee Sierra requested to pull items 11.A. and 11.B.

Trustee Sierra MOVED TO APPROVE Calendar of Consent Item 11.C. Motion seconded by Trustee Hill and carried unanimously on roll call vote.

Discussion followed regarding the District's DEIA contractor participation goals. Trustee Sierra noted that the contractor was a repeat vendor and referenced prior DEIA Committee discussions regarding mechanisms for encouraging and monitoring contractor compliance with the District's workforce participation goals. Trustee Sierra inquired about the status of those efforts and the process being developed to promote accountability among contractors performing work for the District.

Executive Director Cahill acknowledged the ongoing nature of that work and staff discussed the contractor's current workforce participation information. Staff reported that the contractor met the District's minority workforce participation goals and was slightly below the female workforce participation goal. Discussion also included the District's review of workforce participation data and continued efforts to encourage contractors to meet the goals established by District policy.

Trustee Sierra MOVED TO APPROVE Calendar of Consent Item 11.A. Motion seconded by Trustee Silver and carried unanimously on roll call vote.

Additional discussion occurred regarding Item 11.B and workforce profile reporting requirements for a first-time vendor. Staff explained that the vendor had not previously submitted workforce profile information to the District and therefore would not be subject to the same historical reporting requirements as returning contractors. Staff indicated that the vendor would execute the District's workforce participation commitment and that workforce profile information would be provided to the Board following the meeting. Trustee Sierra indicated that he was comfortable proceeding with approval based on that commitment.

Trustee Sierra MOVED TO APPROVE Calendar of Consent Item 11.B. on condition the company's workforce profile be provided. Motion seconded by Trustee Silver and carried unanimously on roll call vote.

12. PENDING BUSINESS

No Pending Business was presented.

13. COMMUNICATIONS

None at this time.

14. OTHER BUSINESS

None at this time.

15. ACTION STEPS REVIEW

None noted.

16. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:10 PM Trustee Sierra MOVED TO ADJOURN. Motion seconded by Trustee Silver and carried unanimously on voice vote.

Full discussion can be viewed at the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a2vgyxXpR28>

Submitted by Alicia Woodworth
Executive Assistant and Board Secretary



TO: Peoria Park District Board of Trustees
FROM: Emily Cahill, Executive Director of Parks and Recreation
DATE: May 22, 2026
RE: Response to Community Violence Presentation

Staff will provide an overview of the Peoria Park District's developing response framework related to recent incidents of violence affecting our community and, in some cases, occurring within or near park spaces.

The purpose of this presentation is to:

- Clarify the Park District's role within broader community violence prevention efforts
- Identify strategies currently being implemented and explored by the District
- Highlight opportunities for increased partnership, activation, and community engagement
- Share immediate and longer-term actions intended to strengthen positive use of parks and public spaces

The framework recognizes that the Park District is not the sole solution to community violence, but that it does play an important role through:

- active and welcoming public spaces
- youth programming and engagement
- visible presence and relationship-building
- coordination with community partners
- positive activation of parks and recreation facilities

Staff will also share feedback gathered through recent public input discussions and discuss how those conversations have informed the District's approach moving forward.



Peoria Park District Response to Community Violence



**Presence, Prevention,
Partnership and
Appropriate
Enforcement**

What the Park District DOES:

- Provides safe, welcoming public spaces
- Engages youth through programming and opportunity
- Maintains a visible safety presence (police + security)
- Partners with community stakeholders



What the Park District **DOES** NOT **DO ALONE:**

- Serve as the primary law enforcement agency
- Address root causes of violence independently
- Replace the role of schools, families, or the justice system
- STOP COMMUNITY VIOLENCE





Safety in our parks is achieved through a system— in which our police and security teams are a critical part — supported by programming, partnerships, and community presence.



We believe people are more likely to protect spaces where they feel connected, valued, and seen.

SYSTEM PRIORITY ONE: Presence, Activation, and Engagement



SYSTEM PRIORITY ONE: Presence, Activation, and Engagement

GOAL: Ensure that spaces and places are consistently active, welcoming, positively used, and connected to community.



PEORIA PARK DISTRICT

Strategies:

- Maintain clean, well-cared-for spaces
- Expand programming in priority spaces, with a focus on youth engagement
- Strengthen school-to-park connections
- Increase evening and weekend offerings, including mobile recreation
- Foster belonging and positive ownership of parks and public spaces

Why? Safety is strongest when parks are actively used—not just monitored.



What is the PPD doing?

PROGRAMMING and EVENTS



Programming

Summer Camps, Sports, Aquatics,
Environmental Programming, SUMMER
of FUN, Fri-Yays at Glen Oak Park



Community Events

Streets Belong to Me, Parks On Tap,
Rec n Roll, Proctor Pool Party,
Yoga in the Park



Signature Events

Jubilee Day

RiverFront Cultural Festivals



EXPLORE:

- Youth leadership opportunities
- Peer mentorship
- Volunteer pathways
- Park stewardship opportunities
- Neighborhood-based engagement... Rec Centers as Safe Havens



SYSTEM PRIORITY TWO: Coordinate Responses Internally and Externally

GOAL: Align District safety resources with broader community efforts



PEORIA PARK DISTRICT

Strategies:

- Establish regular communication between staff in spaces and places with new Police Chief
- Review and drill emergency action plan responses with PPD team
- Strengthen coordination with City Police Department, County and smaller village/university forces, and Peoria Public Schools School Resource Officers



PEORIA PARK DISTRICT

Strategies:

- Clarify and enhance role of police and security internally and externally
- Increase visible, relationship-based engagement by Park Police and security personnel in parks and facilities

Why? This work will succeed through partnership, not reliance on any one agency.



What is the PPD doing?

**Organizational STRUCTURE
and
COORDINATION**



Structure and Coordination

Reconsider Organizational Chart

- Role of Park Police in larger law enforcement system
- Evaluate staffing levels
- Training coordination



Structure and Coordination

CONNECT

- Collaborate in planning for safe RiverFront Events
- Support readiness in all locations (example: Zoo swatting)



SYSTEM PRIORITY THREE: Use Technology and Park Design to Increase Expectations of Safety

GOAL: Technology must support safer, more connected, and more accountable public spaces.



PEORIA PARK DISTRICT

Strategies:

- Evaluate coordination of technology across jurisdictions
- Consider modifications to spaces to disrupt negative patterns of use
- Implement strategic safety technology (where appropriate)

Why? Thoughtful design and strategic technology help extend visibility, accountability, and responsiveness across our spaces.



Innovation

Mobile Apps to Support Enforcement

- Real-time ejection, notice, and tracking
- Longitudinal accountability

Solar Powered Cameras

- Increases mobility
- Reduces environmental impact



Innovation

Coordination/Collaboration

- Evaluate FUSUS/Flock Coordination and Connection
- Execute IGA with City for joint purchasing of police technology



Physical Spaces

Reconsider:

- Traffic Patterns/Access Points in high use parks
- Lighting in Parks and Facilities
- Other



SYSTEM PRIORITY FOUR: Build Shared Goals and Responsibility for Safety Across our Community

GOAL: Ensure Park District efforts are part of a larger, unified approach



PEORIA PARK DISTRICT

Strategies:

- Engage more actively and intentionally with other local governments
- Participate in community violence prevention efforts
- Align with schools, nonprofits, and City initiatives
- Serve as a connector for community impact on this issue
- Coordinate with other leaders to promote community
 - Highlight active and welcoming park spaces through storytelling and visuals



PEORIA PARK DISTRICT

Strategies:

- Coordinate with other leaders to promote community (cont'd)
 - Promote positive community experiences across parks and programs
 - Reinforce visible staff, security, and police presence through community-centered messaging
 - Focus on encouraging participation and connection rather than fear-based communication



PEORIA PARK DISTRICT

Strategies: Why?

The Park District is a partner and convener—not a silo.

...While these priorities guide our long-term approach, we also recognize the importance of taking immediate, visible action.



What is the PPD doing?

Communication Strategies

- Show, Don't Tell
- Summer Press Conference
- Promote/celebrate activity and engagement



What is the PPD doing?

Peoria POSITIVE!

Belong * Contribute *
Celebrate



Peoria Positive!

Earn points for participation, positive behavior, acts of kindness, leadership, mentorship, volunteerism and positive contributions to parks and community.



Peoria Positive!

The goal is not simply participation—the goal is helping young people feel connected to their parks, their peers, and their community.



EXPLORE:

Community Ambassador and Volunteer Initiatives

Potential roles:

- Welcoming presence in parks
- Event support
- Mentorship
- Neighborhood connection
- Community stewardship



IMMEDIATE (0-90 days) Actions:

- . Prioritize safe summer events and programming targeting youth and families with Summer Starts in the Park campaign.
- . Connect with local government partners and work to identify shared goals
- . Explore Park Ambassador/community stewardship model



IMMEDIATE (0-90 days) Actions

(cont'd):

- Maximize impact of current resources (both staff and technology) internally
 - Determine interest in same analysis externally and support this work
- Review organizational structure and build a staff recommendation for modifications
- Build strategy to make parks physically safer through change and addition of technology.
- Continue public input and community conversations.



Our Commitment

We are committed to building active, welcoming spaces where people feel safe, connected, and valued.

Through programming, partnership, stewardship, and shared responsibility, we will continue working to ensure our parks remain places where positive behavior, belonging, and community are visible, recognized, and reinforced.





Discussion