

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE PLEASURE DRIVEWAY AND PARK DISTRICT OF PEORIA, ILLINOIS HELD AT 10:00 A.M. ON WEDNESDAY, JULY 1, 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, Willie Howe, Tammy Johnson, Spencer Wilson, Mary Harden, Melissa Sierra, and Megan Mally

OTHERS PRESENT: Ann Winget, Ashley Penny, Michelle Dunn Medina

1. CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Harant called the meeting to order at 10:03 am.

2. ROLL CALL

Roll Call was taken.

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 June 3, 2026 Planning Committee Meeting

Trustee Silver MOVED TO APPROVE the minutes of the June 3, 2026 Planning Committee meeting. Motion seconded by Executive Director Cahill and carried unanimously by roll call vote.

5. CITIZEN REQUEST TO ADDRESS THE COMMITTEE

Anne Winget, representing the North Florence Neighborhood Association, requested that the Park District consider acquiring the vacant property at the southeast corner of War Memorial Drive and Sheridan Road for use as a neighborhood dog park and passive open space. She stated that a walkable park would benefit residents who cannot easily travel to larger parks, strengthen neighborhood connections, provide dogs with a safe place to exercise, and preserve open space in a densely developed area.

Ashley Penny, a neighborhood resident, spoke in support of the proposal. She described the area as an active dog-walking neighborhood and suggested that modest amenities, such as a pavilion, chess tables, or shuffleboard, could also provide a gathering place for neighbors and residents of nearby Buehler Home.

Michelle Dunn Medina, a neighborhood resident, also supported the proposal. She stated that the parcel is already viewed by many residents as a natural meeting place for dog owners and would be well suited for a fenced dog park and neighborhood gathering space.

An additional community member later expressed an opposing view on behalf of nearby residents, including her elderly mother, who lives adjacent to the property. She stated that they may support another form of green space but do not support a dog park at that location primarily due to traffic considerations.

6. NEW BUSINESS

6.A. Potential Dog Park at War Memorial Dr and Sheridan Rd

Becky Fredrickson stated that staff reviewed the parcel and advised that the location has been considered on several prior occasions. Staff expressed concerns regarding its proximity to two heavily traveled roads, safe access for dogs and owners, ongoing maintenance needs, the absence of on-site Park District staff, and the cost of acquiring property with potential commercial value.

Ms. Winget responded that prior commercial proposals had faced neighborhood and access concerns and stated that most users of a neighborhood park would walk to the site. She noted that the former parking area could provide separation from Sheridan Road and reiterated the neighborhood's interest in preserving the property as open space.

The Committee did not recommend acquisition of the parcel at this time. Trustee Harant requested a broader public discussion regarding the community's need for additional dog parks, appropriate locations, desired amenities, and associated operating requirements. Staff agreed to schedule a public input meeting during the third quarter of 2026.

6.B. Capital Improvement Process Overview

Executive Director Cahill presented a proposed three-phase capital improvement planning process designed to provide a consistent, transparent, and evidence-based method for identifying, reviewing, scoring, and prioritizing capital projects. Staff-initiated requests would first be submitted through a standardized form and reviewed by supervisors and superintendents. Planning, Design and Construction staff would then evaluate project eligibility, scope, condition, cost, funding opportunities, and operational impacts before projects advance to a scoring committee.

The proposed weighted criteria include public and employee safety, ADA and regulatory requirements, asset preservation, operational impact, community impact and customer experience, equity and access, financial sustainability and funding leverage, sustainability and environmental stewardship, and project readiness.

Committee members discussed the weighting of the criteria, particularly environmental stewardship and community-wide impact; the need for clear definitions; and the value

of pairwise comparison when establishing relative weights. Staff agreed to refine the definitions and confirm the weighting assignments.

Trustee Harant and Trustee Silver agreed to participate in a separately noticed working session with staff to test the scoring framework using sample projects before the process returns to the committee or full Board.

6.C. Implementation Guideline Principles Annual Review

Executive Director Cahill reviewed the required three-year update of the Implementation Guiding Principles. Staff recommended reframing the document as the Park District's master planning framework so its purpose is clearer to trustees, staff, partners, and residents.

The review will include reorganizing the document, clarifying park classifications, confirming that properties are assigned to the appropriate classifications, and incorporating public safety and security considerations. Staff stated that the underlying governance authority and planning philosophy would not materially change.

A revised draft is expected to return to the Planning Committee no later than September 2026 before referral to the Strategy Committee and full Board.

6.D. PlayHouse Construction Timeline

Staff presented an update on planned improvements to the Peoria PlayHouse Children's Museum. The project includes enclosing an additional portion of the rear porch to create a play grocery store and cafe, developing connections to the existing farm exhibit, converting the basement science laboratory into a maker space, and replacing difficult-to-maintain flooring near the water-table exhibit with a non-slip epoxy surface.

Construction is expected to begin in September. The PlayHouse is anticipated to close during September and October because of interior construction and flooring work. Staff will offer PlayHouse programming at other District facilities and community events during the closure. PlayHouse memberships will be extended by two months, and Explore More Pass memberships will be extended by one month.

Staff discussed the historic character of the building and stated that the new enclosure will mirror the existing glassed-in porch while retaining visibility of the original brickwork and historic inscriptions. Project renderings, signage, website information, and member communications are expected to be released in mid-July.

6.E. Owens Center Talk About it Tuesday Overview

Executive Director Cahill reviewed plans for the July 7, 2026 Talk About It Tuesday meeting concerning the Owens Center improvement project. The meeting will be jointly presented as a Programming and Planning Committee public-input opportunity because the project involves both programming and significant capital investment.

Staff will present the site plan, anticipated timeline, and areas of proposed improvement and will gather community questions and feedback while the project remains in the concept stage. Committee members requested that the room arrangement, lighting, display size, and viewing time be planned carefully so attendees can readily review and understand the drawings.

7. PENDING BUSINESS

None at this time.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

Becky Fredrickson reported that the Illinois Department of Transportation anticipates providing property-acquisition documents around September for the portion of Grandview Drive affected by the Route 29 project. The District is awaiting historic-preservation comments before completing bid documents. The current schedule anticipates bidding the pavilion relocation after the first of the year, moving the structure in early 2027, and bidding the remainder of the project later in 2027. A specialty historic-building mover will be required as a subcontractor, and IDOT is expected to advance most of the relocation costs.

Trustee Harant requested a future discussion regarding lighting, interpretation, promotion, and educational opportunities associated with Preston Jackson's Never Extinct sculpture. She suggested considering additional interpretive displays or a walking feature highlighting Indigenous nations connected to the region.

9. ACTION STEPS REVIEW

- Schedule a public-input meeting regarding dog parks during the third quarter of 2026.
- Refine definitions and confirm weights within the capital-improvement evaluation criteria.
- Return a revised master planning framework/Implementation Guiding Principles document to the Planning Committee by September 2026.
- Add a future agenda discussion regarding lighting, interpretation, and promotion of the Never Extinct sculpture.

10. ADJOURNMENT

At 11:06 am, 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

Prepared from the meeting recording and notes taken by Megan Mally, Assistant Secretary