

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE PLEASURE DRIVEWAY AND PARK DISTRICT OF PEORIA, ILLINOIS, HELD AT 6:00 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, JULY 9, 2025 HELD AT THE BONNIE W. NOBLE CENTER FOR PARK DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, 1125 WEST LAKE AVENUE, PEORIA, IL

TRUSTEES PRESENT: Trustees Joyce Harant, Steve Montez, Alexander Sierra, Ron Silver, Mark Slover, Vice President Reagan Leslie Hill, and President Robert Johnson

TRUSTEES ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Executive Director Emily Cahill, Brianna Cobb, Nick Conrad, Scott Loftus, Becky Fredrickson, Matt Freeman, Mike Friberg, Shalesse Pie, Karrie Ross, Jenny Swanson, Kristi Shoemaker, Nicole Staley, Attorney Justin Gunn, Miles Howley, Interim Police Chief Mike Eddlemon, and Alicia Woodworth

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Johnson presided and called the meeting to order at 6:10 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

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

No request to attend the meeting electronically was received.

4. MOMENT OF SILENCE AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

5. MINUTES

5.A. Approval of Minutes of the June 25, 2025 Regular Board Meeting

Trustee Sierra pointed out that on the third page of the June 25, 2025 minutes, the sentence "To suggest that corroborating evidence to support anything is needed, suggests that there is distrust and respect amongst Trustees" the word respect should be replaced with *disrespect*, in order to accurately reflect what he stated. It is to read as such: To suggest that corroborating evidence to support anything is needed, suggests that there is distrust and **disrespect** amongst Trustees."

Trustee Slover pointed out that on the third page of the June 25, 2025 minutes, the sentence "Trustee Slover stated that there is no need for the corroborating evidence, then there's really no reason to have the (waiver of) reimbursement policy included" the word *if* should be inserted, in order to accurately reflect what he stated. It is to read as such: "Trustee Slover stated that **if** there is no need for the corroborating evidence, then there's really no reason to have the (waiver of) reimbursement policy included."

Trustee Sierra MOVED TO APPROVE the Minutes of the June 25, 2025 Regular Board Meeting with the corrections noted above. Motion seconded by Vice President Hill and carried on the following roll call vote: Trustees Harant - Aye, Montez - Aye, Sierra - Aye, Silver - Aye, Slover - Aye, Vice President Hill - Aye, and President Johnson - Aye. (Results: 7 Ayes; 0 Abstain; 0 Nays).

Note: On July 9, 2025 Secretary Woodworth made the requested corrections to the June 25, 2025 Regular Board meeting minutes and distributed and published the corrected minutes.

6. CITIZEN REQUEST TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

None at this time.

7. STAFF REPORTS

7.A. Executive Director

Executive Director Cahill turned to Scott Loftus, who in turn introduced new staff member Courtney Johnson, RiverPlex General Manager. Courtney addressed the Board, stating that she's a Peoria native and very excited and grateful to serve the community working for the Park District at the RiverPlex.

7.B. Superintendent of Planning, Design & Construction

Becky Fredrickson presented the June 2025 Project Report. There are no projects materially behind schedule. *Please see Attachment A.* She highlighted the ribbon cutting of the Lakeview Park Splash Pad will be held on Tuesday, July 22 at 10:30 am. Trustee Sierra inquired about the Gwynn Family Aquatic Center's pool. It appears as though it's under some construction? Becky Fredrickson replied that the pool was temporarily closed due to cloudiness of the water due to an issue with the filtration system, however, it's now been corrected.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

None at this time.

9. NEW BUSINESS

9.A. Police Fund Over Reserve Reallocation

Matt Freeman stated that in October of 2023, Park Board Trustees approved for \$500,000 of Park Police fund over-reserve to be allocated for the following expenses.

• Surveillance Cameras	\$300,000
• Mobile Camera Unit	\$ 39,000
• Speed Trailer	\$ 15,000
• Message Board	\$ 44,000
• Light Towers	\$ 10,000
• Additional security staff vehicle	\$ 55,000
• Bid/Quote Contingency	<u>\$ 37,000</u>
• Not to exceed total:	\$500,000

To date, the District has purchased and received the equipment listed, with the lone exception being the budgeted balance for surveillance cameras. The first location and main infrastructure for the cameras has been deployed for a cost of \$77,031. This leaves a remaining Police over-reserve budget of \$229,969. Over recent weeks with the onset of the busy summer season, the safety and security of Park patrons has been a focal point for analysis and discussion with District staff and Board Trustees to ensure a proactive and comprehensive approach is being deployed.

Staff has identified the need for the capital items listed below to help address some of the emergent needs for Police and Security operations in District parks.

- Police Utility vehicle for Glen Oak Park
- Police Utility vehicle for the Rock Island Greenway and Illinois River Bluff Trail
- (2) Enclosed trailers for the Police utility vehicles

- Dash cameras installed in Rec. Security vehicles
- (2) Mobile light trailers

As such, staff recommends that \$150,000 of the remaining balance of the Police over-reserve budget of \$229,969, be reallocated for the Park District Police Department capital needs listed above. If approved, the remaining balance of Police over-reserve dollars would be \$79,969 to address surveillance camera needs. District staff can also use future issuances of general obligation bonds to pay for surveillance cameras and installations.

Trustee Sierra asked if there is a need for Board approval tonight, to purchase any of the items on the list. Matt Freeman stated that this request is only for approval of the reallocation of funds and that most of the items would come back to the Board for approval to purchase, depending on the price point of each item.

Trustee Sierra MOVED TO POSTPONE this item for the over reserve surplus and have it be directly returned to the next Regular Board as a Whole meeting. Motion seconded by Vice President Hill and FAILED on the following roll call vote: Trustees Harant - Nay, Montez - Nay, Sierra - Aye, Silver - Nay, Slover - Nay, Vice President Hill - Aye, and President Johnson - Aye. (Results: 3 Ayes; 0 Abstain; 4 Nays).

Trustee Sierra stated that he wanted to go on record as saying that based on the last meeting and all other meetings leading up to this, there needs to have some extent some professional courtesy around the horseshoe. What he hopes the Board does not start getting into the practice of doing, which based on the previous vote, he hopes the Board does not get into the practice of politicizing every issue. The three Trustees who just voted to postpone, were literally asking for a few more hours to have further discussion. At some point, Trustees have to start exercising the courtesy of professional courtesy.

Trustee Silver stated that he voted the way he did because all that was being asked was to reallocate the money. Staff is not actually purchasing anything at this point. The real action from the Board comes once staff requests approval to purchase items.

Trustee Slover stated that he doesn't believe there was anything political in this at all. He thinks it was a matter that he was satisfied with the work that staff had done to decide these are the products that staff wants to do to help support the issue of making sure parks are safe. He voted the way he did because he was satisfied with what staff presented and he doesn't want to delay anything if it's not necessary. He's not sure discussing it any further would change things at all. If there are other things the Board wants to do to help make parks safe, then funds can be found to do them. He doesn't believe there was anything political about it at all, at least not in his heart.

Trustee Harant stated that she concurs with Trustee Silver. It's not political, it's just a difference of opinion.

Trustee Harant MOVED TO APPROVE the Police Fund Over Reserve Reallocation. Motion seconded by Trustee Silver and carried on the following roll call vote: Trustees Harant - Aye, Montez - Aye, Sierra - Aye, Silver - Aye, Slover - Aye, Vice President Hill - Aye, and President Johnson - Aye. (Results: 7 Ayes; 0 Abstain; 0 Nays).

10. CALENDAR OF CONSENT ITEMS

10.A. Bid – Solar at Glen Oak Park Maintenance Building

10.B. Bid – Paths at Charter Oak Park

10.C. Bid: Stormwater Improvements at Grandview Drive

Trustee Harant requested to pull item 10.A.

Trustee Sierra MOVED TO APPROVE Calendar of Consent Items 10.B. and 10.C. Motion seconded by Vice President Hill and carried on the following roll call vote: Trustees Harant -Aye, Montez - Aye, Sierra - Aye, Silver - Aye, Slover - Aye, Vice President Hill - Aye, and President Johnson - Aye. (Results: 7 Ayes; 0 Abstain; 0 Nays).

In regards to item 10.A., Trustee Harant wanted to highlight the solar at Glen Oak Park's maintenance building. It's very extraordinary that the Park District is taking this first step. Becky Fredrickson stated that the solar panels that will be placed on the Glen Oak Park service building will be owned by the Park District. Partial funding is coming from the Energy Transition Grant. The electricity that will be produced will help provide adequate power for the electric train as well as the service building and hay shed.

Trustee Silver asked if more electricity is produced from the solar, can it be sold back to Ameren? Becky Fredrickson stated yes, it'll go back through the meter.

Trustee Harant MOVED TO APPROVE Calendar of Consent Item 10.A. Motion seconded by Trustee Silver and carried on the following roll call vote: Trustees Harant -Aye, Montez - Aye, Sierra - Aye, Silver - Aye, Slover - Aye, Vice President Hill - Aye, and President Johnson - Aye. (Results: 7 Ayes; 0 Abstain; 0 Nays).

11. PENDING BUSINESS

None at this time.

12. COMMUNICATIONS

None at this time.

13. OTHER BUSINESS

Trustee Sierra stated that he would like to address the Fiesta en el Rio activity that had occurred, and read the following statement: "On June 25th, leaders of Peoria's Hispanic community came to the Peoria Park District with two clear thoughtful requests. First, to cancel the 2025 Fiesta en el Rio event, and second, to do so quietly without public comment to avoid creating division or drawing attention to an already sensitive issue. The Park District agreed to honor those requests, initially. Unfortunately, that initial commitment was not upheld. After the Peoria Journal Star published an article listing upcoming events which included Fiesta en el Rio, staff reached out to correct the record. In doing so, the District issued a public statement that read the following: *After careful consideration, the Peoria Park District has made the difficult decision to cancel the 2025 Fiesta en el Rio event due to the current political climate surrounding immigration.* That response was not only public, it also named immigration and politics as the reason for cancellation, which was not agreed upon nor was it cleared with at least the same community members who made the initial request of us. As a result, this was a failure of process communication and trust. And that failure had real consequences. Our comment sparked confusion, incited fear, and created an environment where hatred was embodied. Community members who asked us for discretion are now carrying the weight of a public controversy they sought to avoid. That is not only disappointing, but harmful. And I think we should do better. So as a result of this, I'm asking

for three things. I'm asking for a review of our internal practices as it pertains to responding to sensitive issues like this. I'm asking for some corrective action, and I'm also asking for some collective community healing. As it pertains to the first one, I believe that we should have a full review of the internal decision-making process and communication breakdown that led up to the release of the public comment without community approval. I do want to say on the record, I've had that conversation with Emily and Emily has not only acknowledged that, but has committed to doing that. The second thing that I want to ask for is for us, and I think we may be doing with Brianna (Cobb) our Director of Equity and Inclusion, for us to consider some sort of mandatory training that all staff involved in external communications, particularly when those communications intersect with culturally sensitive topics consider. And this includes addressing protocols and consulting impacted community leaders before any public response is issued. The third thing is a commitment that I've already started working on but I really want to work on with this full Board, which is for us to work with the Hispanic community and the leaders to schedule some sort of dialogue to listen, rebuild trust, and ensure that they request and respect and perspectives are heard and adhered to. This is about restoring relationships that we unfortunately damaged. And lastly, I think we all can agree that we remain committed to standing with not standing over and serving alongside the communities that have put us in these seats. I do believe that we can rebuild stronger, but we have to rebuild nonetheless."

President Johnson stated that he won't go into discussion at this time, but there are some things that he does disagree with.

14. ACTION STEPS REVIEW

Trustee Sierra stated that the only things he asks for in action steps review are his three requests that he made in his statement just now. They are a review of the internal processes as it relates to pushing out public responses, and the Board figuring out how they have some collective dialogue with the same leaders of the Hispanic community who made the original request of the Board. President Johnson stated that they should go through the Strategy Ad Hoc Committee as there are a lot of things in Trustee Sierra's statement that he does not agree with. The Board as a Whole needs to discuss before making them action steps.

15. ADJOURNMENT

At 6:43 pm Trustee Harant MOVED TO ADJOURN. Motion seconded by Trustee Sierra and carried by unanimous aye of those present.

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

Respectfully Submitted by Alicia Woodworth
Executive Assistant and Board Secretary

PLANNING, DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION DIVISION
MONTHLY PROJECT REPORT
JUNE 2025

[illegible]

PROJECTS IN PLANNING AND/OR DESIGN	PROJECTS OUT TO BID/QUOTE	PROJECTS UNDER CONSTRUCTION	PROJECTS MATERIALLY BEHIND SCHEDULE	COMPLETED PROJECTS
RiverPlex Whirlpool Replace RiverPlex Arena Curtains & Motors Sommer Farm Living History Utility Improv. Stadium #2 Expand Infield for 80' Bases Zoo Giraffe Browse				