



PARK DISTRICT of OAK PARK

**Park District of Oak Park
Administration and Finance Committee
Budget Session Meeting
John Hedges Administrative Center
218 Madison Street, Oak Park, Illinois 60302**

Thursday, October 9, 2025

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:30pm.

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Lentz, Onayemi, Wollmuth, Worley-Hood and President Porreca.

Park District Staff Present: Jan Arnold, Executive Director; Mitch Bowlin, Director of Business Operations; Arlene Pedroza, Finance Manager; Patti Staley, Director of Horticulture & Conservatory; Bill Hamilton, Superintendent of Properties & Planning; Nelson Acevedo, Director of Parks & Facilities; Paula Bickel, Director of Human Resources; Joe Marotta, Risk Manager; Maureen McCarthy, Deputy Director of Recreation; Mike Baiardo, Superintendent of Special Facilities; Ann Marie Buczek, Director of Marketing & Community Engagement; Melissa Penney, Marketing Supervisor; Chad Druke, Program & Operations Manager; Keith Kerrigan, Program & Operations Manager; Megan Ulczak, Arts & Lifelong Learning Senior Program Supervisor; Susan Crane, Historic Properties & Special Events Manager; Roger Oney, Parks & Facilities Supervisor; and Karen Gruszka, Executive Assistant.

II. VISITOR/PUBLIC COMMENTS – None

III. BUDGET PARAMATERS

Executive Director Arnold and Mitch Bowlin provided the Board with strategic initiatives that would be discussed during the meeting and then reviewed the 2026 Budget Snapshot. A few items brought to the attention of the Board included increasing scholarship needs, a transfer from the Capital Fund to the Special Recreation fund, and the addition of two new full-time positions (Special Facilities Coordinator and a Parks and Planning Custodian), both converting from existing IMRF part-time positions.

Mitch began the budget overview explaining the movement of certain expenses to new lines and that operating transfers to capital remain at \$3 million annually (in addition to property tax transfer which increases with CPI). Future projections will not include further minimum wage increase after 2025. He went on to remind the Board that the Tax Limitation Law sets rate increase at lessor of previous years CPI or 5%, plus allowance for EAV growth. Based on need, staff are requesting a 5.36% tax increase, which is an estimated annual increase of \$5.95 per \$100,000 of fair market value. The Board deliberated on their thoughts and concerns with the 5.36% tax increase. They felt there were projects that could be pushed back and other ways to make up differences with a 4.4% tax increase. Staff noted that fees for programs and the CRC had not been raised annually, share costs for WSSRA increasing, scholarship needs continuing to grow, while costs in all aspects of programing as well as projects are increasing. Discussion took place on different tactics should the increase be the 4.4% and impacts to services that may occur and ways to address the impacts.

IV. BUDGET DISCUSSIONS

The 2026 budget presentation was presented by staff including the following: Corporate Administration, Conservatory, Parks and Planning, IMRF, Liability, Audit, Museum Fund, Special Recreation, Health Insurance Fund, and Capital Projects, Recreation Fund (Recreation Administration, Communication and Marketing, Sports, General Recreation, and Guest Services); Special Facilities Fund (Special Facilities Administration, Aquatics, Ice Arenas, Gymnastics, CRC, Maintenance); Historic Properties Fund, and the Budget & Appropriation Ordinance. Departmental goals were presented during each presentation including: increased trainings, technology/fire alarms/HVAC upgrades, raised vegetable beds at Cheney Mansion, landscape improvements, an asset management plan, resurfacing of sports courts, ADA additions, additional programs/leagues/tournaments/special events, and repairs needed at facilities and to equipment. It was noted that appropriations are set at 115% of budgeted expenses as a contingency to avoid needing a budget amendment for unforeseen events. However, staff work off of the approved budget figures as presented. Questions were asked by the Board throughout the budget presentation/goals and they received answers by the presenting staff.

Executive Director Arnold confirmed with the Board the two full-time positions so staff could move forward. The Board asked if the delay in second installment tax bills from the County was a concern yet for staff and Mitch replied that while it is a concern that there is no timeline established for the bills to go out, existing fund balances are still sufficient and the District remains in a strong financial position.

The next steps will include the Budget and Appropriation Ordinance to be placed on table for a minimum of 30 days. The Truth in Taxation Hearing is scheduled for November 6, 2025, just prior to the Committee of the Whole Meeting, followed by the Budget and Appropriation Ordinance Hearing on November 20, 2025, just prior to the Regular Board Meeting. Lastly, the Tax Levy and Budget passage will be requested at the November Regular Board Meeting after the hearing.

The President Porreca informed the Board if they had any questions about the evenings presentations/discussion to reach out to her individually for one-on-ones.

V. NEW BUSINESS – None

VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION – None

VII. ADJOURNMENT

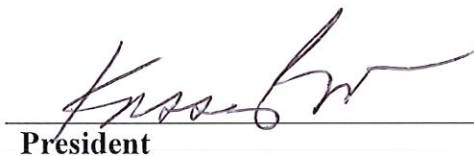
A motion was made by Commissioner Lentz and seconded by Commissioner Wollmuth to adjourn the meeting at 9:01pm. **The motion was passed with a voice vote of 5:0.**



Secretary
Board of Park Commissioners

November 20, 2025

Date



President
Board of Park Commissioners

November 20, 2025

Date