



PARK DISTRICT of OAK PARK

**Park District of Oak Park
Committee of the Whole Meeting
John Hedges Administrative Center
218 Madison Street
Oak Park, Illinois 60302**

Thursday, November 6, 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; Maureen McCarthy, Deputy Director of Recreation; Bill Hamilton, Superintendent of Properties & Planning; Mitch Bowlin, Director of Business Operations; Ann Marie Buczek, Director of Marketing & Community Engagement; Nelson Acevedo, Director of Parks & Facilities; Arlene Pedraza, Finance Manager; Roger Oney, Parks & Facilities Supervisor; and Karen Gruszka, Executive Assistant.

Others: Dr. Ebony Lofton, D97.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT - None.

III. PUBLIC HEARING – Truth in Taxation Act Tell Jan

The Public Hearing for the Truth in Taxation Act was called to begin by President Porreca. Executive Director Arnold reminded the Board that the Park District is required to approve a property tax levy ordinance annually and the ordinance must be filed with the Cook County Clerk no later than the last Tuesday in December. By law, a Truth in Taxation Hearing must be held for any increase over 5% but as a good practice, the PDOP holds a hearing every year. The Tax Levy Ordinance provides the funds for the next years' operations. There are two main limiting factors to the District's taxing power: rate limits and the PTELL tax cap. The IMRF and Liability funds are the only funds that do not have rate limits. All funds are subject to the tax cap except for the Special Recreation Fund. Rate limits mean the tax line in question may not exceed a certain percentage of the total equalized assessed valuation (EAV) of the District. Program costs will be increased in 2026. For tax year 2025 staff were directed to increase this year's tax levy by 2.9% to capture CPI and to elect the 1.5% allowance for EAV growth for a total of 4.4%. That means there will be an approximate \$4.89 increase per \$100,000 of EAV. No public comment was made during the public hearing. No additional questions were asked by the Board. The Public Hearing for the Truth in Taxation Act was adjourned to the Committee of the Whole Meeting.

IV. RECREATION AND FACILITY PROGRAM COMMITTEE

- A. Summer Camp Partnership - Dr. Ebony Lofton, D97 Update - Maureen McCarthy joined Dr. Lofton to share highlights of the past two years of partnering between the PDOP and the School District. Dr. Lofton shared a report with the Board of the results which they are



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excited about as they strive to make sure all demographics are joining and want the families to have the ability to sign-up and qualify for financial assistance. She stated that she works closely with Scott Sekulich, who handles all of the PDOP's financial assistance and that no child or family member with financial aid looks any different than any other registrant in any program. The Board asked if there was a map of the demographics broken down by area of Oak Park, it could be very informative as we want to be in the position to offer the most we can and there may be areas that need to be looked at further. Also discussed was a possible survey to financially assisted families/children who don't take advantage of some of our programs to see why and what can be offered differently. The Board thanked Dr. Lofton.

V. ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

- A. Working Budget – Departmental Goals 2026 – The Board was reminded that staff develop departmental goals based on the Park District's strategic goals. The goals are developed prior to staff working on the financial aspect of the budget. The working budget was presented to the Board on October 9 and October 16. **This item will be brought before the Board on the Consent Agenda at the November Regular Board Meeting.**
- B. 2025 Tax Year Levy – Abatement Ordinance for the 2019 Bonds – It was noted that the Park District issued a General Obligations Refunding Park Bonds Series 2019 October 2019 reissued from the original bond from 2011. The Park District will need to adopt an annual property tax abatement ordinance that abates or eliminates the property tax levy to be collected for payment on the General Obligations Refunding Park Bonds Series 2019. **This item will be brought before the Board on the Consent Agenda at the November Regular Board Meeting.**
- C. 2025 Tax Year Levy – Abatement Ordinance for the 2020 Bonds – Mitch Bowlin noted that the Park District issued a General Obligations Refunding Park Bonds Series 2020 on October 2020 reissued from the original bond 2012/2013. The Park District will need to adopt an annual property tax abatement ordinance that abates or eliminates the property tax levy to be collected for payment on the General Obligations Refunding Park Bonds Series 2020. **This item will be brought before the Board on the Consent Agenda at the November Regular Board Meeting.**
- D. 2026 Budget and Appropriation Ordinance – Mitch Bowlin noted that the Park District is required to adopt a Budget and Appropriations Ordinance (B&A) and file it with the County Clerk within 30 days of its approval. A public hearing notice will be published in the Oak Leaves and the public hearing will be held on November 21. The Budget and Appropriation Ordinance was increased by 15% to manage the budgetary lines and staff work off of the document shown to the Board at the Budget Meeting on October 9. The Board questioned how often/what percentage of these lines go over their budget amounts to which Mitch Bolen responded that actually most do at different times but that the fund level does not and that is where it would become problematic and an adjustment would need to be made. **This item will be brought before the Board on the Regular Agenda at the November Regular Board Meeting.**



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- E. Credentials Certificate for the IAPD Annual Meeting – Executive Director Arnold noted that on a yearly basis, IAPD hosts its annual meeting in conjunction with the IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference which will be held in January 2026. All member agencies must pass a resolution on credentials and return it to IAPD to ensure delegates can vote at the Annual Meeting. The Board designated Sandy Lentz as the commissioner to attend the Annual Meeting as well as three alternates. **This item will be brought before the Board on the Consent Agenda at the November Regular Board Meeting.**

VI. PARK AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

- A. Longfellow Park Improvements Bid Update – Bill Hamilton informed the Board that five bids were received and were opened on October 30. The low, responsible bidder was Hacienda, whom we have worked with before and who also are currently completing Andersen Park. The Hacienda bid came in under budget at \$1,343,202.90 for the base bid along with the alternate 1 coming in at \$35,201.00. Planning Resources Inc. are the professional services on the project. The Board confirmed what made the differences in costs of the other bids received and were happy there were three that were relatively close in costs. **This item will be brought to the Board on the Regular Agenda at the November Regular Board Meeting.**
- B. Taylor Park Electric Relocation Bid Update – The Board was informed that we did not receive any bids. The PDOP is looking for options, and the project is moving to 2026. **No Board actions are required on this item at this time.**
- C. Maintenance Software Update – Staff have been working on this need for approximately the past 6-9 months and have had companies come out for demonstrations. While staff gathered all the PDOP needs/work required and after meeting with each company, Maintain X has been chosen to be the best fit for the District. The Board discussed what the maintenance software would do and questioned whether we have had any software companies previously. They were informed yes, the PDOP has worked with a company in the past, but needs had changed as well as staff weren't aware of all that the department needed/could use the system for in the past but moving forward, are excited for these new abilities and the staff hours saved from manually entering information. The Board also questioned whether Maintain X had worked with other park districts, and it was confirmed they had worked with a few as well as having between 11-12,000 users in general. **This item will be brought to the Board on the Regular Agenda at the November Regular Board Meeting.**
- D. First Amendment to Parkway Construction Agreement VOP-PDOP Cheney Mansion Parkway – Executive Director Arnold informed the Board that this summer the PDOP became aware of bluestone sidewalk around Cheney Mansion that we were responsible for. The PDOP immediately contacted the Village and began the process to relinquish the responsibility. In the meantime, all bluestone slate has been removed and replaced with concrete. This Amendment is on their consent agenda on Tuesday, November 11. The PDOP will still have the responsibility of the sign and lights. The Board questioned if the bluestone was anywhere else in the park district and was told that it had been at the



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Conservatory but is no longer there. **This item will be brought to the Board on the Regular Agenda at the November Regular Board Meeting.**

VII. NEW BUSINESS – None

VIII. CLOSED SESSION – None

IX. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:02pm, the Committee of the Whole meeting was adjourned. **The motion was passed with a voice vote of 5:0.**



Secretary
Board of Park Commissioners

December 18, 2025

Date



President
Board of Park Commissioners

December 18, 2025

Date