

**PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES OF THE DECENNIAL COMMITTEE MEETING
OCTOBER 25, 2023**

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m. President Grossberg

A motion was made by Vice President Freeman, seconded by President Grossberg to allow Commissioner Kaplan to participate by electronic means.

Roll Call:

Aye: Vice President Freeman, President Grossberg, Resident Committee Member Jean Sogin, Resident Committee Member Hania Fuschetto, Resident Committee Member Rafael Labrador

Nay: None

Absent: Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Ruttenberg

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioner Kaplan, Vice President Freeman, President Grossberg, Resident Committee Member Jean Sogin, Resident Committee Member Hania Fuschetto, Resident Committee Member Rafael Labrador

Absent: Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Ruttenberg

Staff Present: Executive Director Romes; Director Peters; Director Gogola; Director Voss; Director Hall; Coordinator Hejnowski

Guest Speakers: None

APPROVAL OF THE DECENNIAL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 27, 2023

A motion was made by Vice President Freeman, seconded by Resident Committee Member Hania Fuschetto to approve the Decennial Committee Meeting Minutes from September 27, 2023.

Roll Call:

Aye: Commissioner Kaplan, Vice President Freeman, President Grossberg, Resident Committee Member Jean Sogin, Resident Committee Member Hania Fuschetto, Resident Committee Member Rafael Labrador

Nay: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None.

REVIEW PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK TRANSPARENCY TO THE COMMUNITY

Executive Director Romes reviewed section seven of the Park District of Highland Park's Efficiency Report, highlighting the importance and benefits of transparency and listing types of information that is readily available to the general public and where/how it can be obtained. He noted that transparency promotes accountability and provides information for the citizens about what the Park District is doing. By being transparent in its operations, the Park District of Highland Park builds trust, demonstrates integrity and instills confidence that the park district is operating in the best interests of the community.

Additionally, the Park District offers residents many opportunities to provide feedback to Park District staff and the Park Board of Commissioners, this includes public hearings, open houses, community surveys, park listening sessions. Meetings, surveys, and listening sessions are generally held for property development such as playground renovations or specific capital projects. Meeting, survey, and listening session notifications/invitations are shared through neighborhood mailers and email newsletters. Information is also available on the park District website. He shared a list of notable projects and program/special event specific surveys which public feedback was obtained over the past three years.

Resident Committee Member Hania Fuschetto, asked if public meetings were held for the Park Avenue Breakwater and Boat Ramp Project and the Development of the Preserve? Additionally, she would like more information regarding the survey's vs a bulleted list.

Resident Committee Member Jean Sogin and Resident Committee Member Rafael Labrador would like the report to acknowledge long-term/ongoing committee representative vs one-off meetings. When listing the notable groups/committees describe the intent/purpose.

President Grossberg and Vice President Freeman recommended going back five years to provide a more comprehensive list of projects and to include open houses, park listening sessions, and neighborhood mailers.

REVIEW PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Executive Director Romes reviewed section eight of the Park District of Highland Park's Efficiency Report, highlighting awards and recognition the District has received over the past five years, this includes industry leader awards, financial recognition, program, event. And facility recognition, marketing awards by the Illinois Parks and Recreation Association and Professional staff recognition. Overall, awards and recognition serve as benchmarks for excellence and encourage continuous improvement. Awards and recognition also contribute to building a positive image of the park district as an industry leader, boosting

the community's confidence in the district, and promoting internal morale that helps attract the best talent to the organization.

The Committee requested the report include a description and the significance of each award. Additionally, they would like all the awards and recognition listed on the Park District website included in the report.

REVIEW PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK BENEFITS AND SERVICES

Executive Director Romes reviewed section nine of the Park District of Highland Park's Efficiency Report, highlighting the benefits and services that come from having a separate unit of local government dedicated to providing recreational opportunities to the community. The Park District of Highland Park has 9 unique facilities, 4 lakefront properties, 350 acres of natural areas, 44 parks with 39 playgrounds, 15 miles of walking/biking paths, 32 indoor/outdoor tennis courts, 18 indoor/outdoor pickleball courts, 16 basketball courts, 29 athletic fields, and 2-off leash dog parks and a dog beach. Additionally, in 2022, the Park District offered 2,634 programs with 18,154 participants in 2022. District records also indicate that 9,946 households used the district's parks and facilities. Lastly, the Park District offers a slew of additional services including partnering with local non-profit to host collection drives to support those in need in Highland Park, Highwood, and neighboring communities.

Overall, the Park District's parks, recreational programming, and other opportunities improve the community's overall physical and mental health and wellness, provide safe, convenient, and affordable childcare options for working families, and environmental and economic benefits to the community.

Resident Committee Member Fuschetto requested that under the section pertaining to grants, staff update the report so that there is a description of how the grant funds were used to support each project.

All three Resident Committee Members requested that staff update the report so that the section four, the general overview of governing statues, ordinances, rules, procedures, powers, and jurisdiction, provide more details about the District, specifically how many people the districts serve, total assets, and budgetary figures (total annual budget, amount dedicated to projects and programs).

Resident Committee Member Rafael Labrador requested breaking out the lakefront facilities into 4 bullets in the report, and a more detailed description of each property.

Resident Committee Member Hania Fuschetto requested that all ADA accessible facilities be noted in the report, specifically any facilities that received a significant renovation.

Resident Committee Member Rafael Labrador would like brief descriptions next to each program bullet in the report.

Resident Committee Member Jean Sogin would like to know out of the Highland Park population, how many residents participate in Park District programs. Possibly how many NSSD112 and District 113 students are enrolled in PDHP programs.

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Resident Committee member Hannia Fuschetto and Rafale Labrador would like the report to better showcase how parks and recreation improve the community's overall physical and mental health and wellness.

SURVEY OF RESIDENTS IN ATTENDANCE FOR INPUT ON MATTERS DISCUSSED IN THE MEETING OF THE PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK'S DECENNIAL COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY

No residents attended October 25, 2023, Meeting of the Decennial Committee.

Executive Director Romes reported that a revised copy of the DRAFT report will be submitted to the Committee along with the Meeting Minutes for review prior to the upcoming meeting.

NEXT MEETING OF THE DECENNIAL COMMITTEE

Executive Director Romes reported that the next meeting of the Decennial Committee is Wednesday, November 8, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Kaplan, seconded by Commissioner Vice President Freeman, and approved by a unanimous vote. The Decennial Committee Meeting adjourned at 5:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxanne Hejnowski

Roxanne Hejnowski, Assistant Secretary