

**PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES OF THE DECENNIAL COMMITTEE MEETING
NOVEMBER 8, 2023**

The meeting was called to order at 5:02 p.m. President Grossberg.

Commissioner Bernstein joined the meeting at 5:22 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: President Grossberg, Commissioner Ruttenberg, Resident Committee Member Jean Sogin, Resident Committee Member Hania Fuschetto, Resident Committee Member Rafael Labrador

Absent: Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Kaplan, Vice President Freeman

Staff Present: Executive Director Romes; Director Gogola; Director Voss; Director Smith, Manager Ochs, Coordinator Hejnowski

Guest Speakers: None

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Executive Director Romes reported that An updated version of the working draft of the Efficiency Report for the Park District of Highland Park was shared with the Decennial Committee on November 3, 2023.

Resident Committee Member, Jean Sogin, shared additional recommendations for increased transparency with me this week. As a result, the following recommendations will be added to the working draft of the Efficiency Report Under Section 10: Recommendations for Increased Accountability and Efficiency, Opportunities for Increased Transparency.

1. The Park District of Highland Park presents monthly financials at the Regular Meeting of the Park Board of Commissioners, this includes the treasures report, revenue and expense charts for every cost center, and financial forecasts. This information is readily available on the Park District website; however, it's buried in the board packet or minutes. It is recommended that this information be listed on the park district website under Financial Information for increased transparency.
2. The Park District of Highland Park lists full-time and part time employee salary ranges in the annual budget book, which is readily available on the park district website. It is recommended that the annual budget book and park district website lists full-time and part-time employee salary ranges.
3. The Park District of Highland Park staff directory is readily available on the park district website; however, it is difficult to locate. Website edits are recommended for increased transparency. In addition, the Park District Organization Chart is included in the Annual Budget. For increased transparency, it was also recommended that this be placed on the Park District website.

4. The budget book includes the number of annual full-time employees of the Park District. It is recommended that the Park District also include this on the website and add the number of full-time equivalents that work on a seasonal basis for increased transparency.

Resident Committee Member Labrador would like to take resident Committee Members Sogin's a step further with readily available contact information on the website for program, facility, and park specific questions.

Executive Director Romes reported there is a "Help and Frequently Asked Questions" page pertaining to programs and registration information on the park district website, however staff will consider website edits for increased transparency.

APPROVAL OF THE DECENNIAL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 25, 2023

A motion was made by Resident Committee Member Hania Fuschetto, seconded by Resident Committee Member Jean Sogin to approve the Decennial Committee Meeting Minutes from October 25, 2023.

Roll Call:

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

Nay: None

Absent: Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Kaplan, Vice President Freeman

Abstain: Commissioner Ruttenberg

Motion Carried

REVIEW PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INCREASED ACCOUNTABILITY AND EFFICIENCY

Executive Director Romes reviewed section ten of the Park District of Highland Park's Efficiency Report, listing recommendations to promote increased accountability and efficiency in government. Considerations include the elimination of fees and charges assessed by other units of government onto the Park District (one unit of local government should not profit by taxing another), improving the process to secure permits to prevent construction delays, improving the grant agreements process to prevent delays in funding, modifying unfunded state mandates, specifically, reducing the costs for the park district to run criminal background checks on employees, limit the prevailing wage requirements to larger capital contracts, and eliminate newspaper publication notices.

Resident Committee Member Hania Fuschetto recommends if various Districts recognize and share our proposed changes, to list those agencies in the report.

Commissioner Ruttenberg recommends only listing intergovernmental fees and charges if the unit of local government charging the fee profits from it.

Resident Committee Member Jean Sogin would like the Illinois Association of Park Districts and/or Illinois Parks and Recreation Association to review agency websites and reference the most transparent websites.

Director Gogola reported that Illinois agencies are recognized for their marketing and communication efforts ranging from print to multimedia at the Annual Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD) and Illinois Parks and Recreation (IPRA) Soaring to New Heights Conference. The conference holds the unique distinction of being the largest state park and recreation conference in the nation. The conference brings together thousands of professionals, Commissioners, and elected officials from around the state for three exciting days of quality educational programming, networking, and professional development. In 2022, the Park District of Highland Park's website received first place. Awards and recognition dating back to 2015 are readily available on the Park District's website.

Resident Committee Member Jean Sogin would also like the Park District of Highland Park and the City of Highland Park to share TIFF discussions on the park district website.

Commissioner Ruttenberg reported that TIFF discussions are held in public meetings. Meeting agendas, minutes, and recordings are readily available on the park district website.

Executive Director Romes reported that staff can look at the park district website and possibly find a better location to house this information.

REVIEW PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK OTHER

Executive Director Romes reported that Section Eleven is an opportunity for the Committee to list any other ideas or suggestions that demonstrate that a park district is the most efficient and transparent form of local government to provide park, recreation, and conservation services.

Resident Committee Member Rafael Labrador would like to update Section Six: Other Examples of Efficient Operations to showcase the benefits of the Parks Foundation of Highland Park. The current language focuses more on operations.

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 November 8, 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, December 13, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.

Decennial Committee Meeting Minutes
November 8, 2023

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Ruttenberg, seconded by Resident Committee Member Rafael Labrador, and approved by a unanimous vote. The Decennial Committee Meeting adjourned at 5:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxanne Hejnowski

Roxanne Hejnowski, Assistant Secretary