

**PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES OF WORKSHOP MEETING
NOVEMBER 12, 2025**

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. President Grossberg.

ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioner Greenberg, Commissioner Beck, Commissioner Labrador, Vice President Freeman, President Grossberg

Absent: None

Staff Present: Executive Director Romes; Director Smith; Director Peters; Director Voss; Director Gogola; Director Baird; Assistant Director Soto; Manager Schwartz; Manager Kutscheid; Coordinator Hejnowski

Guest Speaker: None

Commissioner Labrador joined the meeting at 6:08 p.m.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

None.

CAPITAL PLAN PRESENTATION

Director Smith and Director Peters reported that the Five-Year Capital Plan and Ten-Year Funding Model were reviewed in detail at the September 10 Finance Committee Meeting.

Director Peters reviewed the budget timeline. The Public Hearing for the Tax Levy will be in December 2025. The Public Hearing to approve the Budget will be in January 2026.

Director Smith reviewed the capital plan prioritization tiers, noting that tiers 1-3 are safety and legal compliance, critical repairs, and scheduled replacements (highest priority), tiers 4-5 are improving existing items and new items, and tier 6 are unbudgeted items. Director Smith shared a graph showcasing the amount budgeted for tiers 1-3, tiers 4-5, and the total budget (tiers 1-5) over the next 5 years (through 2030). There was also a column for tier 6 unbudgeted projects.

Director Smith shared budgeted funds for tiers 1-5 from 2025 – 2030. There is \$9,682,645 budgeted in 2026 to cover tier 1-5 projects.

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Director Peters reviewed the Capital Plan Ten-Year Funding Model for tiers 1-5, highlighting annual transfers to the capital fund and debt issuance years (2028, 2031, and 2034). Staff are recommending transferring \$3,075,000 from the Recreation Fund and \$600,000 from the Special Recreation Fund to the Capital Fund on December 31, 2025.

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION 2025-16 GRANTING A NONEXCLUSIVE EASEMENT FOR STORM WATER UTILITIES

Director Smith reported that Ahmedjan Properties LLC and Fahsaf Properties LLC are planning to construct a home at 2628 Roslyn Circle in Highland Park, adjacent to Port Clinton Park. They have approached the Park District, requesting a stormwater easement in a portion of the ravine in Port Clinton Park to allow for the construction of a stormwater conveyance line discharging into the ravine in order to meet City of Highland Park permitting requirements.

The proposed easement agreement would allow for construction and operation of the utility, require restoration of the affected area, allow for repairs, and require the property owner be responsible for maintenance.

Staff presented an aerial image of the site to illustrate that the proposed construction and completed work would not impact Port Clinton Park.

A motion was made by Commissioner Labrador, seconded by Commissioner Beck to approve Resolution 2025-16 Granting a Nonexclusive Easement for Storm Water Utilities.

Roll Call:

Aye: Commissioner Greenberg, Commissioner Beck, Commissioner Labrador, Vice President Freeman, President Grossberg

Nay: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Executive Director Romes reported that staff and the Park Board met with the Lakota Group on November 8 to review and identify key Master Planning priorities related to Capital Development Projects, Capital Improvement Projects, Planning Initiatives, and Operational Goals.

REVIEW PDHP POLICY MANUAL REVISIONS (CHAPTERS 3 - 6)

Executive Director Romes reported that, pursuant to Policy 1.00 of the PDHP Policy Manual, the manual of Board-approved policies governing Park District operations must be reviewed at least once every five years. Staff completed a comprehensive review and incorporated appropriate revisions, which were subsequently reviewed by legal counsel, Ancel Glink, for consistency with the Park District Code and current statutory requirements.

Staff and Park Board Commissioners reviewed and discussed proposed revisions to Policies 3.00–3.28 (Financials), 4.00–4.25 (General Policies), 5.00–5.15 (Recreation and Facilities), and 6.00–6.04 (Information Technologies) during Policy Committee Meetings. Committee liaisons provided recommendations, which were reviewed by legal counsel for compliance.

A summary of proposed policy changes was distributed to the Park Board prior to tonight's meeting. Executive Director Romes requested that any additional comments or questions be submitted via email. Staff will seek formal approval of the proposed revisions at the November Regular Park Board Meeting.

CONSIDERATION FOR ART SCULPTURE ON PARK PROPERTIES

Manager Schwartz reported that the City of Highland Park is considering potential locations for the “Miss Nitro” art sculpture, including sites owned by the Park District. Staff will present the applicable policies, procedures, and criteria for placing art on park property, with a focus on Brown Park and Lincoln Place Park. The City owns Miss Nitro and will make the final decision regarding its location.

Manager Schwartz reviewed the Park District’s Art and Cultural Assets Policy, which governs the acceptance, placement, and erection of artwork and other structures—on either a temporary or permanent basis—on property owned or operated by the Park District of Highland Park and outlines the maintenance and management responsibilities for art pieces located on Park District property.

She also reviewed the District’s evaluation criteria related to park use and site suitability. If both parties agree to the placement of Miss Nitro on Park District property, an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) will be prepared and presented for approval at a future meeting.

CONSTRUCTION PROJECT UPDATES

A. New Facility and Site Improvements at West Ridge Park

Manager Schwartz highlighted recent progress including ongoing exterior wall assembly, interior framing, and MEP roughing-in work, gas line installation, continued brick veneer installation, interior wall framing, grading/draining work for the ball field, and design for safety village and native planting. Drywall installation is expected to begin next week and solar is expected to begin in the next few months.

B. Lincoln Park Improvements Project

Manager Kutscheid reported that the playground and shelter installation are complete. The rubber base surface has been laid. The ballfield has been seeded. Park will be open for use on November 21. Staff will hold a ribbon cutting ceremony spring 2026.

C. Rosewood Park Playground Replacement Project

Manager Kutscheid reported that the playground installation is complete. The pathway to the playground will be laid this weekend. Project is expected to be completed by mid-December.

WINTER OUTDOOR ICE

Executive Director Romes reported that the Park District of Highland Park has faced challenges in providing outdoor winter ice. In response, staff have been collaborating with the Glencoe Park District on shared services to benefit both communities. Under this arrangement, the Glencoe Park District will offer the resident rate on a Season Pass, which provides access to open skate, open hockey, and open broomball. The Glencoe Park District will invoice Highland Park for the difference between resident and non-resident rates. By offering this option, the District would no longer need to maintain outdoor ice rinks.

REVIEW OF VOUCHERS

Director Peters reported that there were two notable vouchers: a check to Stuckey Construction for the pool filter project at Park Fitness, and a payment for the purchase of electric vehicles.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

None.

CLOSED SESSION

A motion was made by Commissioner Labrador, seconded by Vice President Freeman to adjourn into Closed Session for discussion of Section 2(c)1: The employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors in a park, recreational, or educational setting, or specific volunteers of the public body or legal counsel for the public body;

Roll Call:

Aye: Commissioner Greenberg, Commissioner Beck, Commissioner Labrador, Vice President Freeman, President Grossberg

Nay: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

The meeting adjourned into Closed Session at 8:17 p.m.

The meeting reconvened into Open Session at 8:27 p.m.

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ACTION FROM CLOSED SESSION IF ANY

President Grossberg reported that the Park Board of Commissioners met in Closed Session under Section 2(c)1: The employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors in a park, recreational, or educational setting, or specific volunteers of the public body or legal counsel for the public body;

No action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Greenberg and seconded by Commissioner Labrador and approved by a unanimous vote. The Board Meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Roxanne Hejnowski, Assistant Secretary