

**MINUTES OF A THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
OF THE PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK
HELD ON NOVEMBER 11, 2025, 8:02 AM.**

A motion was made by Commissioner Greenberg and seconded by Commissioner Beck to allow Vice President Freeman to participate by electronic means.

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

Absent: None

Also, Present: Executive Director Romes; Director Peters, Director Smith, Director Voss, Director Gogola, Director Baird, Director Hall, Assistant Director Soto, Manager Ochs, Coordinator Hejnowski

Guest Speaker: None

Additions to the Agenda

None.

Budget Presentation

Director Peters reviewed the 2026 Budget Calendar, including upcoming meetings leading to the Public Hearing for the 2026 Combined Budget Ordinance in January 2026, and outlined key considerations and assumptions used in developing the proposed 2026 budget.

Director Peters presented 2026 Budget Highlights and Assumptions, noting that 2026 will serve as a transition year for new facilities, including Club Pickle and Padel, West Ridge Community Center, and the Centennial Ice Arena programming space. She explained that budgeted revenues exclude impact fees and reflect flat interest income, while increases are expected in recreation programming, memberships, and merchandising.

She also provided a Districtwide Budget Comparison, highlighting that staff are projecting a flat overall budget from 2025 to 2026.

Director Peters compared 2025 Budgeted, 2025 Projected, and 2026 Proposed Budget revenues and expenses by function:

- Administration Function: Includes capital, debt service, special recreation, and all General Fund activities excluding parks.
- Parks Function: Anticipates a deficit, which is typical since revenues are limited to park and dog permit fees and property taxes, while expenses remain high for property maintenance.
- Recreation Function: Reflects just under a 10% increase in salaries and wages to support staffing needs for the new facilities.

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Director Peters reviewed budget transfers, noting that the 2026 Proposed Budget includes:

- A \$610,420 transfer from the General Fund to the Debt Service Fund;
- A \$1,034,380 transfer from the Recreation Fund to the Debt Service Fund;
- A \$3,075,000 transfer from the Recreation Fund to the Capital Fund; and
- A \$600,000 transfer from the Special Recreation Fund to the Capital Fund.

She also reviewed fund balance history and projections dating from 2017 through the 2026 Proposed Budget.

Lastly, Director Peters reviewed the Recreation Function by Center, noting a projected deficit at West Ridge Center and Centennial Ice Arena due to the transition period, while Deer Creek Racquet Club shows a decrease in revenue as the facility no longer includes pickleball operations.

Sheridan Road Sidewalk Update

Director Smith reminded the Committee that the IDOT culvert replacement project on Sheridan Road will also include the addition of a pedestrian sidewalk along Sheridan Road from Dean Road to Roger Williams Road. Director Smith noted that, if the Board would like staff to explore adding a boardwalk or sidewalk along the road leading to Rosewood Beach (Lower Rosewood), staff can gather cost estimates for consideration.

Sunset Valley Golf Club Restaurant License Agreement Renewal

Manager Ochs reported that Catering by Relish, Inc. currently serves as the exclusive provider of food and beverage services at Sunset Valley Golf Club through December 31, 2025. Staff and Catering by Relish, Inc. have negotiated a proposed five-year Restaurant/Bar License Agreement, extending from January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2030, which would provide the Park District with \$200,000 in revenue over the five-year term. A breakdown of the monthly payment schedule was presented.

As part of the proposed renewal, Catering by Relish, Inc. has agreed to host ten community events per calendar year at the Clubhouse. These events may include, but are not limited to, movie nights, trivia nights, bingo nights, Breakfast with Santa, Oktoberfest, fish fries, craft nights, wine tastings, and bourbon tastings. In addition, the vendor has agreed to contribute 50% of the cost of musicians for the summer Friday night concerts, up to \$2,000 per calendar year.

In 2025, Sunset Valley hosted eleven Friday night concerts on the outdoor patio between June and August. Manager Ochs provided a brief overview of the financial terms for 2026 through 2030, including a monthly payment schedule.

It was the consensus of the Finance Committee to recommend placing the proposed five-year Restaurant/Bar License Agreement with Catering by Relish, Inc. for Sunset Valley Golf Club—effective January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2030—on the Consent Agenda for the November 19, 2025 Regular Meeting of the Park Board.

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Winter Outdoor Ice

Executive Director Romes and Director Voss reported that they have been collaborating with the Glencoe Park District on shared services to benefit both communities. The Park District of Highland Park has faced challenges in offering outdoor winter ice. As a result, the Glencoe Park District has agreed to 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 set up outdoor ice rinks.

Other Business

A. Community Garden

Executive Director Romes reported that the community gardens are moving to the Heller Nature Center.

Open to the Public to Address the Board

None.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:56 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Roxanne Hejnowski, Assistant Secretary