



**Park District of Oak Park
Park Board Retreat
Cheney Mansion
220 North Euclid Avenue
Oak Park, Illinois 60302**

Tuesday, June 17, 2025

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 9:03am.

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Lentz, Onayemi, Wollmuth, Worley-Hood, and President Porreca.

Park District Staff Present: Jan Arnold, Executive Director; Mitch Bowlin, Director of Business Operations; Paula Bickel, Director of Human Resources & Risk Management; Chris Lindgren, Deputy Director of Property and Planning; Bill Hamilton, Superintendent of Parks and Facilities; Maureen McCarthy, Deputy Director of Recreation; Ann Marie Buczek, Director of Marketing and Community Engagement; Pattie Staley, Director of Horticulture & Conservatory; Mike Baiardo, Superintendent of Special Facilities; and Karen Gruszka, Executive Assistant.

Others Present: Craig Pugh, Public Communications, Inc.; Caitlyn Culbertson, Elrod Friedman LLP.

II. BOARD GOVERNANCE

Craig Pugh, PCI, and Caitlyn Culbertson, Elrod Friedman LLP, were on hand to discuss Board Governance with the members of the Board. The Ethics Law, adopted by the PDOP, guides political activities and prohibited political activities. Everyone was reminded of guidelines and procedures for social media, discussions with residents, and that any media requests should be directed to the Executive Director for a consistent voice. PDOP Pamphlets and FAQ sheets can be used but for the most reliable up-to-date information, residents should always be directed to the website as it can be updated quickly with the most current information. The Board was reminded of their responsibility to act as one board.

III. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN DISCUSSION

Craig and Caitlyn stated they admired the PDOP's leadership and the succeeding way the team worked and addressed challenges. Looking at upcoming projects in the Strategic Plan and financing, Craig and Caitlyn went through the best practices and the considerations to complete the projects. Executive Director Arnold reminded everyone that the Park District goes out with a community survey to the residents every 5 years to gather residents' input along with the survey our marketing team gathers on hot topics at many of our events. The early engagement of the community was commended by Craig and Caitlyn. Mitch Bowlin, Director of Business Operations, discussed different funding options for capital projects and answered questions on the various options. Specifics of upcoming strategic plans were discussed along with timelines.

The Board asked about their involvement in gathering information from residents and were reminded their job is to always bring calm, clear information when confronted with tough questions and to guide residents to the website which will have correct up-to-date information listed. The PDOP staff will be responsible for providing updates to the website and this is the best tool to direct the community to for reference.

VI. PDOP UPDATES

The Board and Executive Director Arnold had a casual question and answer session to finish out the Board Retreat as well as the Board providing feedback from their participation of the day.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

At 12:46pm, the Board Retreat was adjourned. **The motion was passed with a voice vote of 5:0.**



Secretary
Board of Park Commissioners

July 24, 2025

Date



President
Board of Park Commissioners

July 24, 2025

Date