REGULAR BOARD MEETING
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS OF PALATINE PARK DISTRICT
Village of Palatine, 200 East Wood Street in Palatine
Second Floor- Village Room B
October 13, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

These minutes are not a verbatim record of what was said during the meeting

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Commissioner Sammons

Commissioners Present	Commissioners Absent
Greg Sammons, President	
Jennifer Rogers, Vice-President	
Susan Gould	
Joe Petricca	

Staff Present

Benjamin Rea, Executive Director
Andrea Fisher, Director of Finance
Lisa Allie, Park Board Secretary/Executive Assistant
Michelle Eckelberry, Director of District Services
Sonia Austin, Superintendent of Finance
Colleen Palmer, Director of Recreation & Facilities
Jim Holder, Director of Parks & Planning
Josh Ludolph, Superintendent of Recreation Facilities
Katie Waszak, Superintendent of Recreation Programming
Amy Vito, Superintendent of Parks
Alex Giannikoulis, Superintendent of Trades
Cheryl Lufitz, Communications & Marketing Mgr.
Marcy Laney, Accounting Assistant

Visitors and Citizens Present

Andrew Paine, Attorney
Dianna Rushing, Resident
Jim Burke, Resident
Tony Mulert, Resident
William Van Giesen, Resident
Michelle Rushing, Resident
Terry Ruff, Resident
Frank Skorski, Resident

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Rogers moved, and Commissioner Sammons seconded that the agenda be approved as amended. Director Rea stated that we need to add a Closed Session for Section 2(c)(5) discussion of the acquisition or lease of real property for the use of the District. By a voice vote, the agenda for the regular meeting of October 13, 2025, was approved as amended. The result of the voice vote follows:

AYE: Jennifer Rogers, Susan Gould, Joe Petricca, Greg Sammons
NAY: None
ABSENT: None
Motion carried.

Approval of Consent Agenda

The Board reviewed the previously distributed items posted on the consent agenda. Commissioner Rogers moved, and Commissioner Petricca seconded that the consent agenda be approved as presented. By a roll call vote, the following items on the consent agenda were approved: Regular Meeting Minutes of September 22, 2025, and Warrant #9. The motion was approved by a roll call vote; the result follows:

AYE: Joe Petricca, Susan Gould, Jennifer Rogers, Greg Sammons,
NAY: None
ABSENT: None
Motion carried.

Visitors and Citizens' Comments

Wiliam Van Giesen: Mr. Van Giesen expressed his concerns regarding the process of filling the vacant board seat. He previously communicated his interest to the Board and the Executive Director but was told that the Board would follow the appointment process used in November 2020. Mr. Van Giesen stated that he was on the ballot six months ago with 3,400 votes. He did not show up, expecting an appointment to be handed to him, but believes that the situation warrants a transparent interview process where all interested candidates can formally present their qualifications and vision for the park district. Mr. Van Giensen shared his qualifications, community involvement, and questioned why he wouldn't be a great candidate for this Board. His presence tonight is the final attempt to convince the Board to do the right thing by creating a process of interviewing and getting to know him. He acknowledged that he has spoken out harshly and critically at times, stating that sometimes criticism is not a bad thing. Mr. Van Giesen told the Board that he is very passionate about this, he would love to get to know them, and that he has many fun ideas they don't know about. He said that on paper, his qualifications are really good. He continued to share his work experience, which included his current job as an Activity Director at a Senior Living Community. In closing, Mr. Van Giensen stated that regardless of the outcome of the current appointment, his commitment to the Palatine Park District is unwavering, and if nothing changes, you can expect to see his name in 2027 for a six-year term.

Frank Skorski: Mr. Skorski shared that he's happy the Lord finally blessed us by removing Terry and that he should have been removed a long time ago for his incompetence and possibly illegal activities. He said he heard that Terry's company was bought, and the new owners think he should play by the rules the state of Illinois created regarding fiduciary responsibility on the part of board members. Mr. Skorski thinks that this board should call their attorney to find out if the last years that Terry has been working here were just like Biden's, who was illegal, brain dead, and hurting people. That's reprehensible. Mr. Skorski acknowledged the presence of a police officer and stated that it's kind of stupid that you guys have spent $6,200 since May 13 protecting yourselves. He continued to say that he hasn't had a good fight in about 30 years, and he's not about to start throwing punches at 81. He's got lawyers and friends who could take care of the physical part of his life from here on. As for the legal, he finds it reprehensible that you guys may be in violation of the law to have allowed Terry to sit as president, and his fiduciary responsibility may have jeopardized his actions. Mr. Skorksi continued to say that he's often wondered why you guys ran full speed ahead to screw the girls in Palatine by closing their stable. People said they wanted stables, but you guys already decided to trash it because you are above the law.

Commissioner Sammons told Mr. Skorski his time was up.

Terry Ruff: Mr. Ruff introduced himself as the man who was just libeled and slandered and said that it's about time we had some good news from this side of the podium. He thanked the Board for their time and endorsed Michelle for the vacant Commissioner seat. He also congratulated the park staff on the three Hometown Pride awards they won this year. Mr. Ruff also feels it is important to reflect on the past before moving forward, and a Board that works together can accomplish many great things. He continued to say that one of the byproducts of a board that exemplifies professionalism is the ability to attract good people, and that Palatine Park District is a place where people want to work. He believes that's the difference between good leadership and bad leadership. Mr. Ruff said that this board has provided strong leadership for our staff and has supported our Executive Director, a director whom people want to work for. People come here to work for Ben Rea, who is the first Executive Director in his tenure to have a vision for the future, not just maintaining the present. In closing Mr. Ruff stated that there is no place for personal agendas in an organization such as this. They only hinder the progress of the entire team. There will always be some who differ in opinions; listen, evaluate, make sound decisions, and move forward. The next five years, which he's going to miss, are going to be a very busy time for all and a lot of fun, but he knows that everyone is up to the challenge.

New Business

The Park Board reviewed the previously distributed documents regarding the Acceptance of Commissioner Terry Ruff's resignation and declaration of the commissioner seat vacant. Commissioner Petricca moved and Commissioner Rogers seconded that the Board of Park Commissioners accept Commissioner Ruff's resignation and declare the seat vacant. The result of the roll call vote follows:

AYE: Susan Gould, Jennifer Rogers, Greg Sammons, Joe Petricca
NAY: None
ABSENT: None
Motion carried.

The Park Board reviewed the previously distributed documents regarding the Appointment to Fill the Current Park Board Commissioner Vacancy. Commissioner Rogers moved and Commissioner Petricca seconded that the Board of Park Commissioners approve the Appointment of the Declared Commissioner Vacancy Seat to Michelle Rushing until the April 2027 election. Commissioner Gould said that she doesn't care for the process used to select our next Commissioner. She feels that we should have been more transparent, followed our own policy, and the Illinois Park District Code, which is very vague and allows park districts to do it the way they want. She recalled the early 90's when we had a resignation and we interviewed applicants, but in 2020 we just appointed someone, so she is going to abstain. She added that Michelle is going to be a wonderful Commissioner and thinks they will get along just great, but that is her belief. The result of the roll call vote follows:

AYE: Jennifer Rogers, Greg Sammons, Joe Petricca
NAY: None
ABSTAIN: Susan Gould
ABSENT: None
Motion carried.

Secretary Allie swore Michelle Rushing into office. Commissioner Gould pointed out that this is the first time in history that there have been 3 women on the Board.

Commissioner Sammons asked for nominations for Election of the Park Board President. Commissioner Rogers made a motion to nominate Commissioner Sammons for President and Commissioner Petricca seconded that the Board of Park Commissioners approve the nomination for Commissioner Sammons for the office of Park Board President. Commissioner Gould interjected to request that the Board return to rotating the offices, which was the process until 2024. She went back into the minutes to locate the original rotation from 2022 and suggested that they figure out where to start the rotation since it's no longer a straight line anymore. Commissioner Gould added that rotating the schedule worked well for over 40 years and was the envy of various other boards. She noted that we no longer have a Treasurer in the rotation and added that she doesn't really care which way we do it, but she would like to get started back into the rotation. From consensus of the Park Board, and with no further nominations offered, the Board of Park Commissioners agree that the nomination for Park Board President be closed; therefore, Commissioner Sammons will be nominated for the position of Board President for the remaining 2025-2026 term. Commissioner Sammons requested a roll call vote; the results follow:

AYE: Joe Petricca, Susan Gould, Jennifer Rogers, Michelle Rushing, Greg Sammons
NAY: None
ABSENT: None
Motion carried.

President Sammons asked for nominations for the Election of the Park Board Vice-President. President Sammons made a motion to nominate Commissioner Rogers for Vice-President and Commissioner Petricca seconded that the Board of Park Commissioners approve the nomination for Commissioner Rogers for the office of Park Board Vice-President. From consensus of the Park Board, and with no further nominations offered, the Board of Park Commissioners agree that the nomination for Park Board Vice-President be closed; therefore, Commissioner Rogers will be nominated for the position of Board Vice-President for the remaining 2025-2026 term. President Sammons requested a roll call vote; the results follow:

AYE: Susan Gould, Jennifer Rogers, Michelle Rushing, Joe Petricca, Greg Sammons
NAY: None
ABSENT: None
Motion carried.

Commissioner Gould congratulated President Sammons and Vice-President Rogers and said now, let's start rotating. President Sammons said that he hopes to follow in Terry's footsteps. He led by example and did a great job. He thanked Mr. Ruff for his service.

The Board reviewed a previously distributed board summary pertaining to the Approval of the Palatine Historical Society Agreement. Commissioner Rogers moved, and Commissioner Petricca seconded the motion that the Park Board of Park Commissioners approve the agreement between the Palatine Park District and the Palatine Historical Society. Commissioner Gould asked Director Rea if there were any big changes, to which Director Rea replied that the agreement is a 50-year term to get back in line with the original term of the first agreement and that we will also be hiring a part-time supervisory position back there. Superintendent Ludolph elaborated that there's a lot missing from the previous agreement; this spells it all out and notes the technology and support we give them. Commissioner Gould said that it's a real asset to the park district; not every park district has a building that's on the National Register of Historic Places. She's glad to see that we're sustaining it, and that we're going to have a part-time facilitator over there. The motion was approved by a roll call vote; the result follows:

AYE: Jennifer Rogers, Michelle Rushing, Joe Petricca, Susan Gould, Greg Sammons
NAY: None
ABSENT: None
Motion carried.

The Board reviewed a previously distributed board summary pertaining to the Approval of Insurance Renewal for 2026 Plan Year. Commissioner Rogers moved, and Commissioner Petricca seconded the motion that the Park Board of Park Commissioners approve the Renewal plans for the 2026 plan year as submitted. In response to Commissioner Rogers' question, Director Rea said it is pretty much the same, with a slight increase; he also explained the HMO plan change due to the network changes. The motion was approved by a roll call vote; the result follows:

AYE: Michelle Rushing, Joe Petricca, Susan Gould, Jennifer Rogers, Greg Sammons
NAY: None
ABSENT: None
Motion carried.

The Board reviewed a previously distributed board summary pertaining to the Approval of Updated Purchasing Policy 2.11.12. Commissioner Rogers moved, and Commissioner Petricca seconded the motion that the Park Board of Commissioners approve updated purchasing policy 2.11.12.

In response to President Sammons' question, Director Rea confirmed that legislative changes were made this summer and shared that our policy was outdated, with the labor cost at $25,000 when it has been at $30,000 for several years. He also shared that our Attorney has reviewed this as well. The motion was approved by a roll call vote; the result follows:

AYE: Joe Petricca, Susan Gould, Jennifer Rogers, Michelle Rushing, Greg Sammons
NAY: None
ABSENT: None
Motion carried.

The Board reviewed a previously distributed board summary pertaining to the Approval of Installation of four (4) inch HDPE conduit pipe for Birchwood's primary power cables. Commissioner Rushing moved, and Commissioner Rogers seconded the motion that the Board of Park Commissioners approves Sonoma Underground Services Inc., New Lenox, IL, in an amount not to exceed $54,750.00 for the installation of a four-inch underground HDPE conduit pipe and required splice box for Birchwood Recreation Center. In response to Commissioner questions, Director Holder explained that Com Ed won't install anything over 700 feet on private property and provided details of the project issues. The motion was approved by a roll call vote; the result follows:

AYE: Susan Gould, Jennifer Rogers, Michelle Rushing, Joe Petricca, Greg Sammons
NAY: None
ABSENT: None
Motion carried.

The Board reviewed a previously distributed board summary pertaining to Resolution #25-10 Truth in Taxation for Projected Tax Levy. Commissioner Rogers moved, and Commissioner Petricca seconded the motion that the Board of Commissioners approve Resolution #25-10 a Resolution providing an estimate for the 2025 property tax levy to be collected in 2026. The motion was approved by a roll call vote; the result follows:

AYE: Michelle Rushing, Joe Petricca, Susan Gould, Jennifer Rogers, Greg Sammons
NAY: None
ABSENT: None
Motion carried.

Executive Director Report
Director Rea reported that this Thursday is the Fall into the Arts at Cutting Hall. It's a showcase for the number of things that we have going on at Cutting Hall, and they will wrap up with a small concert band. The Halloween party is also coming up on Saturday the 25th at Community Center.

Commissioner Reports/Future Agenda Items
Commissioner Gould noted that the Cook County taxes are still not out yet. Luckily, we have reserves, however, some of the school districts are really going to be hurting. She also mentioned the policy confusion over the selection of a new commissioner. She would like to put a policy in place so that we have something consistent that people can rely on.

Commissioner Rogers officially welcomed Michelle and thanked her for joining the Board. She acknowledged Michelle's involvement with the Park District and programming, which is a great asset to the Board. She is excited to have three women on the Board. Commissioner Rogers also thanked Terry for his years of service in the Park District and noted that he's been a great advocate for the Park District and the staff. His leadership has helped us move forward on many projects; she's very appreciative.

Commissioner Rushing is honored by the opportunity and thanked everyone for welcoming her.

President Sammons mentioned the historical society bulletin and shared that this Wednesday they have a Teddy Roosevelt impersonator who is a former Palatine High School alumni named Joe Wiegand.
He also thanked Commissioner Ruff for all his years of service. He will do his best to fill the big shoes he's left.

Executive Session

President Sammons requested a motion to close the public portion of the meeting and convene into Executive Session for Section 2(c)(5) Open Meetings Act for the purpose of the acquisition or lease of real property for the use of the District. Commissioner Rogers moved and Commissioner Petrricca seconded that the Board of Park Commissioners enter into closed session for discussion of Executive Session ection 2(c)(5) Open Meetings Act for the purpose of the acquisition or lease of real property for the use of the District. The result of the roll call vote follows:

AYE: Joe Petricca, Susan Gould, Jennifer Rogers, Michelle Rushing, Greg Sammons
NAY: None
ABSENT: None
Motion carried at 6:35 p.m.

Return to Open Session

President Sammons asked for a motion to come out of closed session and resume to the regular meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners. Commissioner Rushing motioned and Commissioner Rogers seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by a voice vote as follows:

AYE: Joe Petricca, Greg Sammons, Jennifer Rogers, Susan Gould, Michelle Rushing
NAY: None
ABSENT: None
Motion carried at 6:54 p.m.

Action on Matters Considered in Closed Session

Regarding Section 2(c)(5) discussion of the acquisition or lease of real property for the use of the District. There was no action taken from the executive session meeting.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Park Board on this date, Commissioner Rushing moved that the regular meeting be adjourned, and Commissioner Rogers seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a voice vote; the result follows:

AYE: Susan Gould, Greg Sammons, Jennifer Rogers, Joe Petricca, Michelle Rushing
NAY: None
ABSENT: None
Motion carried at 6:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Allie
Park Board Secretary

Attest:

Lisa Allie

Lisa Allie
Secretary

Approved:

Jennifer Rogers

~~Greg Sammons~~
~~President~~

Jennifer Rogers
Vice-President

2025 Park Board Meetings	
November 10, 2025	December 8, 2025
November 24, 2025	