



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
January 26, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

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

Commissioners Present

Greg Sammons, President
Susan Gould
Joe Petricca
Michelle Rushing

Commissioners Absent

Jennifer Rogers, Vice-President

Staff Present

Benjamin Rea, Executive Director
Lisa Allie, Park Board Secretary/Executive Assistant
Michelle Eckelberry, Director of District Services
Dayell Houzenga, Superintendent of District Services
Jim Holder, Director of Parks & Planning

Amy Vito, Superintendent of Parks & Planning
Colleen Palmer, Director of Recreation Facilities
Josh Ludolph, Supt. of Recreation Facilities
Katie Waszak, Supt. of Recreation Programming
Alex Giannikoulis, Superintendent of Trades

Visitors and Citizens Present

Joey McArthur, Rolling Meadows Resident

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Rushing moved, and Commissioner Petricca seconded that the agenda be approved. By a roll call vote, the agenda for the regular meeting of January 26, 2026, was approved. The result of the roll call vote follows:

AYE: Susan Gould, Joe Petricca, Michelle Rushing, Greg Sammons

NAY: None

ABSENT: Jennifer Rogers

Motion carried.

Approval of Consent Agenda

The Board reviewed the previously distributed items posted on the consent agenda. Commissioner Rushing 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 January 12, 2026, Closed Session Minutes of January 12, 2026, Ordinance #26-02 for Surplus of Property. The motion was approved by a roll call vote; the result follows:

AYE: Susan Gould, Joe Petricca, Michelle Rushing, Greg Sammons

NAY: None

ABSENT: Jennifer Rogers

Motion carried.

Visitors and Citizen's Comments

Joey McArthur, Ward 1 resident from Rolling Meadows and co-sponsor of the Master Intergovernmental Agreement for Salt Creek Corridor Restoration, addressed the board regarding two contracts they are named on, the 1981 maintenance, operation duties to provide sufficient funds annually and prevent

impairment, and an August 15, 2006 subordinate Euclid bike path intergovernmental agreement with the Village of Palatine that's encroaching on the MWRD permanent easement. Mr. McArthur appreciates the installation of a fence, but feels that it's still an encroachment, and the issue remains unresolved. He urged collaboration among all parties through a Master Intergovernmental Agreement to bind everyone, legalize fixes with new easements, deliver in-kind credits, and protect the corridor without litigation or cash outlay. Mr. McArthur noted support from 45 households and referenced efforts to secure a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers restoration grant, stressing transparency and collective action for flood resilience and community protection.

Mr. McArthur left the meeting at 6:04 p.m.

New Business

The Board reviewed a previously distributed board summary pertaining to approval of Purchase for Replacement Fleet Trucks through Sourcewell. Commissioner Rushing moved, and Commissioner Petricca seconded that the Board of Park Commissioners approve the lowest responsible bidder, National Auto Fleet Group, Watsonville, CA, in the amount not to exceed \$151,143.47 for the acquisition of three (3) 2026 Chevrolet Silverado 2500HD trucks through Sourcewell. The motion was approved by a roll call vote; the result follows:

AYE: Joe Petricca, Michelle Rushing, Susan Gould, Greg Sammons

NAY: None

ABSENT: Jennifer Rogers

Motion carried.

The Board reviewed a previously distributed board summary pertaining to approval of Professional Service Contract for Falcon Park's Parking Lot Pavement Improvements. Commissioner Rushing moved, and Commissioner Petrica seconded that the Board of Park Commissioners approve Gewalt Hamilton Associates, Inc., Vernon Hills, IL., in the amount not to exceed \$53,600.00, to provide construction documents, permitting, and construction administration for Phase 2 of Falcon Park's parking lot improvements. In response to President Sammons, Director Holder confirmed that this contract is with the same engineer used for Phase 1 and that the work will address most of the ADA pavement requirements. The motion was approved by a roll call vote; the result follows:

AYE: Michelle Rushing, Susan Gould, Joe Petricca, Greg Sammons

NAY: None

ABSENT: Jennifer Rogers

Motion carried.

The Board reviewed a previously distributed board summary pertaining to approval of Executive Director Merit Increase and Bonus. Commissioner Rushing moved, and Commissioner Petricca seconded that the Board of Park Commissioners approve the Executive Director's 4% increase and \$5,000 bonus for 2026. The motion was approved by a roll call vote; the result follows:

AYE: Susan Gould, Joe Petricca, Michelle Rushing, Greg Sammons

NAY: None

ABSENT: Jennifer Rogers

Motion carried.

The Board reviewed a previously distributed board summary pertaining to approval of Policies for Boundary Violations and Electronic Communication with Minors and Vulnerable Adults. Commissioner Rushing moved, and Commissioner Petricca seconded that the Board of Park Commissioners approve the addition of two new policies, 3.09.13 Boundary Violations and 3.09.14 Electronic Communication with Minors and Vulnerable Adult as required by PDRMA. In response to Commissioner Gould's request for clarification, Superintendent Houzenga explained that the Boundary Violations Policy is modeled on the Park District Risk Management Agency (PDRMA) template, which covers emotional, physical, and verbal boundaries; this also expands beyond the prior physical-only guidance to include emotional safeguards. The Electronic Communications Policy is for youth participants and staff under the age of 18, stating that communication should be with guardians rather than minors directly; for employment-related communications with minors, it must be employment-based. Superintendent Houzenga and Director Eckleberry answered President Sammons questions, explaining that PDRMA provided template options to choose from dependent on the Districts needs; they also clarified that this is a standalone policy distinct from other electronic communications policies. Commissioners commented on recent news stories and other similar requirements in youth sports. The motion was approved by a roll call vote; the result follows:

AYE: Susan Gould, Joe Petricca, Michelle Rushing, Greg Sammons

NAY: None

ABSENT: Jennifer Rogers

Motion carried.

Department Reports

The Board reviewed the previously distributed written Finance Report. Director Rea asked if anyone had any questions. In response to Commissioner Gould's question regarding tax revenues, Director Rea shared that Cook County sent an email today with the dates of when they will release funds. On the 28th, there's going to be a billion dollars released in tax funds to various agencies.

The Park Board reviewed the previously distributed written District Services Report. Director Eckleberry shared the following updates from November and December: she attended the IAPD Legal Symposium, Superintendent Houzenga attended the IPRA Safety workshop and the PDRMA Risk Management Institute. The District was awarded the Exceptional Workplace Designation. HR completed the integration between benefit platforms, launched a new Performance Evaluation process, finalized the training calendar for PT Staff, and hired two staff members for Marketing Assistant and Horticulture Arborist. We had 51 volunteer hours between the Turkey Trot packet pick-up and race day, and over 90 volunteer background checks were completed and monitored. IT completed our security camera installation and our Salto phase four keyless entry, creating a network expansion to our new buildings and starting the roll-out of Keeper Password Manager. Risk Management completed the Essentials of Risk Management Review for PDRMA with a score of 82%. Our incident reports were down in November and December. Staff members attended the Risk Management Institute, PDRMA held training at the Community Center and conducted 2 CPR trainings for 18 staff members. Communications and Marketing expanded marketing to new sponsors, which helped facilitate engagements and resulted in the Turkey Trot surpassing its goal with over 2,000 runners. The Winter Spring program guide was delivered with over 61,000 page views to the website within the first few weeks. We also began working with a5 Branding and Digital on the district rebrand.

The Board reviewed the previously distributed written Parks and Planning Report. Director Holder provided the following updates: the Meadowlark project is closed, with final payment going out tomorrow; we also received the \$499,900 grant money from the State of Illinois. All communication issues with the Fitness Center HVAC system have been resolved. The Birchwood power cable replacement project was completed, and the Birchwood Pool Boiler Replacement Project is also fully completed. The ice rink opened early this year, then had to close with the 50-degree weather. Unfortunately, kids were climbing

the fence and tore up the liner, so almost all the water was lost. Most of the rips have been patched, and it is currently open, but once the temps get up above freezing, we'll have to close for the season. We are fully staffed, with the Golf Course Mechanic position being filled by Mark Lenz, who started on January 19th.

The Board reviewed the previously distributed Recreation and Facilities Report. Director Palmer's report included 13 events held over November and December, entertaining over 3,500 attendees, participants and showgoers. We had our first Winter Break Camp for two weeks at the end of the year, one was a sports camp, and then a general camp. They were well attended with 30 to 40 campers each day the camps ran. The Tiger Shark Swim Team competed in 8 different meets, earned multiple awards, had 5 team records, and achieved top finishes, had 4 swimmers compete at the IHSA State level and 4 swimmers at the Junior Nationals, the highest number of swimmers we've had at that level in over 20 years. One of our new events this year was the Pickleball Tournament, P-Town Paddle Battle with over 87 players competing. Falcon hosted for the first time a production of 12 Angry Jurors, and they had 300 attendees over 4 different shows. Our rentals and our drop-in services at all our facilities continue to soar. The numbers in registration were also trending about 10% higher than last year. Commissioner Sammons commented that he stopped by the Paddle Battle, and everyone was having a great time with good friendly competition.

Executive Director Report

Director Rea referenced the letter Mr. McArthur sent about the District blocking his emails. Mr. McArthur showed Director Rea his phone that shows all emails to the District as undeliverable. Director Rea is going to talk to our IT Manager to investigate what is causing this. He also shared that the plumbing issue at Community Center has been resolved which was the result of baby wipes and paper towels being flushed down the toilet. He also reminded the board that this week is the IPRA conference.

Commissioner Reports/Future Agenda Items

Commissioner Gould commended staff for the impressive list of activities they organized for the kids on winter break.

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 Petricca seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a voice vote; the result follows:

AYE: Joe Petricca, Michelle Rushing, Susan Gould, Greg Sammons

NAY: None

ABSENT: Jennifer Rogers

Motion carried at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

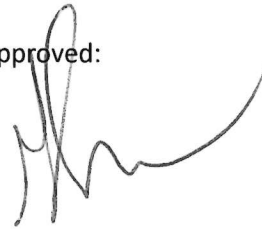
Lisa Allie
Park Board Secretary

Attest:



Lisa Allie
Secretary

Approved:



Greg Sammons
President

<u>2026 Park Board Meetings</u>		
February 9, 2026	May 26, 2026	September 14, 2026
February 23, 2026	June 8, 2026	October 12, 2026
March 9, 2026	June 22, 2026	October 26, 2026
March 23, 2026	July 13, 2026	November 9, 2026
April 13, 2026	July 27, 2026	November 23, 2026
April 27, 2026	August 10, 2026	December 14, 2026
May 11, 2026	August 24, 2026	