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 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
Jennifer Rogers, Vice-President
Susan Gould
Joe Petricca
Michelle Rushing

Commissioners Absent

Staff Present
Benjamin Rea, Executive Director
Andrea Fisher, Park Board Treasurer/Director of Finance
Lisa Allie, Park Board Secretary/Executive Assistant
Sonia Austin, Superintendent of Finance
Dayell Houzenga, Superintendent of District Services
Colleen Palmer, Director of Recreation & Facilities
Jim Holder, Director of Parks & Planning
Josh Ludolph, Supt. of Recreation Facilities
Katie Waszak, Supt. of Recreation Programming
Amy Vito, Superintendent of Parks
Alex Giannikoulis, Superintendent of Trades
Cheryl Lufitz, Communications & Marketing Manager
Heather Richardson, HR Coordinator

Visitors and Citizens Present
Luke MacDonald, Good News in the Neighborhood

Public Hearing
President Sammons opened the Public Hearing for the Truth and Taxation Projected Tax Levy. The public hearing was declared open, and the floor was open to questions or comments from the Board; no questions or comments were presented. President Sammons offered the open floor to questions or comments from the audience. There were no questions or comments from the audience. Director Rea confirmed that he did not receive any inquiries or comments prior to tonight's board meeting and that the public hearing was posted in the newspaper on October 19, 2026. In response to a motion to officially declare the public hearing closed, Commissioner Rogers moved, and Commissioner Rushing seconded, that the Board of Park Commissioners close the public hearing regarding the proposed 2026 Property Tax Levy. The motion was approved by a roll call vote, and President Sammons closed the Public Hearing. The result of the roll call follows:

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

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 October 26, 2026, was approved. The result of the roll call vote follows:

AYE: Susan Gould, Joe Petricca, Michelle Rushing, Jennifer Rogers, 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 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 September 14, 2026, and Warrant #9. The motion was approved by a roll call vote; the result follows:

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

Superintendent Houzenga introduced Heather Richardson, the District's new Human Resources Coordinator. Heather shared that she is a Palatine native and former Park District participant. She previously worked for the Western DuPage Special Recreation Association and has enjoyed her first two months in her new role. The Board welcomed Heather to the District

Visitors and Citizen's Comments
None.

New Business
The Board reviewed a previously distributed board summary pertaining to the Approval of Resolution # 26-08 Truth in Taxation for Projected Tax Levy. Commissioner Rogers moved, and Commissioner Rushing seconded, that the Board of Park Commissioners approve Resolution # 26-08, a Resolution providing an estimate for the 2026 property tax levy to be collected in 2027. The motion was approved by a roll call vote; the result follows:

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

The Board reviewed a previously distributed board summary pertaining to Approval of the new Mission Statement. Commissioner Rogers moved, and Commissioner Petricca seconded, that the Board of Park Commissioners approve the updated Mission Statement: "To provide sustainable park and recreation opportunities that connect our community and enhance quality of life." Discussion ensued regarding the word sustainable and a revised mission statement. Commissioner Rogers moved, and Commissioner Rushing seconded, that the Board of Park Commissioners approve the revised mission statement: "To provide safe and accessible park and recreation opportunities that connect our community and enhance quality of life." The motion was approved as revised by a roll call vote; the result follows:

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

The Board reviewed a previously distributed board summary pertaining to the Approval of A5 Agreement. Commissioner Rushing moved, and Commissioner Rogers seconded, that the Board of Park Commissioners ratify and approve the agreement with a5 Branding and Digital to create a new park district logo and branding guidelines for a total of $65,000. In response to Commissioner Sammons question, Director Rea confirmed that the budget for the logo was set at $65,000 and that a5 has been assisting with the logo rollout. The motion was approved by a roll call vote; the result follows:

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

The Board reviewed a previously distributed board summary pertaining to the Approval of Parking Lot Agreement. Commissioner Rushing moved, and Commissioner Petricca seconded, that the Board of Park Commissioners approve the parking lot agreement with Good News in the Neighborhood Church. Mr. McDonald expressed appreciation for the partnership with the Park District, noting the organizations share facilities and community interests. He stated that the proposed agreement formalizes an existing relationship and supports future expansion efforts, and he thanked the Board and staff for their collaboration. The motion was approved by a roll call vote; the result follows:

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

The Board reviewed a previously distributed board summary pertaining to the Approval of Rotary Club of Palatine Special Use Permit. Commissioner Rushing moved, and Commissioner Petricca seconded, that the Board of Park Commissioners approve the Rotary Club of Palatine's Special Use Permit for alcohol sales at their December 17th Cutting Hall Performing Arts Center fundraising event. In response to Commissioner Sammons, Director Rea stated that the Harp Twins performance features holiday music and classic rock, is approximately two hours, including an intermission, and serves as a one-night Rotary Club fundraiser with proceeds supporting the club's February allocations event. The motion was approved by a roll call vote; the result follows:

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

Department Reports

The Board reviewed the previously distributed Finance Report. Director Fisher reported that year-to-date net profit is up 12% compared to 2025, driven in part by increased property tax and interest revenue. Capital expenditures through September were lower than 2025 but are expected to increase with upcoming Administration Center project payments. She noted that FICA and IMRF expenses have been moved to separate funds, purchase services increased due to the previously presented and subsequently paid Metro Risk Management Agency (MRMA) expense. Director Fisher also shared that Recreation Fund revenues increased approximately 8% due to higher program participation. All other financial activity remains consistent with normal operations.

The Park Board reviewed the previously distributed District Services Report. Superintendent Houzenga stated that preparations for the upcoming employee open enrollment period are underway, including a dependent audit, benefits communications, and the introduction of the Working Advantage employee discount program. She noted that 56 volunteer hours were recorded in September, primarily through National Public Lands Day, which was a huge success, so staff plan to expand that next year. She also reported progress on security camera, network, and access control upgrades, including integration of new facilities and migration of the Cutting Hall website under District management. Risk Management recorded 30 incidents in September, a decrease from the previous year. Communications and Marketing welcomed a new part-time Marketing Assistant and completed the final branding guidelines for the logo rollout. She also reminded the Board of the Parks Foundation meeting scheduled for November 10 at 5:15 p.m.

The Board reviewed the previously distributed Parks and Planning Report. Director Holder shared that the Falcon Park parking lot and Palatine Trail pavement projects are complete. Staff are working on punch list items to provide the contractor for completion before final payment is made. Construction at the Administration Center continues to progress. Demolition is complete, interior framing is nearly finished, and exterior concrete work is nearing completion. Parking lot paving is anticipated this fall after delivery of the rooftop unit and installation. Plumbing work continues, including modifications to the building's water service to meet code requirements. HVAC ductwork is progressing, and installation of the fire suppression system is expected soon. Director Holder also shared that the Parks Division continued seasonal field preparations. Renovations to Osage Field 1 have been completed, and all remaining structures have been removed from Osage Field 2. The Horticulture Division has transitioned from mowing and turf renovations to seasonal bed cleanup and the installation of fall annual plantings throughout the district. The Fleet Division received the final two vehicles ordered earlier this year. One vehicle will be going to the golf course to replace a 2004 pickup truck and the second will be outfitted as an irrigation service vehicle. The Trades Division has been winterizing facilities and recently completed installation of power service for a new security camera at Celtic Park. Staff may evaluate additional camera coverage next year. The golf course experienced rain-related maintenance delays in September but the last few weeks have been great, allowing staff to continue fall turf maintenance before the season ends.
Commissioner Sammons mentioned that he has not yet had a chance to see the recent bike path renovations and thanked staff for adding the entrance off Wren. Director Holder noted that the project turned out nicely, and Commissioner Rogers agreed, having taken a few walks on it.

The Board reviewed the previously distributed Recreation and Facilities Report. Director Palmer reported that September marked the start of fall programs and the indoor facility season. Preschool began under the leadership of our new coordinator and manager and is going well. They completed several room updates and held the first all-school parent orientation at Cutting Hall to ensure families were aligned on new and updated program procedures. Director Palmer also shared that cultural arts participation continues to climb. Allegro reached a record 62 singers, and the visual arts programs are also seeing an increase in participation. She also highlighted PAFA Cheer, which has reached a record 180 participants, a 35 percent increase over last year. Director Palmer noted that during the COVID-19 pandemic, the program had shifted to other instructors and locations, making it especially encouraging to see participation return and continue to grow. Director Palmer continued her report with several facility projects, including completion of the Birchwood flooring project, the Falcon Park parking lot resurfacing project; and painting of the Cutting Hall lobby in preparation for the upcoming season of shows. Upcoming events at Cutting Hall include *Sweet Baby James*, *Brigadoon*, candlelight concerts, and a new Friday Night Movies series. Director Palmer also recognized ballroom dance instructor Sherry Yurisak, who retired in September after more than 40 years of teaching ballroom dance for the Park District. She thanked Ms. Yurisak for her dedication and many years of service. In response to a question from Commissioner Rogers regarding the Friday Night Movies series, Director Palmer reported that attendance is gradually increasing. Superintendent Waszak stated that approximately 20 people attended the most recent movie. She also noted that the fall movie series is a preview of plans for 2027, which include offering a variety of films throughout the year and attracting more visitors to Cutting Hall.

Executive Director Report

Director Rea reminded the Board of the upcoming Halloween Party on Saturday. He also informed Board members that they will receive T-shirts featuring the District's new logo at the next Board meeting and noted plans to take a group photo of the Board wearing the new branded apparel.

Commissioner Reports/Future Agenda Items

President Sammons thanked the Board for approving expenses to attend the NRPA Conference in Philadelphia. He reported that the conference was a success, providing valuable networking and educational opportunities, along with an enjoyable overall experience.

Commissioner Rushing raised the possibility of including synthetic turf improvements in future budget discussions, specifically for football and baseball fields. She noted the benefits of synthetic turf in reducing weather-related field closures and referenced other communities that have invested in these improvements. Staff indicated that no synthetic turf projects are currently planned and noted potential limitations, including MWRD restrictions on installing synthetic turf at properties under its jurisdiction.

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: Michelle Rushing, Jennifer Rogers, Susan Gould, Joe Petricca, Greg Sammons
NAY: None
ABSENT: None
Motion carried at 6:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Allie
Park Board Secretary

Attest:

Lisa Allie
Secretary

Approved:

Greg Sammons
President

2026 Park Board Meetings
November 9, 2026
November 23, 2026
December 14, 2026