



It is the mission of the Urbana Park District to:

- *Improve the quality of life of its citizens through a responsive, efficient, and creative park and recreation system,*
- *Pursue excellence in a variety of programs, parks, and special facilities that contribute to the attractiveness of neighborhoods, conservation of the environment, and the overall health of the community.*

**NOTICE AND AGENDA OF MEETING
URBANA PARK DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (UPDAC)
TUESDAY, APRIL 23, 2024
7:00 PM
PLANNING & OPERATIONS FACILITY
1011 E. KERR AVENUE
URBANA, IL 61802**

- I. **Call to Order**
- II. **Public Comment**
Any member of the public may make a brief statement at this time within the public participation rules of the Board.
- III. **Approval of the Minutes of the March 26, 2024 Meeting**
- IV. **New Business**
 - A. After School Programs
- V. **Reports**
 - A. UPDAC Chair
 - B. Board Representative
 - C. Director’s Report
 - D. Capital Projects Report
- VI. **UPDAC Member Comments and Open Discussion**
- VII. **Adjourn**

***** This month’s secretary is David Dorman*****

Note: The Meeting Agenda and Supporting Materials are on the UPD website at <http://www.urbanaparks.org/documents/index.html>; choose the “Public Meetings” category and search for the meeting information you wish to download.

**MEETING MINUTES
 URBANA PARK DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (UPDAC)
 TUESDAY, MARCH 26, 2024
 7:00 PM
 PLANNING & OPERATIONS FACILITY
 1011 E. KERR AVENUE
 URBANA, IL 61802**

The meeting of the Urbana Park District Advisory Committee (UPDAC) was held Tuesday, March 26, 2024 at the Urbana Park District Planning & Operations Facility at 7:00 pm. The notice and agenda of the meeting were posted at the park district administrative office and at the location of the meeting. Copies of the notice and agenda were received by each member of the committee and by local newspapers, radio, and television stations at least forty-eight hours before the meeting in compliance with the Open Meetings Act of the State of Illinois. A copy of the notice and agenda is attached to the minutes. Also available for inspection are all documents that were reviewed or approved at the meeting.

UPDAC Members	PRESENT	ABSENT
Ashley Withers, Chair	X	
Lauren Chambers	X	
Lori Choquette	X	
Reba Daniels		X
David Dorman	X	
Kanittha Fay	X	
Lucia Maldonado	X	
Hannah Sheets	X	
Ashley Sims	X	
Rachel Spencer	X	
Gary Stensland	X	
Michael Stevenson	X	
Brittany Tammen	X	
Gretchen Madsen Webb	X	
Karl Weingartner	X	
Darius White		X

Others Present:

- Allison Jones
- Derek Liebert
- Laura Hastings
- Jameel Jones
- Leslie Radice
- Kayla Boparai
- Corky Emberson

I. Call to Order

UPDAC Chair, Ashley Withers, called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

II. **Public Comment**

There were no comments from members of the public.

III. **Approval of the Minutes of the February 27, 2024 Meeting**

The minutes of the February 27, 2024 UPDAC Meeting were presented for approval.

Michael Stevenson made a motion with a second from Brittany Tammen. A vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

IV. **New Business**

A. Emerging Trends in Parks & Recreation: Reports from annual IAPD/IPRA Conference (January 2024)

UPD staff, Board, and UPDAC members shared information from the annual IPRA conference, especially focusing on upcoming trends for parks and recreation.

Jameel Jones

- Fitness session, changing environment, offer variety to keep it cutting edge, fresh, and trendy.
- IPRA – Innovation Oasis, Embracing AI – Understanding AI and how it works, how it can revolutionize parks and recreation, automation. Pros and cons. Ever evolving system, hard to create or implement policies regarding AI. Chat GPT. Saber AI. Noted the potential need to adopt policy on AI in the future.

Corky Emberson

- Video surveillance – discussions about being “big brother” vs. focus on safety. Policies on how long to store files, posting notice of surveillance, not recording sound, etc.
- Pools – no cameras pointing at water/swimmers.

Leslie Radice

- Learned of new ways to attract people to events: give aways, spotlighting athletes, fitness presentations, etc.
- Leadership and Communication: different types of language, verbal & physical. This will be brought to shift managers, discuss the different types of communication.
- Meeting staff from different park districts is very helpful, discussing the process of creating a program guide.

Kayla Boparai

- Attended a drone use class. Drones are being used in many new ways. District has been using a drone since 2020 to take footage of construction projects, marketing, to check the condition of buildings, monitor for tree disease, etc. Creating policies important. Will start implementing a pre-flight check list, for example. Apps for checking the use of airspace and checking if you need permission from the FAA. If taking footage of large events, new attachments may need purchased in the future, such as heat sensor attachments. Always need to remain aware of privacy, safety, and new laws. Also opportunities for drones in recreation, such as drone racing, drone parks, Drones 101

classes, etc.

Laura Hastings

- Vendors were presenting interesting new products; also some vendors featuring UPD projects in the promotion.
- Session about how to diversify your district. Discovered that our park district is already ahead of the curve with UPDAC and resident involvement.

Derek Liebert

- Important upcoming trends regarding solar, EV charging, etc.
- Lakes management - learning about new invasive plants that may impact lakes.
- Innovation inclusion: people are living longer, how to reach and accommodate those needs.
- 3D printing is on the rise with a multitude of uses.
- Staff values for new hires - they want flexible work and meaningful work.

Ashley Withers

- Web accessibility. Considering the broad spectrum of visual impairment. Subtitles on videos. Consider the reading level of your website, make sure the language is universal and not too complicated.
- Sponsorships can create opportunities for funding and building new relations.

Corky Emberson

- Text messaging platform. Need to get information out in multiple ways to reach a bigger audience. Can use multiple languages and reach more communities.

Leslie Radice and Ashley Withers will be applying to present at next years conference. They hope to present on employing individuals with disabilities.

UPDAC and staff also discussed information regarding strategies on reaching out to residents with language barriers, and also residents with fear of authority/government agencies.

B. SPLASH /Afterschool Program Update

Corky Emberson provided an update on the SPLASH afterschool program. He noted that after this school year, there will no longer be a grant to fund the program. He stated that hopefully SPASH programming at the middle school will be able to be continued. He stated that UPD will focus on unmet needs for youth recreation at the grade school level moving forward. He stated that discussions with Dr. Ivory-Tatum at USD #114 reveal kids are getting to middle and high school not knowing the basics of the sports that are being offered. He hopes that plans to test out sports afterschool programs at the elementary level will move forward.

V. Reports

A. UPDAC Chair

There was no additional information shared by the UPDAC Chair.

B. Board Representative

Board Member Laura Hastings recommended driving by the Health and Wellness center to see the construction progress.

C. Director's Report

Corky Emberson reported on upcoming UPD events, including:

- Summer or fall pop up skate events, possibly near downtown Urbana;
- Last Play Day at Meadowbrook went well. Over 300 pavers were picked up;
- Earth Day event on Saturday, 4/20/24 – 1:00PM – 4:00PM in Crystal Lake Park;
- Peace Walk starts at King Park ends at Douglass Park on Thursday, 4/4/24 – 5:30PM – 7:00PM.

D. Capital Projects Report

- a. Health & Wellness Facility Open House/Floor Signing Event – Saturday, 4/20/24 – 10:00AM – 12:00 PM

Derek Liebert noted that the grant was submitted for the Southridge Park Trail project. He also noted that UPD staff will be at Dr. Williams school in the next week to gather feedback on the Weaver & Prairie Park master plan.

VI. **UPDAC Member Comments and Open Discussion**

Lauren Chambers - Southridge Park appreciated the opportunity to provide feedback on the forthcoming trail project.

Kanittha Fay – Glad to see continued progress in regards to expanding cultural events through the District, including the Lunar New Year Festival and collaboration with the Urbana High School through different programs. First time in 20 years that these events have happened. Further opportunities, such as a Taco Festival with La Mixteca, possible.

VII. **Adjourn**

Ashley Withers adjourned the meeting at 8:21 PM.

Respectfully submitted by **Brittany Tammen**