

**URBANA PARK DISTRICT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES – BOARD STUDY SESSION
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2024
7:00 PM
PLANNING AND OPERATIONS FACILITY
1011 E. KERR AVENUE
URBANA, ILLINOIS 61802**

The study session meeting of the Urbana Park District Board of Commissioners was held Tuesday, February 4, 2024, at the Planning and Operations Facility, 1011 E. Kerr Avenue, Urbana, IL 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 commissioner of the district 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.

COMMISSIONERS	PRESENT	ABSENT
President Michael Walker	X	
Vice-President Merdith Blumthal	X	
Commissioner Cedric Stratton	X	
Commissioner Roger Digges	X	
Commissioner Laura Hastings	X	

Also present were Tim Bartlett, Executive Director;
Derek Liebert, Superintendent of Planning and Operations;
Corky Emberson, Superintendent of Recreation;
Allison Jones served as Recorder.

I. Call to Order

President Walker called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

A. Remote Attendance

There was no remote attendance requested at this time.

II. Accept Agenda

COMMISSIONER BLUMTHAL MADE A MOTION WITH A SECOND BY COMMISSIONER DIGGES TO ACCEPT THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN, ALL SAID “AYE.”

III. Public Comment

There were no comments from members of the public.

IV. Discussion

A. Urbana Park District Scholarship Program

Director Bartlett introduced the topic of the UPD Scholarship Program. He noted the program has been adjusted over the years and staff hope to have discussions on how to promote the

program, how to fund scholarships, and how to reach the most people and reduce barriers. He also noted that the Urbana Parks Foundation will be prioritizing this important program over the coming months.

Corky Emberson noted he is the primary person for approving scholarship applications. He noted these are generally funded through taxes, program revenue, and donations. He reviewed the paperwork application process and the sliding scale system based on income and household size. He noted that the maximum scholarship generally given is 65%.

Next Corky Emberson reviewed the newer type of scholarship through Urvana. He noted that this is donation money from Carle Foundation and was approximately \$20,000 to distribute for 100% scholarships for applicants on site over the last 5 years. He noted that no proof of income is needed and there are no restrictions based on residency, and funds are available for adults, youth, and families. He also stated that the Carle funding has expired, but there was enough residual money that we will have FY 2025 Urvana Scholarships available. He also noted one final way UPD reduces financial barriers for programs is by participating in CCRS, the Child Care Resource Center program through the state of Illinois. He noted this program is child-care based and primarily for summer camps and school days out programs.

Staff continued to provide additional information on the topic, including program participant numbers, and scholarships requested, granted, and used. The Board expressed interest in further tracking Urvana scholarships to see how effective they are for getting participants into programs. The Board and staff discussed the maximum scholarship of 65% and how to increase that number to eliminate further barriers. The Board also emphasized minimal or less paperwork, when possible, for utilizing scholarships. Staff also noted that they are in the process of working out the details for a large donation for Health & Wellness facility scholarships.

Next, Board and staff discussed CUSR scholarships and how to maximize staff time for providing programming to the community. The Board encouraged maximum scholarships, expanding afterschool offerings, new inclusion staff hiring, and trying different approaches to fundraising and scholarships.

The Board and staff then discussed potential partners for scholarships for residents and non-residents, including the County Government, or City Block Grant dollars. The Board encouraged a focus on fundraising for scholarships at high-profile events like Turkey Trot. Other funding possibilities were discussed, including the Urbana Parks Foundation and the United Way.

V. Old Business

A. Action to Revise Approval of Solar Power Purchase Agreement

Derek Leibert provided an update on the solar power agreement and noted that after further investigation it was found that the power transformer at APNC is undersized to be able to accommodate additional upgrades. Therefore, staff recommend removing that facility from the solar power agreement at this time in order to move forward with the remaining facilities quickly. Staff also noted it provided cost savings for the project as well.

COMMISSIONER HASTINGS MADE A MOTION WITH A SECOND BY COMMISSIONER BLUMTHAL THAT URBANA PARK DISTRICT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REVISE THEIR APPROVAL OF THE 20-YEAR POWER PURCHASE AGREEMENT WITH GENERAL ENERGY/DSD RENEWABLES WITHOUT THE NATURE CENTER FOR THE AGGREGATED RATE OF \$0.06/KWH PENDING APPROVAL BY THE URBANA SCHOOL DISTRICT AND JOINT PARK AND SCHOOL DISTRICT LEGAL AGREEMENT ON THE CONTRACT TERMS. A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN, ALL SAID "AYE."

V. Comments from Commissioners

Commissioner Blumthal commented on pickleball at Brookens gym and what resources are provided to the program participants. Staff noted they would clarify to program participants what they can expect from the program.

Commissioner Hastings commented on mud around the portable toilet at Blair Park and possibly needing some mulch in that area. Staff responded they would look into it.

Commissioner Blumthal inquired about an opening date/repair updates for the Urbana Indoor Aquatic Center. Staff reported that they have been constantly working on the HVAC system, but additional malfunctions have been found and they may need to order additional equipment to complete the repairs. Staff also noted that pool passes are being extended to accommodate for the closure.

VII. Adjourn

President Walker adjourned the meeting at 8:24 PM.

Michael W. Walker, President

Timothy A. Bartlett, Secretary

(Seal)

Date Approved: 3/19/24