



*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 28, 2020  
7:00 PM**

**REMOTE MEETING VIA ZOOM**

**VIDEO LINK: <https://zoom.us/j/94040440098>**

**PHONE NUMBER: (312) 626-6799**

**MEETING ID: 940 4044 0098**

**PASSWORD: 027604**

**I. Call to Order - Introductions**

**II. Public Comment**

*Please see attached document for details regarding attendance and public comment via Zoom.*

**III. New Business**

- A. Organic Gardens Action Plan – UPD Staff
- B. UPD Work During COVID-19

**IV. Questions and Answers – Answer any questions as follow up from last month’s meeting**

**V. Reports**

- A. UPDAC Chair
- B. Director
- C. Board Representative
- D. UPD Projects update

**VI. Approval of the Minutes of the February 25, 2020 Meeting**

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

**VIII. Adjourn**

**\*\*\*This month’s secretary is Laura Hastings\*\*\***

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.

***Upcoming meetings:***

*May 26, 2020*

*June 23, 2020*

*July – no meeting*

*August 25, 2020*

*September 22, 2020*

## Public Input for Urbana Park District Advisory Committee Meeting (Tuesday, April 28, 2020)

Anyone can attend the meeting virtually via Zoom. We ask that if you possibly can, please submit your public comments via email by 7:00 pm to [erkirsanoff@urbanaparks.org](mailto:erkirsanoff@urbanaparks.org) – these will be read per Urbana Park District Board rules and time limits.

You will be able to use a phone to call in:

- Join by calling (312) 626-6799.
- Callers will then be asked to enter the Meeting ID number followed by the # key. The Meeting ID number is 940 4044 0098.
- We ask that you please mute yourself until the time for public input.

You will be able to use a computer to address the Urbana Park District Advisory Committee using Zoom:

- Make sure you have a microphone on your computer if you wish to speak. Please identify yourself for the record if you do speak.
- You do not need to install software to use Zoom. You can click “Join from your browser.” It appears that Zoom prefers for users to download and install their meeting client software on your computer. Choose the option you are most comfortable with, and note, it may be browser specific.
- You should see the meeting video stream through Zoom and hear people talking. The link to join by computer is <https://zoom.us/j/94040440098>.
- Please turn off your webcam video feed as everyone connected will be able to see you and your background. This Zoom session will be recorded as part of the record.
- We will not be using the Chat or Participant windows for this meeting.
- You can find tutorials and help information here:  
<https://support.zoom.us/hc/enus/articles/201362193-How-Do-I-Join-A-Meeting->

As a reminder, public input can be received prior to the meeting via email as listed above. This is a work in progress, and we ask for your patience and thank you for your understanding, as we navigate this difficult situation.

Two websites with additional tips and tricks:

<https://www.groovehq.com/blog/zoom-tips-and-tricks>

<https://www.colorado.edu/ocg/ocg-staff-resources/meeting-resources/zoom-meeting-tipstricks>

# Minutes of the Urbana Park District Advisory Committee

February 25, 2020

Meeting attendance: Nicki Ambrose, Ben Kaap, Jean Paley, Sarah Roper, Howard Schein, Travis Schein, Nancy Delcomyn, Corky Emberson, Derek Liebert, Ellen Kirsanoff, Rich McMahon, Georgena Donoho.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Jean Paley at 7:05 pm.

There was no public comment.

New Business: Derek introduced two UPD staff members, Rich McMahon, Grounds Maintenance Supervisor, and Georgena Donoho, Grounds Maintenance Technician. The topic for today's program is Trees and Gardens here at the UPD.

Rich began the program. He introduced the topic with information on the number of trees we care for here at the UPD, and also how we work together with the City of Urbana to maintain a good urban forest. He shared on the screen the TreeKeeper software system that is used to carefully track the number of trees, their health, and all the maintenance work done to each tree. It is a significant software system that can maintain a lot of data on all the trees within both the park district and city canopy.

Rich and his Arbor staff keep all the data up to date in the system, maintaining accurate records on tree health, condition, treatment such as pruning, or any other needed work.

Rich also gave an overview of the number of trees planted annually, how they are cared for throughout the year. Our historic trees (English Oak in Carle Park, Burr Oak in Leal Park, etc.) receive extra care to help maintain their health and long life. We are working to use more sustainable practices in our tree care, using less or no herbicides for example. The UPD does very careful due diligence to protect our trees. We cage them to prevent deer and other wildlife from damaging trees, we water them regularly and will prune to remove deadwood that would be detrimental to the trees' health.

Some future projects for the Grounds department is possibly a mobile app for the Hickman Tree walk in Carle Park. This is used a lot by school groups for educational purposes, so an app might be a useful learning tool. Also an app for the legacy tree program of the City. Since we have trees registered in this system, it might be nice to easily identify them.

A question from UPDAC was; would we be willing to plant Elm trees again. The answer is yes, there are Elm trees now that are resistant to the Dutch Elm Disease.

Georgena then presented on the gardens at the UPD. She gave an introduction to herself and her background in horticulture. In her presentation, she focused on her vision for the district's gardens.

- Sustainability!
- Conservation of our soil! It takes 25 years to make 1 mm of topsoil. It is important to keep what we have and improve it when we can.

Her landscapes are using more and more native plants whenever possible. She also plants cover crops in rotation where she can to help build the topsoil, and it's a more sustainable process.

She shared with UPDAC some of her designs that she has done in recent years. The re-landscaping at the Phillips Recreation Center, the Cottage re-landscaping, the Nature Playscape, and the McCullough Farmhouse at Meadowbrook Park.

Other work that Georgena is doing is offering outreach classes at the park district for the public to teach about techniques for soil improvement and landscaping with native plants.

One of her goals at the UPD is to get a greenhouse to grow her own annuals for landscape beds. She mentioned Midwest Ground Covers in St. Charles, IL is a wealth of information and open to the public to go and learn about the best plants to use in gardens.

UPDAC asked about signage of plants to help the public ID and learn about them. Her response is that it's difficult because plants "move" and will begin growing on other areas and the signage does not always keep up. Apps like the iNaturalist app can help though if folks want to take a picture and use their phone to ID plants.

Reports –

Board Representative – Nancy talked about the upcoming legislative breakfast, what the purpose is, and what our message is to the legislators who attend. A large part of the focus will be on how grants make a difference over the years in our provision of services and the quality of life our residents enjoy.

UPD project update – brief update on work being done in CLP and what other grant funding has been submitted.

Howard wanted to make the point that the Crystal Lake Park Family Aquatic Center (which received grant funding) is a REAL community asset. He knows that people drive up to 100 miles to come spend the day here. It's a beautiful facility, and we make a big impact with it.

Approval of minutes of the January 28, 2020 meeting. So moved by Nicki Ambrose and second by Ben Kaap. Approved with no corrections.

Move to adjourn the meeting made by Howard Schein. The meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm.