



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, AUGUST 22, 2023
7:00 PM
PLANNING & OPERATIONS FACILITY
1011 E. KERR AVENUE
URBANA, IL 61802**

I. Call to Order and Introductions

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 June 27, 2023 Meeting

IV. New Business

- A. UPD GIS Map
- B. Saline Greenway

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

Upcoming meetings:

September 26, 2023

October 24, 2023

November 28, 2023

December – no meeting

*****This month's secretary is Kelsey Beccue*****

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.

**NOTICE AND AGENDA OF MEETING
 URBANA PARK DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (UPDAC)
 TUESDAY, JUNE 27, 2023
 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, June 27, 2023 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	
Gary Ambler	x	
Jonville Chenoweth		x
Lori Choquette	x	
Reba Daniels	x	
Amy Delahanty		x
David Dorman	x	
Kanittha Fay	x	
Gary Stensland	x	
Michael Stevenson	x	
Brittany Tammen	x	
Karl Weingartner		x
Darius White	x	

Others Present:
 Cedric Stratton, Commissioner;
 Laura Hastings, Commissioner;
 Tim Bartlett, Executive Director;
 Corky Emberson, Superintendent of Recreation;
 Derek Liebert, Superintendent of Planning & Operations;
 Kelsey Beccue, Development Manager;
 Keenan Portis, Park Planner;
 Jeff Martin, Farnsworth Group

I. Call to Order

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

II. Public Comment

There was no public comment – prospective UPDAC member Myra Stevens was in attendance.

III. Approval of the Minutes of the May 23, 2023 Meeting

Lori Choquette made a motion with a second from Brittany Tammen to approve the minutes of the May 23, 2023 UPDAC Meeting. A vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

IV. New Business

A. Prairie/Weaver Park Draft Master Plan Concepts

With new board member Laura Hastings in attendance, Tim Bartlett called on everyone to introduce themselves. He then provided some background information on the master planning process for Blair and Weaver Parks, which has included the public, UPDAC, UPD Board, and staff. He presented information on land acquisition at the district, noting that sometimes acquisition of land occurs long before that land is developed, such as with the land that ultimately became Meadowbrook Park. Weaver Park was acquired with the LAWCON grant back in the late 1990s, and was purchased with the idea of developing it into a complex to house the district’s outdoor athletics fields. The natural areas seen at Weaver Park today were actually an interim plan to reduce the need for mowing on the site and create some sort of public use prior to the planned developments. There was also a recent change in law at the time that determined that publicly acquired lands could not be used agriculturally, as had been practiced before. With the new Health & Wellness Center being constructed in the bordering Prairie Park, master planning has begun for both sites to create a dynamic destination park for the east side of Urbana.

Next, Jeff Martin with Farnsworth Group reviewed the planning schedule and upcoming public input opportunities along with a general review of the topography and site features at Prairie and Weaver Parks. Two main concept plans were presented distilled from previous public input: Revised Plan Options #1 and #3.

Option #1 features six soccer fields on the north end of Weaver Park, two softball fields and a multipurpose field on the south end, along with about 27.75 acres of natural areas and a 175 foot buffer from the high-quality wetland area that is currently present in Weaver Park. There is also a parking lot entrance from the north along the western border of the park as well as parking from Prairie Park to the south adjacent to the softball and multipurpose field. There are also several outdoor amenities in this option for Prairie Park including tennis and pickle ball courts, half-

court basketball, a wetland, playground, splash pad, and preservation of the existing baseball field. There is also a trail system planned that connects both parks.

Regarding Revised Plan Option #1, Tim provided some background on the existing wetland in Weaver Park, and how it was installed to help remediate flooding issues in the neighboring Scottswood neighborhood. It has since become habitat for many types of birds and is a high quality natural area that the district will preserve. Tim also shared that there are concerns with the district's access to outdoor fields, as many of the fields that are currently used are at the Brookens Complex leased from the County. With the County moving locations, that arrangement has become uncertain, and so there is a need to develop outdoor fields on properties owned by the district to secure future use. Darius commented on the disparity between the half-court basketball option versus the full-sized option for other outdoor amenities and noted that there are racial associations the district should be mindful of. Reba brought up potential conflicts with school pick-up times at the neighboring Dr. Preston Williams Elementary School and Tim responded that a traffic study had been done prior to design to avoid conflicts. Cedric asked if there would still be mown paths including within the natural areas, and Jeff responded in the affirmative.

Next, Jeff reviewed Revised Option #3. Revised Option #3 includes two softball fields on the north side near along the western border, four soccer fields to the south along the western border, two soccer fields in the southeast corner, a playground, perimeter path, about 30 acres of natural areas, and a 70 foot buffer from the wetland. Parking is included from the northwest corner and connected to Prairie at the south and running along the southern border. Amenities at Prairie Park are largely the same as in Revised Option #1. David asked if the wetland could potentially flood during heavy rains and Jeff responded that excess water would be absorbed by the surrounding open space noting that is an argument for extending the buffer area between the wetland and other recreational amenities. David also inquired if the park could support both the more active recreation opportunities at the athletics fields in conjunction with the more passive options in the natural areas. Tim replied that the park is equipped to balance both uses and that there is about a 50/50 balance of the two occurring in both designs. The two uses balance each other out and may expose people to different forms of recreation. Kanittha brought up the idea of concessions near the athletics fields, and Ashley commented that she preferred the soccer fields at the southern end of the park given the proximity to Prairie. A further revised Option #3 moves the playground to Prairie Park, and people seemed to like that better.

In all, Revised Option #3 was preferred by UPDAC.

B. Blair Park – OSLAD Grant Review

Tim reviewed the development of a new master plan for Blair Park completed a few years ago, noting that the district received an OSLAD grant to improve the park and

add many of the amenities included in the plan. However, even with the grant award, there are still items that need attention, specifically the Blair Park Pavilion. Fortunately, there is a local donor who is willing to contribute a significant donation to help cover the costs of renovating the pavilion, but further funding is necessary. To acquire this additional funding, the district plans to apply for an OSLAD grant with the donor funds to function as a significant portion of the local match.

Keenan reviewed the current pavilion renovation needs, the recent amenities that have been added to the park, and future amenities being considered. UPDAC members spent time ranking the proposed park amenities including concrete game tables, a multipurpose field, tetherball, baggo set, and concrete ping pong table.

V. Reports

A. UPDAC Chair

Ashley reminded UPDAC members that there is no meeting in July. She also noted that this is Gary Ambler's last meeting, and she thanked him for his service.

B. Board Representative

Laura commented that Jettie Rhodes Day had a great turnout and encouraged everyone to come to next year's event. Tim echoed Laura's sentiments and noted there were a lot of community groups there tabling. Corky commented on upcoming Neighborhood Nights and Play Days in the Park events.

C. Director's Report

Tim gave updates on the Health & Wellness Groundbreaking and the Blair Tennis Dedication, noting that both events had a great turnout. Darius asked about the Candlelight Serenade event, and Tim responded that overall it went well.

D. Capital Projects Report

Tim shared that construction has begun on the Health & Wellness Center at Prairie Park.

VI. UPDAC Member Comments and Open Discussion

Gary Stensland commented that he had recently seen an article about the environmental impacts of modern light sources and said he would send it to Kelsey to share. Reba suggested that it would be a good idea to have an UPDAC presence on the first day of school to promote the Weaver/Prairie webinar and second survey. Kanittha shared that she is getting some comments from the public about the Urbana Indoor Aquatic Center (UIAC). Lori suggested that the district should make public the budget numbers that led to the summer closure. There was brief further discussion of a fact sheet or FAQ regarding the UIAC.

VII. Adjourn

Ashley Withers adjourned the meeting at 9:02 PM.