

**URBANA PARK DISTRICT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
 MINUTES – BOARD STUDY SESSION
 TUESDAY, AUGUST 1, 2023
 6:30 PM-8:00 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, August 1, 2023 at the Planning and Operations Facility, 1011 E. Kerr Avenue, Urbana, IL at 6:30 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 Meredith Blumthal	X	
Commissioner Cedric Stratton	X	
Commissioner Roger Digges	X	
Commissioner Laura Hastings	X	

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

I. Call to Order

Vice-President Blumthal called the meeting to order at 6:33 PM.

A. Remote Attendance

There was no remote attendance requested.

II. Accept Agenda

COMMISSIONER DIGGES MADE A MOTION WITH A SECOND BY COMMISSIONER STRATTON 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. UPD Staffing Levels and Transitions

Director Bartlett introduced the topic of staffing and led the discussion on this this critical resource. He noted staff's desire to keep the Board up-to-date on staffing, transitions, growth, and changes within the district. Staff noted significant efforts to build human capital, including You Belong Here diversity efforts, updating the salary/wage program, consideration of additional benefits, re-evaluating job requirements, and increasing training and leadership opportunities. Staff have also needed to manage challenges such as COVID, the minimum wage increase, and local growth to remain a competitive workplace. Staff noted upcoming issues that may impact staffing at UPD, including the new Health & Wellness Facility, the entire Weaver/Prairie complex, changes in Aquatics, the Kickapoo Rail Trail expansion, and efforts to improve redundancy throughout the district.

Administration staff reviewed recent changes over the last few years, including high turn-over, as well as elevating Laura Orcutt's position to Superintendent of Finance. Administration staff have continued to work on standardizing financial practices throughout the district, cross training, staff growth, and supporting donor recruitment and efforts of the Urbana Parks Foundation.

Recreation staff noted that internal UPD Matrix Teams are designed to help with innovation and are valuable resources when working on staffing needs. Areas of note within the Recreation department including increasing part-time staff incentives, securing a new Outreach and Wellness Manager with the skills to operate the new facility once built, internal staffing changes/shifts due to medical situations, and filling several open positions from within.

Aquatics staff noted efforts to manage staff for the opening of the indoor pool, as well as keeping staff up-to-date on maintaining cleanliness standards at the Urbana Indoor Aquatic Center.

Marketing staff note their wish to grow communication efforts, and the potential need to expand, specifically to provide additional attention to social media opportunities.

Planning and Operations staff reviewed important staffing issues, including a few key upcoming retirements and ensuring their roles are properly trained for, custodial needs throughout the district and how best to meet those needs either externally or internally, a complete roster of part-time employees, and large projects being worked on, such as updating security technology, tree inventory, and a staff-led GIS system.

The Board and staff discussed this issues and the Board encouraged staff to continue these efforts in improving staff retention, outreach, and communication.

V. **Comments from Commissioners**

Commissioner Stratton commented on the issue of the proposed men's homeless shelter in downtown Urbana.

Director Bartlett commented on efforts within the Urbana Indoor Aquatic Center to communicate with customers regarding the changes in hours, as well as manage the staffing challenges for that facility. He noted staff efforts to reach out within the community to find sources of income through rentals and events, as well as reduce expenses during unproductive

times. He also noted additional efforts in cleaning/maintenance practices.

VI. Adjourn

Vice-President Blumthal adjourned the meeting at 8:23 PM.

Michael Walker, President

Timothy A. Bartlett, Secretary

(Seal)

Date Approved: 9/12/23