



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, SEPTEMBER 23, 2025
7:00 PM
PHILLIPS RECREATION CENTER
505 W. STOUGHTON ST.
URBANA, IL 61801**

I. Call to Order – Welcome New Members 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 August 26, 2025 Meeting

IV. New Business

- A. UPDAC Year-in-Review
- B. Upcoming Programs and Projects

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:

October 28, 2025

November 18, 2025*

****Third Tuesday***

December – NO MEETING

January 27, 2025

February 24, 2026

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

Note: The Meeting Agenda and Supporting Materials are on the UPD website at <https://www.urbanaparks.org/urbana-park-district-advisory-committee-updac>.

**MEETING MINUTES
 URBANA PARK DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (UPDAC)
 TUESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2025
 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, August 26, 2025 at the Urbana Park District (UPD) 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
Hannah Sheets, Chair	X	
Eusebio Briseño	X	
Lauren Chambers	X	
Lori Choquette	X	
Sara Curtis		X
Carmen Franks	X	
Matthew Fletcher	X	
Sylena Harper		X
Lauren Karplus		X
Lucia Maldonado	X	
Martha McSims	X	
Sara Rand	X	
Rachel Spencer	X	
Ashley Sims		X
Gretchen Madsen Webb	X	

Others Present:

Ashley Withers, Commissioner;
 Laura Hastings, Commissioner;
 Rachel Lenz, Executive Director;
 Derek Liebert, Superintendent of Planning & Operations;
 Keenan Portis, Park Planner;
 Kelsey Beccue, Development Manager

I. Call to Order

Hannah Sheets called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM. She then invited introductions to welcome the new UPDAC class, and UPDAC members, board, and staff introduced themselves.

II. Public Comment

Kanittha Fay from the Urbana Parent-Teacher Student Association spoke about offering opportunities for student leaders to experience and participate in the meetings of local government agencies. She commented on her good experience with UPDAC and wanted to offer the chance for local students to understand how it works and experience a meeting. Two Urbana High School students were in attendance at the UPDAC meeting as part of this effort to develop civic engagement in Urbana's youth.

III. Approval of the Minutes of the June 24, 2025 Meeting

Hannah presented the minutes of the June 24, 2025 UPDAC Meeting for review and approval.

Rachel Spencer made a motion with a second from Eusebio Briseno to approve the minutes of the June 24, 2025 UPDAC Meeting. A vote was taken and passed unanimously.

IV. New Business

C. King Park Master Plan

Executive Director, Rachel Lenz, introduced the King Park Master Plan. She noted that the plan was borne from a very intentional community planning process that incorporated multiple stakeholder groups.

Park Planner, Keenan Portis, reviewed the community engagement process for developing the King Park Master Plan, highlighting the opportunities the district had to engage with youth and families. Of particular note, was that first through third graders really liked the gaga ball pit, while fourth and fifth graders preferred open field space. Both amenities are included in the final plan.

Gretchen Webb asked if the playground was really large, and Derek Liebert responded that the proposed playground is slightly larger than what is currently at the site, but that the overall footprint is the same. Lucia Maldonado asked about multicultural games, and suggested that the district speak with the school about the top languages spoken by their students to inform any inclusion of culturally specific pastimes. Derek said that the district could look into that.

Next, Keenan reviewed the master plan aerial and highlighted the various features of the plan: new playground, basketball courts and teen hangout area, peace plaza, and expanded parking to name a few. Derek spoke about the Felmley-Dickerson site to the west as a target for future expansion of the park. The site is currently owned by a construction company and leased to another construction company for a long-term

lease, but the property owners are aware of district interest and staff will revisit the conversation with them again in fifteen years when the lease is nearing expiration.

Lucia suggested that the district plan milkweed since the King School mascot is the monarch butterfly. Sara Rand suggested that the district consider an alternative to green for their benches since it is difficult to see against a green landscape for the visually impaired. Derek mentioned that we have blue benches at PrairiePlay to fit in with the site better, and that we could look at alternatives for future benches.

There was a question about when the project would be complete, and Derek responded that it would likely be 2027 or 2028 before everything is finished. An UPDAC member suggested distance markers for the trails in King Park and other parks.

Matt Fletcher asked Keenan how many hours he thought he put in toward community engagement for this project, and Keenan said he thought it totaled about 40 or 50 hours.

V. Reports

E. UPDAC Chair

Hannah recapped the UPDAC Planning Meeting held just prior to the evenings regularly scheduled UPDAC meeting, noting that topics for future UPDAC discussion had been slated.

F. Board Representative

Laura shared a story about a boy who was glad to have “picked out” the new playground for King Park, and praised the district’s work in community engagement and planning. Ashley expressed the value of UPDAC in understanding the “why” of district activities.

G. Director’s Report

Rachel spoke about her ongoing meetings with district staff as she settles into her role. She also shared updated attendance and membership numbers for the Health & Wellness Center (HAWC) and the Crystal Lake Park Family Aquatic Center.

H. Capital Projects Report

Derek gave several capital projects updates:

- New sculpture installation, “Wending” by Ted Garner
- Updates to the Phillips Recreation Center entrance for ADA compliance
- Kickapoo Rail Trail/Baker’s Lane project

VI. UPDAC Member Comments and Open Discussion

Lori Choquette commented that there aren’t any changing tables available at Meadowbrook Park. Derek responded that we are including them in new construction

and he will look at options for Meadowbrook. She also commented that lifeguards are pulling the lap lanes too early.

Eusebio said that the closure of the HAWC disrupted patron routines and asked if an option would be available for future closures. Rachel said that for next year, we are working on a reciprocal plan with the Martens Center at Champaign Park District: HAWC members can go to the Martens Center during HAWC closures, and Martens Center members can come to HAWC during Martens Center closures.

The topic of selling t-shirts was revisited. Lauren Chambers said that the Urbana Free Library uses an online platform that handles payment, printing, and distribution. Kelsey said she'd reach out to Lyndzie to learn more.

Carmen commented on the picnic tables outside the HAWC and Sara Rand suggested more single day programs for parents whose visitation might not make it practical for them to enroll their kids in programs over the course of multiple weeks or months.

VII. Adjourn

Hannah adjourned the meeting at 8:24 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Kelsey Beccue