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*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, FEBRUARY 24, 2026  
6:00 PM  
PLANNING & OPERATIONS FACILITY  
1011 E. KERR AVENUE  
URBANA, IL 61802**

- I. **Call to Order**
- 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 January 27, 2026 Meeting**
- IV. **New Business**
  - A. IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference Review
- 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:***

***March 24, 2026***

***April 28, 2026***

***May 26, 2026***

***June 23, 2026***

***July – No meeting***

**\*\*\* 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, JANUARY 27, 2026**  
**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, January 27, 2026 at the Urbana Park District (UPD) Planning & Operations Facility at 6:00 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 Orcutt, Superintendent of Business Services  
 Kelsey Beccue, Development Manager

**I. Call to Order**

Hannah Sheets called the meeting to order at 6:27 PM.

## II. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

## III. Approval of the Minutes of the October 28, 2025 Meeting

The minutes of the October 28, 2026 UPDAC meeting were presented for approval.

*Eusebio Briseño made a motion with a second from Sara Curtis to approve the minutes of the October 28, 2025 UPDAC Meeting. A vote was taken and the motion passed.*

## IV. New Business

### A. UPD Finance 101

Superintendent of Business Services, Laura Orcutt, presented information about Urbana Park District finance. She began with an explanation of an Urbana property tax bill and how it is calculated. One key aspect of this is the Equalized Assessed Valuation (EAV). EAV is the partial value of property ( $\frac{1}{3}$  of market value for Champaign County). For example:  $\$51,665 \times 0.333333 = \$17,220$  EAV. This multiplier number is used to eliminate tax discrepancies.

In calculating the tax bill, the change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) is important. The Change in CPI is the measure of the average change over time in the prices paid by urban consumers for a market basket of consumer goods and services. It is considered a measure of inflation and is used as an economic indicator.

She also discussed the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (PTELL, commonly known as “tax caps”). It is designed to limit the increases in property tax extensions for non-home rule taxing districts. The CPI for the 2025 Levy is 2.9%. During COVID, the CPI increased to around 6%, while the normal level is typically below 3%. COVID caused CPI increase to around 6%, while normal is typically below 3%. Individual tax bills increase when the person’s EAV goes up faster than others or there is a decrease in the overall EAV (business property tax appeal).

80% of the Urbana Park District’s total revenue is from tax money, so the annual tax levy has to be right as much as possible. If the district doesn’t levy enough, then that loss continues to roll over year after year. The levy cycle starts in September with the deadline to file in December, and the actual extension in April. Every November, the Board has a public hearing and adopts the levy ordinance. The Board can reallocate funds in February prior to confirmation in April if necessary. If public feedback is received, commissioners will hear it at the public hearing, but may or may not act on it. The levy cycle also includes publishing the Truth in Taxation notice, or “black box” in the newspaper regarding tax changes every October.

Tax Increment Finance (TIF) Districts also affect the overall tax levy. TIFs are used to improve struggling areas by freezing property tax assessments at a base level. These

are decided on by the Urbana City Council. As TIFs are established or expire, they impact the overall EAV and tax levy of UPD.

The property tax bill is distributed to many different agencies, depending on where you live. In the Urbana Park District residency area, there are 11 agencies who receive a portion of your total bill. Overall, the Urbana Park District accounts for approximately 11% of the total property tax bill.

Next, Laura discussed the budget cycle. Key steps to the cycle are to plan, prepare, implement, monitor, and revise. The budget cycle begins with planning in the late fall and is essentially a year-round process. Spending levels and financial resources must be accurately gauged at budget preparation time to ensure that planned services are properly funded. The Board passes their annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance in July. Appropriation means the authority to spend. After the budget is approved, it is the responsibility of the Board and department heads to ensure that services are delivered within budget limits.

Finally, Laura shared information on the district's Capital Improvement Plan and Budget. There is an internal Capital Improvement Team that meets monthly to discuss and review. For the Capital Improvement Plan, the priorities are ranked from 1 to 5 and scheduled appropriately in the five-year outlook.

## **V. Reports**

### **A. UPDAC Chair**

OSLAD grant received for King Park, can move forward as planned.

### **B. Board Representative**

Most of the board and UPD staff going to conference the last weekend of January.

### **C. Director's Report**

Kelsey presented on behalf of Rachel. She commented that the Health & Wellness Center 1-Year celebration had a great turnout and went very well. She also shared that State Representative Ammons and State Senator Faraci had designated \$3.5 million and \$500,000 respectively toward the Prairie and Weaver Park project. These funds will be used for infrastructure improvements, trail development, and soccer fields. If all goes smoothly with contracting, then it's possible that construction work will begin in 2027.

### **D. Capital Projects Report**

Kelsey also shared a brief capital projects update on behalf of Derek, noting that the Foundation has recently received a generous donation from a community member to do work in Busey Woods to create better access to the south end and natural area restoration.

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

Carmen said that the City of Urbana Community Services Grant is open and encouraged the park district to apply. Kelsey shared that the park district applies every year, typically for the Youth Scholarship Program.

Sara Rand commented that the HAWC anniversary party was not very friendly for kids – she noted that her kids were shuffled out of activities like pickleball, volleyball, and basketball by other adults who wanted to play seriously. When she asked a staff member for assistance, the staff member said “it’s just a free for all for us too” and walked away. She suggested that in the future, there is time set aside for kids in the beginning or an area set up for kids to play at a similar event.

One UPDAC member asked about hosting a multicultural event at the park district. Kelsey responded that the district doesn’t have a specific event like this, but has partnered with other agencies for culturally-specific events, and is open to the idea.

**VII. Adjourn**

Hannah adjourned the meeting at 8:00 PM.