



REGULAR BOARD MEETING
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS OF PALATINE PARK DISTRICT
Village of Palatine, 200 East Wood Street in Palatine
Second Floor- Village Room B
November 24, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

These minutes are not a verbatim record of what was said during the meeting

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Commissioner Sammons

Commissioners Present

Greg Sammons, President
Jennifer Rogers, Vice-President
Susan Gould
Joe Petricca
Michelle Rushing

Commissioners Absent

Staff Present

Benjamin Rea, Executive Director	Amy Vito, Superintendent of Parks
Andrea Fisher, Park Board Treasurer/Director of Finance	Alex Giannikoulis, Superintendent of Trades
Lisa Allie, Park Board Secretary/Executive Assistant	Colleen Palmer, Director of Recreation & Facilities
Michelle Eckelberry, Director of District Services	Josh Ludolph, Superintendent of Recreation Facilities
Sonia Austin, Superintendent of Finance	Katie Waszak, Superintendent of Recreation Programming
Dayell Houzenga, Superintendent of District Services	Todd Ranum, Athletic Coordinator
Jim Holder, Director of Parks & Planning	

Visitors and Citizens Present

Steve Konters, Hitchcock Design Group	Terry Ruff, Resident
Bridget Deatrick, Hitchcock Design Group	Maria Nowakowski, Resident

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Rushing moved, and Commissioner Rogers seconded that the agenda be approved as amended. Director Rea stated that we needed to swap agenda items #5 and #6, moving the new business as #5 and the presentation as #6. By a voice vote, the agenda for the regular meeting of November 24, 2025, was approved as amended. The result of the voice vote follows:

AYE: Jennifer Rogers, Susan Gould, Joe Petricca, Michelle Rushing, Greg Sammons

NAY: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried.

Approval of Consent Agenda

The Board reviewed the previously distributed items posted on the consent agenda. Commissioner Rogers moved, and Commissioner Petricca seconded that the consent agenda be approved as presented. By a roll call vote, the following items on the consent agenda were approved: Regular Meeting Minutes of November 10, 2025. The motion was approved by a roll call vote; the result follows:

AYE: Susan Gould, Joe Petricca, Michelle Rushing, Jennifer Rogers, Greg Sammons

NAY: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried.

Visitors and Citizen's Comments

None

New Business

The Board reviewed a previously distributed board summary pertaining to the Approval of Professional Services Contract for 400 N Hicks Road building expansion project. Commissioner Rogers moved, and Commissioner Petricca seconded the motion that the Board of Park Commissioners approve Gewalt Hamilton Associates, Inc., Vernon Hills, IL., in the amount not to exceed \$111,500.00, to provide construction documents, permitting assistance, and construction administration for the 400 N Hicks Road construction project. The motion was approved by a roll call vote; the result follows:

AYE: Joe Petricca, Michelle Rushing, Jennifer Rogers, Susan Gould, Greg Sammons

NAY: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried.

The Board reviewed a previously distributed board summary pertaining to the Rejection and Award of Bid, one (1) Chevrolet Silverado 6500 cab chassis. Commissioner Petricca moved, and Commissioner Rogers seconded the motion that the Board of Park Commissioners reject, the lowest bidder, Napleton Chevrolet and approve, the next lowest responsible bidder, Ray Chevrolet, Fox lake, IL, in an amount not to exceed \$65,534.00 for the purchase of one 6500 Silverado cab chassis. The motion was approved by a roll call vote; the result follows:

AYE: Michelle Rushing, Jennifer Rogers, Susan Gould, Joe Petricca, Greg Sammons

NAY: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried.

Hitchcock Design Group Presentation

Steve Konters and Bridget Deatrick from Hitchcock Design Group presented the next steps of the Comprehensive Master Plan, focusing on strategies and action plans. They shared key priorities and discussed specific strategies. Other items discussed were high-priority activities for community engagement, strategies to improve program capacity and accessibility were also outlined.

The importance of enhancing park spaces, addressing accessibility issues, and implementing sustainability practices was emphasized. Along with a five-year action plan detailing capital improvements, operational needs, and program enhancements. Steve ended the presentation with a review of the next steps, which will conclude with a new draft master plan being presented for adoption early next year.

Commissioner Michelle Rushing left the meeting at 6:37 pm

Commissioner Gould expressed her concern about a previous statement that described the equestrian programming as primarily serving female youth, saying that it may attract more girls, but the program is open to all and offers a unique opportunity. Aside from going to the dog park or an event like Canine Carnival, the stables were the only place where children could interact with animals. She felt that dismissing it by saying the district serves youth well in other areas felt demeaning. Commissioner Gould requested that the statement be removed as it doesn't reflect our values and is hurtful. She acknowledged that we are beyond this point, but she doesn't like the wording or the way it was done, and the fact that it affects girls more than boys is off the wall. Commissioner Gould shared her experience with sports at Palatine High School and was glad to hear that the statement had been removed. She also pointed out that the stables were left out of the facility list in the survey, so that was not an option for people who attended Fall Fest or spectators at a horse show. She feels that this underrepresents their importance.

Bridget acknowledged that the original wording was poorly chosen and clarified that the data was based on actual enrollment figures from registration programming. She expressed appreciation for the feedback and apologized for any offense it caused.

Commissioner Gould asked if there were plans for a new Senior Center. Director Rea shared that he and Director Palmer have met with Diane and Senior Center Board Members and they have expressed that they are comfortable with the current location. He also shared that the focus moving forward is on refreshing and improving the space for the seniors. Upcoming priorities include addressing infrastructure needs and discussions will continue how to collaborate long-term to enhance the facility.

Maria Nowakowski, a resident who has lived in Palatine since 2000, asked if she could speak and expressed appreciation for the proposed plan. She mentioned the lack of an indoor pool promised near Hicks and Rand Road and the need for an additional indoor pool, other than Harper. Maria also shared that the Community Center fitness area is very noisy in the evenings due to other programming and that the facility is in poor condition. As a senior and regular participant in exercise programs, she questioned if she will be able to benefit from the new facilities or if she should look for alternatives outside the district due to current limitations. Maria expressed her disappointment, saying that the improvements are beautiful, but they do not benefit her as a resident.

Director Rea responded to Maia and explained that part of the Master Plan is to move staff to the new Admin Facility which will free up space at the Community Center giving residents more space for programming. He also noted that while Harper remains the only indoor pool, a future feasibility study will explore the potential for a new indoor pool, though no specific plans are currently in place.

Department Reports

The Board reviewed the previously distributed written Finance report. Director Fisher shared the following highlights from the October Financials: October included three payroll cycles, compared to 2 cycles in 2024, which resulted in an additional \$472,000 in payroll expenses. We're still awaiting property taxes; we know those bills went out since we just made payments on the new property at 400 S. Hicks Road. We are hoping to get tax inflow in December, as there's less revenue coming in on the programming side. Director Fisher also shared that due to upcoming renovations, investment opportunities will be limited and likely short-term. She also noted that a significant debt service expense appeared in October due to the timing of the annual rollover payment, which was made ahead of the November 1 due date. The draft budget will be presented for tentative approval at the next meeting on December 8th. That will start the 30-day public review period. The final budget adoption is scheduled for the first board meeting in January.

The Park Board reviewed the previously distributed written District Services Department report. Director Eckelberry reported they are continuing to work on condensing the policy manual into a spreadsheet for easier navigation. She acknowledged Amy Vito, Laney Hauptert, and Lily Moreno for delivering a presentation on Parks and Recreation to students at Palatine High School. It was very well attended with great feedback. The Heath and Benefit Fair for employees introduced self-enrollment, which just wrapped up. We had two volunteer events in October: Howl-o-ween and the Halloween party, with a total of 30 hours. IT has worked on completing Security camera installations, and keyless entry extensions are underway. Director Eckelberry also shared that our incident rates were down by 40% over last year. There is a new safety recognition for January, and the new safety shout-out forms were also introduced. We are excited to welcome Mary McGrath, who was hired as our part-time marketing assistant, and Fred Hall has retired from the Foundation Board.

The Board reviewed the previously distributed written Parks and Planning Report. Director Holder gave an update on Meadowlark: the contractor finished the punch list items, and the OSLAD grant application was submitted. He also shared that the communication issue with the Fitness center HVAC replacement has been corrected, but we are still waiting on the new motherboard, which provides secondary support to the heat pump in subzero temperatures. The contractor will be on site tomorrow to start the installation of the conduit for the Birchwood cable replacement with ComEd. The Golf Course closed for the season with another great year.

The Board reviewed the previously distributed Recreation and Facilities report. Director Palmer shared the following highlights for October: Recreation & Facilities staff wrapped up budgets and hosted a variety of special events. The annual Howl-O-Ween event, with 83 dogs and 147 people in attendance. This was one of the highest attended canine events in recent history. Candy Crawl had 150 families and over 30 vehicles decorated and participated. The Halloween party had slightly lower numbers this year, but we still hosted over 400 attendees and received a lot of great feedback. The Youth Theater performed 33 Little Pigs and Welcome to the Haunted House with 425 total combined attendance. We also had Susannah's Gift fundraiser with 150 tickets sold. Director Palmer also recognized staff, as there was quite a bit of collaboration across departments and throughout the district. Staff have been busy with rentals, birthday parties, maintenance items, and prepping for winter activities.

Executive Director Report

Director Rea shared that he and Director Holder met with the architects regarding the Administration Center, to discuss the design plans. We are still on track to be ready for bidding in February. We also received an existing floor plan of the Community Center; we've never had a complete layout, so that will be helpful as we move forward with renovation plans, which is expected to be done in phases. Director Rea reminded everyone about the Turkey Trot this Thursday, with the first race starting at 8:00 a.m. He also shared that we received the 2025 IPRA Exceptional Workplace Award. This is a five-year term, and it requires meeting certain criteria as an agency moves forward. Kudos to Allison and all the team members who worked on that.

Commissioner Reports/Future Agenda Items

Commissioner Gould attended the SLSF Celebrate Ability Gala, which was a great event as always.

Commissioner Rogers wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and thanked staff for their efforts with Turkey Trot.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Park Board on this date, Commissioner Rogers moved that the regular meeting be adjourned, and Commissioner Petricca seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a voice vote; the result follows:

AYE: Jennifer Rogers, Susan Gould, Joe Petricca, Greg Sammons

NAY: None

ABSENT: Michelle Rushing

Motion carried at 7:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

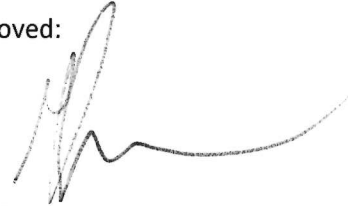
Lisa Allie
Park Board Secretary

Attest:



Lisa Allie
Secretary

Approved:



Greg Sammons
President

2025 Park Board Meetings	
December 8, 2025	