

**EFFICIENCY REPORT FOR THE
CRYSTAL LAKE PARK DISTRICT**



**APPROVED BY THE PARK DISTRICT'S
COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY
ON JUNE 6, 2024**

FILED
McHENRY COUNTY, IL

JUN 21 2024

Joseph J. Tirio
COUNTY CLERK

I. Purpose

The Crystal Lake Park District ("Park District") formed its Committee on Local Government Efficiency (the "Committee") on May 18, 2023, to study efficiencies and report recommendations regarding those efficiencies and increased accountability pursuant to 50 ILCS 70/1, *et seq.*

II. Committee Membership

The Committee consisted of the following individuals:

Eric Anderson, Committee Chair

Cathy Cagle, Commissioner

Jason Heisler, Commissioner

Sarah Michehl, Commissioner

Michael Jacobson, Commissioner

Karen Johnson, Commissioner

Linda Matthias, Commissioner

Debbie Gallagher, Resident Member

John Pletz, Resident Member

Jason Herbster, Executive Director

III. Committee Meetings

The Committee met as follows:

Meeting Date	Meeting Time and Place
September 7, 2023	6:00pm 1 E. Crystal Lake Avenue, Crystal Lake
February 1, 2024	5:30pm 1 E. Crystal Lake Avenue, Crystal Lake
June 6, 2024	6:15pm 1 E. Crystal Lake Avenue, Crystal Lake
August 1, 2024	6:25pm 1 E. Crystal Lake Avenue, Crystal Lake

Minutes of these meetings are available on the Park District's website or upon request at the Park District's administrative office.

IV. General Overview of Governing Statutes, Ordinances, Rules, Procedures, Powers, Jurisdiction

The Park District was established by a referendum initiated and approved by the voters of the Park District in 1921. All Illinois Park Districts, including the Crystal Lake Park District, are governed by the Park District Code, 70 ILCS 1205/1 *et seq.*

Having a separate and distinct taxing body for parks, recreation, and conservation within the local community, which operates apart from general purpose governments, is extremely beneficial to the community for many reasons, as detailed further in this report.

- **Elected, non-partisan, non-compensated board.** The Park District is governed by a board of seven commissioners. Commissioners must reside within the boundaries of the Park District and are elected at the Consolidated Election in odd-numbered years. Pursuant to state law, commissioners are non-partisan and serve without compensation.
- **Accessible and focused representation.** Having a dedicated board to oversee these essential facilities, programs, and services provides the community with increased access to their elected representatives and allows those elected representatives to remain focused solely on those facilities, programs, and services. This is contrasted with general purpose governments where elected representatives are responsible for broad oversight on a wide range of issues. This special purpose benefit is particularly advantageous when it comes to budget and finance oversight.
- **Increased transparency.** Having a dedicated unit of local government to provide park and recreation services also improves the relationship between the Park District and its residents because of the transparency and openness related to the board and Park District operations. Having detailed agenda and action items allows taxpayers to be better informed about the inner workings of their local government. When individual units of government are responsible for providing specified services like Park Districts, transparency is increased because action items and budget procedures are more detailed. Additionally, these items and budgetary decisions are subject to more scrutiny by locally elected officials than is the case with larger, multi-purpose governments with a multitude of departments.
- **Protection of revenues.** Because the Park District is a separate unit of local government, the revenues it generates can only be used for Park District

purposes. This assurance is contrasted with general purpose governments like cities, villages, and counties that provide a multitude of services such as fire, police, public works, economic development, etc., where revenues that are generated specifically for parks and recreation can be expended on these other services with limited, if any, input from voters.

- **Protection of assets.** Public parks and other real property owned by the Park District is held in trust for the residents of the Park District, and, subject to very limited exceptions, can only be sold or transferred if residents approve of the sale or transfer by a referendum. This is contrasted with general purpose units of government, which have authority to sell or dispose of property by a vote of the governing board.
- **Providing the Community More with Less.** The Park District does more with much fewer funding options. Unlike other units of local government that receive direct state funding, and income, sales, use, hotel/motel, motor fuel and other numerous taxes, the Park District's only tax revenues come from a modest portion of a resident's overall property tax bill. In fact, despite its limited funding options, the Park District share is only 5% of the local tax bill.

As part of good governance and implementing best practices in the management of day-to-day operations, the Park District has also adopted the following ordinances, rules, policies, and procedures:

- *Park District Policy Manual*
- *Park Board General Practices Manual*
- *Park District Ordinance Manual*
- *Employee Policy Manual*
- *Safety Manual*
- Strategic Plan 2017-2022
- *Comprehensive Master Plan 2023-2028*
- Popular Annual Financial Report
- ADA Transition Plan
- Urban Forest Management Plan 2020
- District Wide Tree Inventory

V. List of Shared Services and Partnerships

The Park District works diligently to provide the best possible programs, services, and facilities to our community at the least possible cost. One of the many ways the Park District achieves this goal is by partnering with neighboring Park Districts, school districts, other units of local government within or near the community, the State, non-profit organizations, and for-profit corporations. Below is a comprehensive list of the current partnerships, agreements, and other relationships that assist the Park District's mission of delivering the best possible services at the least possible cost to our community.

1. Membership in SRA

The Park District is part of the Northern Illinois Special Recreation Association ("NISRA"). Special recreation associations are a form of intergovernmental cooperation among units of local government that are authorized under the Illinois Constitution, the Intergovernmental Cooperation Act, the Park District Code, and the Municipal Code. Their formation is rooted in a fundamental belief and recognition that "Recreation is for Everyone." They are shining examples of local government efficiency.

By partnering together, local communities are able to effectively and efficiently deliver more successful program opportunities to community members who have special needs. Furthermore, by participating in the NISRA, the Park District networks with twelve other local governments to provide many more program opportunities for our community members who have special needs and offers a choice between participating in the NISRA's programs or in programs that are provided by the Park District.

The Park District and the NISRA also achieve efficiency by utilizing existing facilities that are owned and operated by the SRA's members, including the Park District. Utilizing these existing facilities allows the NISRA to deliver services to its member communities at a lower cost. Currently, the Park District provides the NISRA access to the following facilities for their program offerings:

- *Main Beach*
- *West Beach*
- *Oakwood's Lodge*
- *Grand Oaks Recreation Center*
- *Woods creek Building*

- *Rotary Building*
- *Lippold Park*
- *Spoerl Park Building*

The NISRA also provides the support needed for participants with special needs who choose to register for the Park District programs or inclusive programming. When asked to, the NISRA collects information on the registered participant and determines what support is needed for that participant to be successful in this inclusive setting or the Park District program. This could include additional training of the supervisory staff, additional support staff, the use of adaptive equipment, behavior management, and/or other measures that will assist in the successful participation of this individual in the Park District program. Although success may not look the same for everyone, the NISRA works with the Park District's staff to ensure the best possible results for all the participants in the program. The Park District's cost of providing these services would be much greater without its participation and partnership in the NISRA.

In 2022, the NISRA successfully served 202 individual residents resulting in 1343 registrations. The NISRA also helped support 73 participants in inclusive programs that were provided by the Crystal Lake Park District.

The Park District is immensely proud of the ongoing collaboration with NISRA. By working cooperatively with other local governments, not only are we better able to collectively serve all citizens within our communities, including persons with disabilities, but we are able to do so in the most efficient and effective manner possible.

2. Other intergovernmental agreements with other Park Districts, forest preserve districts, conservation districts, or municipal recreation agencies

- *Intergovernmental agreement for Joint Use of Facilities By and Between the Crystal Lake Park District and Village of Lake in The Hills*
- *Senior/Active Adult Programming intergovernmental agreements with Cary Park District, Lake in the Hills, Barrington Park District, City of McHenry*

3. Intergovernmental agreements with other units of local government

- *School District 47 Facility/Park Intergovernmental Use Agreement*
- *High School District 155 Facility/Park Intergovernmental Use Agreement*
- *City of Crystal Lake Police / Crystal Lake Park District Park Police Mutual Aid Intergovernmental Agreement*

- *McHenry County Sheriff's Department / Crystal Lake Park District Park Police Mutual Aid Intergovernmental Agreement*
- *Village of Lakewood / Crystal Lake Park District Park Police Mutual Aid Intergovernmental Agreement*
- *Village of Cary / Crystal Lake Park District Park Police Mutual Aid Intergovernmental Agreement*
- *City of Crystal Lake Waiver of City Permit Fees for the Crystal Lake Park District Intergovernmental Agreement*
- *School District 47 Before and After School Extended Time (ET) Program*
- *School District 47 Teacher Extended Time (ET) Program Fee Discount*
- *City of Crystal Lake / Village of Lakewood / Crystal Lake Park District Lake Safety and Lake Ecology Intergovernmental Agreement*

4. Intergovernmental agreements with the State of Illinois

- *Sourcewell Joint Purchase*
- *Illinois State Vehicle Bid*

5. Partnerships or agreements with athletic or similar affiliate organizations that operate sports or other leagues

- *Crystal Lake Soccer Federation*
- *Crystal Lake Little League Baseball*
- *Crystal Lake Baseball*
- *Crystal Lake Babe Ruth Baseball*
- *Phenom Illinois Travel Baseball*
- *McHenry County Youth Sports Association*
- *Crystal Lake Girls Fast Pitch Softball*
- *Crush Tidal Waves Competitive Fast Pitch Softball*
- *Crystal Lake Raiders Football*
- *Crystal Lake Rowing Club*

- *Crystal Lake Water Ski Association*
- *Crystal Lake Blackhawks Youth Lacrosse*
- *Crystal Lake Community Band*
- *Voices in Harmony*

6. Partnerships or other interrelationships with non-profits

- The Crystal Lake Park District has relationships with many non-profits who have fundraisers or events on Park District grounds, but the Park District only receives the rental fee from them and not any of the fundraising dollars.
- Boy Scouts of America
- Girl Scouts USA
- Crystal Lake Historical Society
- Green Gate Garden Club
- University of Illinois Extension Master Gardener Program
-

7. Partnerships with for profit organizations

- Sponsorship agreements with numerous local businesses
- Stryker has led an afternoon of STEM experiments with our summer camp participants

8. Informal cooperation with other units of local government which save taxpayer dollars by eliminating redundancy

- Use of City of Crystal Lake fueling station by Crystal Lake Park District and NISRA
- City of Crystal Lake shared snow salt with Crystal Lake Park District
- City of Crystal Lake and Crystal Lake Park District share unique equipment to eliminate both agencies having to own or rent
- Cooperative Senior Holiday Party with Village of Lake in the Hills and Cary Park District

- Joint youth programming with Dundee Township Park District, Huntley Park District, and Village of Lake in the Hills
- Crystyl Lake Park District / Crystal Lake Library free concert program
- Cooperative environmental efforts with the Mayors Monarch Pledge and the Environmental Defenders of McHenry County
- Hosting Northern Illinois Food Bank free summer lunch program
- NAMI has provided training to summertime cap staff
- Representatives from the library and fire department have participated in education at Barlina preschool

VI. Other Examples of Efficient Operations

Use of volunteers. One way in which the Park District reduces the burden on taxpayers is through the use of volunteers. Last year, 534 individuals volunteered 1200 hours of service to the Park District.

Youth employment. The Park District is a major employer of youth in the community. Last year, the Park District employed over 275 youth. Not only is this an efficient way to deliver services, but youth employment serves as a valuable training tool for the future workforce.

Joint purchasing (if not listed above). The Park District participates in joint purchasing cooperatives pursuant to the Governmental Joint Purchasing Act (30 ILCS 525/0.01 *et seq.*) thereby saving taxpayer dollars through economies of scale. These include:

- *Sourcewell Joint Purchase*
- *Omni*

Crystal Lake Parks Initiative Foundation. Last year, the Foundation raised \$27,693.16 in private donations, which helped alleviate the burden on taxpayers. The Foundation fundraising efforts are intended to help subsidize projects and provide scholarships for some program participants.

- *Generating funds to support the installation of an outdoor ball hockey rink*
- *Generating funds to support the Park District scholarship program*

Collaboration with other Park Districts on best practices. Because Park Districts are not in competition with one another, they are more willing than the private sector to share best practices. These best practices help to avoid unnecessary costs and deliver services more effectively and efficiently.

Reliance on Non-Tax Revenue. Unlike most local governments that rely on a wide range of sales, use, and income taxes, the Park District is not permitted to assess these types of taxes. Additionally, although the Park District is an economic engine for the community and generates much revenue for the state and our community in the form of hotel/motel, sales, and motor fuel taxes, our Park District does not receive any of these revenues. Also, unlike Illinois cities, villages, counties, and school districts that received billions of dollars in direct financial assistance from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), our Park District did not receive any such direct federal aid. Our Park District also does not receive state funding under the Local Government Distributive Fund (LGDF) or General State

Aid (GSA) that these same cities, villages, counties, and school districts receive through the State budget.

Instead, the Park District provides all of the programs, facilities, and services to the community with a very modest amount of property taxes and from **non-tax sources** such as memberships, program registrations, and other user fees as well as private donations and grants.

VII. Transparency to the Community

The following information about the Park District may be obtained by citizens in the location listed.

Document	Location(s) Available <small>(website, administrative offices, county clerk, state website, etc.)</small>
• Annual tax levy	Website, Administration Office, County Clerk
• Annual budget and appropriation ordinance	Website, Admin Office
• Agenda and minutes	Website, Administration Office
• Board Meeting Packets	Website, Administration Office
• Popular annual finance report (PAFR)	Administration Office
• Annual audit	Website, Administration Office
• Statement of Receipts and Disbursements	Administration Office
• Comprehensive Master Plan	Website, Administration Office
• Capital improvement plan	Administrative Office
• ADA transition plan	Website, Administration Office
• Newsletters	Website, Administration Office
• Seasonal Activity Guides	Website, Administration Office
• Project Updates	Website, Administration Office

The Park District offers residents many opportunities to provide feedback. These include:

- The board of commissioners meets twice each month. Residents may provide public comment at every meeting.
- The Park District's annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance is available in tentative form at least 30 days prior to its adoption at an open meeting of the Park District board. Additionally, at least one public

hearing is held prior to final action, and notice of the hearing is published in the newspaper at least one week prior to the hearing.

- The Park District's annual property tax levy is approved at an open meeting of the Park District board in accordance with the Open Meetings Act. The Park District follows all public notice and hearing requirements under the Truth in Taxation Law prior to the adoption of this annual tax levy. The Park District's annual levy is also subject to the limitations of the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law.
- Residents may contact or request information from the Park District by phone at (815) 459-0680 or email at <https://www.crystallakeparks.org/contact-us>
- Statistically Valid Community Survey – 2022
- On-line/Social Media surveys to obtain feedback on playground replacements
- Seasonal Program Surveys
- Playground replacement community input meetings
 - Kamajima Park
 - Brighton Oaks Park
 - Lapins Park
 - Della Street Park
- Haligus Park Development Input meetings
- Barlina Barn Demolition/Plans Community Input Meetings

VII. District Awards and Recognition

The District's achievements have been recognized in numerous ways.

- 2022 Environmental Defenders of McHenry County Government Award
- Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting
- Crystal Lake Chamber of Commerce Pride in Crystal Lake Award recipient
- Commissioner Debbie Gallagher – Community Women of Distinction Award
- Park Board Boot Camp Orientation Program
- McHenry County Best of the Best Recognition – Trails, Parks, Beaches
- Crystal Lake Park District Board Self Evaluation Training

VIII. Benefits and Services

The Park District serves the entire community from the youngest child to the oldest adult and all ages in between. It does so in a variety of ways.

1. Facilities

The Park District offered the following facilities to the community last year:

- Grand Oaks Recreation Center
- Barlina House Preschool
- The Racket Club
- Woodscreek Activity Building
- Lippold Park Family Golf Center
- Main Beach Boat House
- Main Beach Pavilion
- Nature Center
- Oakwoods Lodge
- Rotary Building
- Spoerl Park Building
- West Beach Building
- Active Adult Facility at Grand Oaks
- Main Beach Boat Launch
- West Beach Boat Launch
- Acorn Alley Splash Pad
- Woodscreek Splash Pad
- Hill Farm Garden Plots
- Della Street Park

- Asbury Park
- Brighton Oaks Park
- Canterbury Park
- Hampton Park
- Kamijima Park
- Knaack Park
- Ladd Park
- Lapins Park
- Johns Park
- Seminary Park
- Sterling Meadows Park
- Woodland Estates Park
- Wyndwood Park
- Feinberg Park
- Fetzner Park
- Four Colonies Park
- Indian Prairie Park
- Bird Park
- Main Beach Park
- Spoerl Park
- Lippold Park
- Veteran Acres Park
- Woodscreek Park
- Butternut Preserve

- Cress Creek
- Oak Hollow Park
- Prairie Ridge Conservation Area
- Shamrock Hills
- Sterne's Woods
- Willows Edge Park
- Winding Creek Park
- Wingate Prairie Nature Preserve
- Haligus Park
- Sunset Meadows Park
- Veteran Acres Trails
- Sterne's Woods Trails
- Lippold Park Trails
- Fetzner Park Trails
- Colonel Palmer House

2. Programs

The Park District offered the following programs last year. Registration numbers are also provided.

- See addendum 1

3. Additional Services

The Park District provided the following additional services to the community.

- Family Special Events (Touch a Truck, Luminaria Walk, Flannel Fest, Puzzle Palooza, Snow What Let's Putt)
- Adult Special Events (Friday the 13th Event, Caddyshack Event, Galentine's Day Brunch, Snow Bord Softball Tournament)

- Firewood Sale, Free Mulch, Seaweed Harvesting, Christmas Tree Recycling, Holiday Light Recycling

4. Other Benefits

While the Park District is a special purpose district, its impact on the community is multi-faceted and far reaching. For example, the Park District's parks, recreational programming, and other opportunities improve the community's overall physical and mental health and wellness, thereby reducing health care costs. Before and after school and summer programs offer safe, convenient, and affordable childcare options for working families during critical times when school is not in session. These opportunities also help reduce juvenile crime. The Park District's open space and trees help improve air and water quality and mitigate flooding. The Park District is a core part of the community infrastructure that creates a sense of community by bringing people together in numerous ways.

IX. Recommendations for Increased Accountability and Efficiency

1. Intergovernmental Fees and Charges

One opportunity for efficiency would be the elimination of fees and charges assessed by other units of government. By way of example, below are amounts that other units of local government charge the Park District even though the Park District's taxpayers are also taxpayers of these other units of local government. Such fees and charges, and the bureaucracy that accompanies them, inhibit the Park District's ability to deliver programs, facilities, and services at the least possible cost.

- Annual State and Local Liquor Licenses - \$1,487
- Elevator inspection fees - \$612
- Water tap on fees -varies
- Illinois State Police Background Checks - \$2,500 Annually
- IDNR State Boat Licenses for rental boats - \$100

Other units of local government should recognize that intergovernmental fees often lead to inefficiency in the expenditure of taxpayer dollars through extra bureaucracy and administrative costs. In many cases, the unit of government assessing the fee ultimately benefits from the project or event, meaning it can recoup its costs through the extra sales tax or other revenue that will be generated. Where such fees are absolutely necessary, general purpose units of government should offset the fee by crediting the Park District for all benefits they will receive from a project, event, or property. For example, open space that is protected and maintained by the Park District helps mitigate stormwater management costs, so assessing stormwater management fees on the Park District not only leads to inefficiency, but it is also shortsighted.

Governmental units should be discouraged or prohibited from charging more than their out-of-pocket costs associated with the activities covered by a fee that is assessed to another unit of local government with the same taxpayers. Put another way, one unit of local government should not profit by taxing another. Eliminating local permit fees is a way to reduce administrative costs without impacting overall public revenue. Local government best serves the people when it cooperates and works together. Some communities recognize this and do not charge fees to other units. All communities should be

encouraged to follow that model to receive the best results for local taxpayers and to promote governmental efficiency.

2. Inefficiency of Other Governments

The Park District is also negatively impacted by the inefficiency of the state and other units of local government.

- As the recipient of an OSLAD grant, the executed agreement was delayed in being returned to the Crystal Lake Park District as a result of an archaeological survey needing to be completed prior to the project beginning. The IDNR did not communicate that this was to take place prior to the executed agreement being returned. This resulted in the start of the project being pushed back, potentially not allowing the project to be completed on time and the forfeiture of the grant funds.
- As the recipient of a Museum Grant, the executed agreement was never sent back to the Crystal Lake Park District, delaying the start of the project. Because of the paperwork delay, the risk of not meeting the completion deadline was a concern that would result in the loss of a 100% grant. The result of this situation was that the delay was an oversight of the document sitting in someone's outbox. New staff and processes were to blame.

3. Unfunded Mandates

Unfunded state mandates are another cost driver. While the Park District recognizes that there are benefits to some of these mandates, modifications could help alleviate some of the burden to the park district.

a) Non-resident FOIA Requests. Last year, the Park District spent considerable staff time and legal fees to fulfill FOIA requests. Often the individuals/businesses submitting the FOIA requests are from outside of the Park District boundaries, and they appear to be serving a specific agenda, rather than assuring better local government.

- Mowing Bid Results
- All current employee/staff contact information
- Sealcoat and Stripe Project Bid Results
- Nature Center Interior Exhibits Project Contract
- Roofing Project Bid Results

- Salary Range Information for Full and Part Time Staff
- Annual Payroll Request
- Costs of challenges to the release of public records
 - All settlement agreements resolving any Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) lawsuits.
 - All judgments or other court orders requiring you to pay attorney fees, costs, and/or civil penalties in any FOIA lawsuits.
 - All invoices from law firms for work on any FOIA lawsuits or Public Access Counselor reviews, where the lawsuit or the PAC review was ultimately decided in favor of the requestor.
 - All invoices from law firms for work on any FOIA lawsuits or Public --- Access Counselor reviews, where the lawsuit or the PAC review was ultimately decided in favor of the District.
 - All claims made to an insurance company for coverage involving a FOIA action.
 - All studies, reports, or other records calculating or referencing the cost of FOIA lawsuits or PAC reviews on an annual or other time-period basis.
- Electricity Contracts
- Electricity Bills
- Main Deck Replacement Project Bid Results
- Enterprise Resource Planning System, Third Party Community Development Provider, Payment Processing System
- Police/incident report for all arrests between 12/01/2023 and 12/31/2023 where the suspect was charged with resisting arrest, and/or assault on police officer.

Under current law, resident taxpayers end up footing the bill for these non-resident or commercial requests. In order to help alleviate the burden for these non-resident requests the law could be amended to: (1) add a requirement that non-residents identify/explain the purpose of the request for information; (2) add a time limit on how far back a non-resident can request information; (3) staff time and costs could be included in the amount that is reimbursable for non-resident and commercial requests; (4) move back the deadline for non-resident requests 10 business days so that the Park District does not have to delay services to its residents in order to comply with a non-resident request.

Sunshine laws are supposed to protect taxpayers by allowing them to shed light on any issue that is not exempt from FOIA. However, local government can be burdened by having to drop everything to rearrange priorities to meet FOIA deadlines, particularly if it has limited resources. Since local residents ultimately bear the expense of complying with FOIA, treating resident and non-resident requests differently would be justified.

b) Criminal Background Checks. All Park Districts are statutorily required to conduct criminal background checks on all employees pursuant to Section 8-23 of the Park District Code. The background checks must be done through the Illinois State Police (ISP). Last year, the Park District spent approximately \$2,500 for criminal background checks. The Park District does not recommend eliminating this mandate because it is necessary to ensure the safety and well-being of children and other Park District patrons. However, the State should explore ways in which it could improve the current system and make it less costly for Park Districts to comply with the law.

The mandate also raises the fundamental question as to why one layer of government is forced to charge its taxpayers to comply with a State mandate when the State made the determination to impose the mandate. Put another way, if the State has determined that criminal background checks are necessary for public safety, the State should assist with compliance.

The Park District recommends studying whether there can be a more efficient background check process implemented through the ISP to reduce the time and expense it takes for background checks. Another suggestion is for ISP to waive the fee for checks on minors or waive all fees for name checks. If there is a "hit" from a name check, the fee could be charged for the more costly fingerprint check. Since it is a state mandate, perhaps the fee structure for Park Districts should also be reviewed to determine whether the fee being charged exceeds the actual cost of doing the check and, if so, perhaps the ISP could consider reducing its cost to local governments.

c) Prevailing Wage. One way to reduce the burden on local government staff is to limit the prevailing wage requirement to larger capital contracts. This would free up tracking of the paperwork on small repairs and projects. One reason for creating a threshold requirement is the cost of the administrative burden relative to the cost of the actual project. For example, eliminating prevailing wage on smaller projects, e.g., those less than \$50,000, will result in more local bids and decrease the overall cost for these smaller public works projects.

d) Newspaper Publication. The newspaper is no longer the most effective way to provide notice. Websites are cheaper and reach more people. Permitting the Park District to post the information on its website in lieu of newspaper publications would reduce costs.

4. Opportunities for Increased Transparency

As illustrated above, the Park District is very transparent in its operations. The following are opportunities for increased transparency:

- *Pop up events in neighborhood parks that provide access to the Board and staff*
- *Board and staff availability at special events*
- *Board meetings televised via ZOOM*
- *Social media posts promoting meeting dates and times along with Board meeting packets*
- *State of the Community Booklet available at the annual State of the Community Luncheon event*

Dated: 6/20/2024

Signed: 
Committee Chair

FILED
McHENRY COUNTY, IL
JUN 21 2024
Joseph J. Tirio
COUNTY CLERK