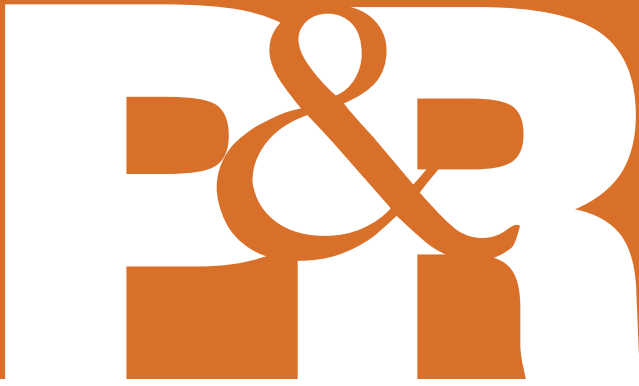


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PARKS AND RECREATION

The magazine of the Illinois Association of Park Districts and the Illinois Park and Recreation Association



leadership & board development

PLUS: Soaring to New Heights Pre-Conference Guide

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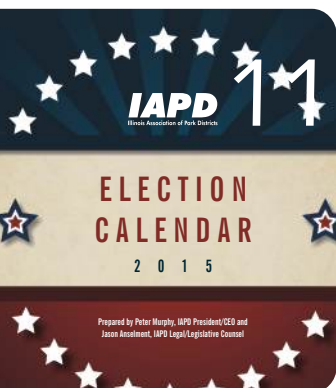
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FROM THE EDITOR

Leadership is to be used across many industries including park and recreation. A skilled leader can be effective in both their personal and professional life and can affect those around them as well as those who work for them. I learned the most about leadership when I was in banking and oversaw marketing for 32 banks



spread across the state of Illinois. I realized that everyone had their own personality and ways of getting things done. The only way I could be an effective leader was to approach each manager with a different style of management. Some people accepted company policy and procedures and followed them at all times. Others were emotional and took offense to coaching and had to be handled with kid gloves. Some employees would follow direction and complete tasks properly and efficiently. Then there were those who chose to do their own thing regardless of specific instruction. One person would go the extra mile every time and another would do the least amount of work possible to get by. Using patience and understanding when dealing with many different individuals and having the flexibility to change your approach based on the situation are critical skills that can also be used in park and recreation leadership.

Also in this issue, you will find the 2015 Soaring to New Heights Conference Preliminary Program! This guide contains information on workshops, registration, housing, educational sessions, exhibitor lists and even social events. Don't miss this insightful piece on the biggest conference in Illinois for the park and recreation industry!



"Give Us Your Best Shot" Photo Contest Announcement

Do you have a great photo from one of your agency events you would like to share? Enter them in this year's photo contest! You may enter up to five photos in each of the following categories:

- Recreation / People at Play
- Sports
- Wildlife (live animals and insects, etc.)
- Nature / Landscapes (flowers, sunsets, lakes and other landscapes, etc.)

Contest rules and waiver form can be found online at ILparks.org/PhotoContest. Please send us your "Best Shots" soon. The deadline for entry is December 2, 2014.

Rachel Laier

— Rachel Laier, Editor



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-Laura Barron, Director of Parks and Recreation, Oakbrook Terrace Park District



Peter M. Murphy
IAPD President and CEO

The Leadership Imperative: Getting to Why

Park boards and their executive teams across Illinois are constantly challenged with the changing demands of providing quality recreational experiences for the members of their communities. New trends, shifting demographics and the impact of weather all affect the popularity of such programming as well as the financial health of an agency.

All of these factors are the reason that one of the most important words to effective and successful leadership is the frequent use of the word “why.” The power of “why” is not in asking what went wrong, but in the context of seeking new possibilities as in “why not.”

Strong leaders understand that asking questions that bring out fresh information can be the key to bringing about transformation and growth. The power of why:

- Creates a climate of discovery
- Captures new ideas
- Encourages diverse perspectives
- Honors everyone's contributions
- Articulates a shared understanding
- Breaks down resistance to change
- Overcomes the myth that “some individuals are not creative”
- Nurtures the preferred perspective of possibility
- Accelerates problem solving
- Creates a culture of active inquiry and innovation

Albert Einstein framed the importance of questioning the status quo and finding solutions as follows:

“If I had an hour to solve a problem and my life depended on the solution, I would spend the first 55 minutes determining the proper question to ask, for once I know the proper question, I could solve the problem in less than five minutes.”

One of the goals of IAPD's new Leadership Institute is to encourage the personal and professional growth of all park board members in their community and across the state. It is the collective strength of all park districts that make the delivery of park and recreation services so exemplary in Illinois.

I recently attended an educational session presented by Dick Durrance, the award-winning National Geographic photographer, who aptly pointed out that learning is like climbing a ladder. No matter how high you go, there always seems to be more rungs above you. But this realization also teaches that the higher you go up the ladder of learning, the broader your horizon also gets and the more opportunities for change you see.

It is IAPD's core value to help our members thrive. We do this in many ways, not the least of which is by providing a robust offering of educational opportunities.

“The greatest thing in this world is not so much where we are, but in what direction we are moving.”

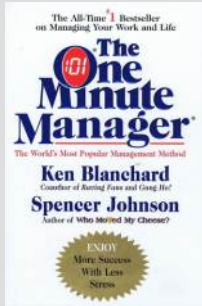
- O.W. Holmes



I encourage all of you to register for the remaining sessions in the IAPD Leadership Series, as well as the highly popular IAPD Legal Symposium, and make plans now for the IAPD/IPRA State Conference in January of 2015.

In fact, the State Conference has more than 28 sessions designed for leadership/management and more than 24 sessions on governance, boardmanship, and legal issues facing park districts, forest preserves, conservation districts and recreation agencies. Sessions such as *Work-Life Balance: 6 Steps to Reclaiming Your Life*, *Leading Optimistically*, *Creating an Organizational Culture in Support of Innovation*, *Board Wars Continued*, *Ethics for Illinois Park Commissioners*, *Counting What Counts: Using Data to Drive Real Change* to name just a few.

All of IAPD's programs are geared to develop your leadership skill set and expand your horizons. Getting your board to “why not” is the key to great leadership where you can collectively see what is and imagine what can be.



Recommended Reading

The One Minute Manager

By Ken Blanchard & Spencer Johnson

The One Minute Manager was featured in IAPD's most recent leadership webinar and speaks to the timeless principles that successful leaders employ. These include strategies on one minute goal setting, one minute praising and the one minute reprimand.

The book is not an oversimplification of management principles, but rather distills them down to their core. I found the section on goal setting for staff to be particularly helpful. It sets forth six key steps: (1) agree on your goals; (2) see what good behavior looks like; (3) write out each of your goals on a single sheet of paper using less than 250 words; (4) read and re-read each goal; (5) take a minute every once in a while out of your day to look at your performance; and (6) see whether or not your behavior matches your goal.

In addition, the chapter discussing the philosophy that the best minute I spend is the one I invest in people is also a timeless reminder for all leaders.

BRING OUT THE LEADER IN YOU!

The IAPD Leadership Institute

A premier educational series designed to foster leadership skills, boardmanship and professional success

SEMINAR -Building Trust

Saturday, September 27, 8:00 a.m - 1:00 p.m.

WEBINAR -Whale Done!®

Wednesday, October 22, 7:00 p.m - 8:00 p.m.

SEMINAR -Leading People Through Change®

Saturday, December 6, 8:00 a.m - 1:00 p.m.

REGISTER TODAY!



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2014 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Saturday,
September 27, 2014

Session 3, Building Trust

Schaumburg Park
District's Golf Club
Chandler's

Monday,
September 29, 2014

IAPD Summer Golf Tour #4

Wilmette Golf Club,
Wilmette Park District

October 14-16, 2014

NRPA Congress

Charlotte, NC

Wednesday,
October 22, 2014

The Leadership Institute – Session 4, Whale Done!® Webinar

January 22-24, 2015

IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference

Hyatt Regency Chicago

Friday,
October 24, 2014

IAPD Best of the Best Awards Gala

Chevy Chase
Country Club
Wheeling Park District

Thursday,
November 6, 2014

IAPD Legal Symposium

McDonald's
University/
Hyatt Lodge

Saturday,
December 6, 2014

The Leadership Institute – Session 5, Leading People

Through Change®
Schaumburg Park
District's Golf Club
Chandler's

IAPD
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For the most up-to-date Calendar of Events, please visit the IAPD website at www.ILparks.org.



By Debbie Trueblood
IPRA Executive Director

Ideas for Successful Leadership Relationships Between the Board and the Professionals

This issue of the magazine is focused on the theme of leadership and board development. At IPRA, we are thrilled to host our nationally award winning program, IPRA's Leadership Academy, as our way to give back to the professional community and help people at all levels of their careers to become better leaders. This program is always evolving. The Academy is a partnership between IPRA and University of Illinois. The IPRA Leadership Academy Board of Regents, including U of I, put together a fresh curriculum every year. Only the highest rated speakers are welcomed back. Each year, we start by reviewing the current needs of leaders in parks and recreation so we can adjust the curriculum accordingly. As this is a premier program, we want it to stand out- attendees must apply and be accepted to the program and each year we accept only the most dedicated leaders in the field. We put together a program with three levels of leadership, with no more than 30 people per level, and then bring in national level speakers to present to these intimate groups. It allows for the attendees to hear from experts from all over the country speaking to only a few people at a time. This fall, we start our third year of the program and we are thrilled to welcome the 2014-2015 class.

In my own life, while I have never had the opportunity to be a commissioner or serve on a park board, I have had many opportunities to learn about leadership and board development on the staff side of the board table. I have been executive director for Illinois Home Care Council, International Association of Rehabilitation Professionals, International Academy for Eating Disorders, International Society of Adolescent Health and Medicine, International Society of Vertebrate Paleontology, and now IPRA. Plus, I have served on the board side of things too in nonprofits- serving as president of Wheaton Drama, a nonprofit theater which has existed since 1931, and I am currently serving on the Board of Trustees for MacMurray College. Over the years, I have worked with many leaders and many boards, seen many board facilitators, and worked on many strategic plans, budgets and programs. Here are a few of the things I learned through the years about being a better leader or a more developed board.

1. The secret to a successful organization is an engaged board who can delicately balance between passion for the organization and micromanaging the staff.

2. A board needs to support and trust the executive director publicly and privately. Your support authorizes that person to do what needs to be done when conflicts arise. Otherwise, this creates a situation where customers or staff can "play one parent against the other."

3. A board has a fiduciary, legal expectation to understand the management of the organization. As you are legally responsible for the decisions you make, if you don't understand something ask questions. Don't be afraid to meet with the staff or your attorney separately and have them explain something to you so you can make a better decision in the board room.

"While staff eat, sleep, and breathe issues related to your organization, the board volunteers their time in addition to their already full plates because they are passionate about the cause. Both love the organization. We are all in this together!"



4. When a board comes together for an important decision, it is appropriate to read your board packet, ask questions in advance, check with your constituency, consider doing additional research, and be prepared, but then come to the meeting with an open mind to listen and participate in debate so that you can make a decision with ALL the information, including the comments and viewpoints expressed by other people.

5. Whether an organization is in early stages of development, holding back a storm of conflict or challenges, or growing exponentially, a board and executive director must be willing and comfortable managing risk and change. No organization will thrive on status quo. There will always be innovation and a need for change. Boards must decide when they feel it is appropriate to make strategic, calculated risks. Once begun, the board and executive director need to further agree how long they will give that risk to become successful before they change course. I have seen many times an agreement to try something "risky" and almost with the first complaint, leaders and staff begin to get nervous. Decide how long you will stand your ground and give the risk a chance before you decide to change direction.

6. Boards have a responsibility to do their homework, have a healthy debate, and vote their conscience, but after a vote, the board and staff should speak with one voice. It is never appropriate for those voting in the minority or staff to speak ill of the board's decision as it shows the staff or customers that there is distrust for the new decision, creating a distraction which could cause the organization to suffer. Essentially this is a way to sabotage the board's decision, hurting everyone involved. Further, it is important to keep confidential the details of private communications.

7. Boards have every right to request plenty of in-depth data analysis from the staff team. Boards need all the information they can get to make well informed decisions. However, be careful that boards and staff use data for the right reasons. Staff can hide behind data analysis to avoid aspects of their leadership role that are more uncomfortable. Boards can feel awkward about voting something down and instead may keep postponing a decision by asking for more research which wastes everyone's time.

8. Boards and the full staff leadership team can benefit from spending time together. It can become easy for the executive director to become the "go-between" with the board and the staff team. This creates extra layers of interpretation about programs and direction and can even result in the board not understanding staff roles. We often hear the management advice of "hire experts and let them do their work," and staff are the experts in their respective roles, but we sometimes see boards making decisions on programs without the appropriate staff in the room. Utilize your experts and ask for their opinions on programs. Utilize your frontline staff to find out what's broken with systems and processes that could be improved upon. And make sure everyone knows their views will be respected so the staff feel authorized to be open with their suggestions.

9. Keep an open line of communication between the staff and the board at all times so that no one is caught off guard. Communicate, communicate, communicate!

10. Finally, remember that while staff eat, sleep, and breathe issues related to your organization, the board volunteers their time in addition to their already full plates because they are passionate about the cause. Both love the organization. Both want it to be successful. Both want to serve the mission, the community, and progress together. We are all in this together!

I hope you have found my top 10 list to be helpful. As I said, while I have never served on a park board, these ideas come from a mix of different board experiences and all of them are simple suggestions to help an already successful board and leadership team function even more effectively. If you want to share other ideas that you have learned about how to be a better leader or a better developed board, send me an email at debbie@ilipra.org. If I get several responses, we can post them anonymously as a list on IPRA's Facebook page.

IPRA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- | | |
|--|---|
| September 10, 2014
A&F Section Board Meeting & Business Managers Meeting, including educational session 'How to Prepare for a Ratings Call' | September 26, 2014
IPRA New Member Webinar - 3rd Quarter |
| September 10, 2014
Skills Development Webinar Series - Aligning Services with Identified Needs | October 2, 2014
Aquatics Fall Roundtable |
| September 11, 2014
TR Leadership Summit | October 7, 2014
Leadership Academy |
| September 12, 2014
FM Section Meeting and Education: How to Restore a Failing Facility | October 8, 2014
Skills Development Webinar Series - Sponsorship Strategies from the Other Side of the Desk |
| September 16, 2014
Leadership Academy | October 21-23, 2014
Certified Playground Safety Inspector Course (CPSI) |
| September 18, 2014
Skills Development Webinar Series - Aligning Services with Identified Needs | October 30, 2014
Finance Committee Meeting |
| September 19, 2014
Administration and Finance Section Golf Outing | November 9-12, 2014
Professional Development School |
| September 19, 2014
Innovation Renovation Workshop: Office Culture "The Road from Good to Great" | November 13, 2014
Maintaining Those Stormwater BMPs the Consultants Thought Were a Great Idea |
| September 22, 2014
Foot Golf - Networking Event presented by the FM & REC Sections | November 18, 2014
Leadership Academy |
| September 23-24, 2014
Supervisor Symposium | November 21, 2014
IPRA Open House - Networking Breakfast & Association Breakfast |
| Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP) Exam Preparation - Series of Four Classes | December 3, 2014
The Benefits of IGFOA Membership & the GFOA Budget Award |
| | December 16, 2014
Leadership Academy |



For the most up-to-date Calendar of Events, please visit the IPRA website at www.ILipra.org.



Jason Anselment
Legal/Legislative Counsel

Understanding and Adhering to Open Meetings Act Is an Important Part of Leadership and Board Development

Park district, forest preserve and conservation district board members are among the finest in the state. This is due, in large part, to their commitment to keeping up with the latest trends and to following best practices. Of course, being a strong leader and following best practices mean complying with all the laws and rules that govern park districts and locally elected officials. Perhaps no other statute impacts a public official's leadership role more than the Open Meetings Act.

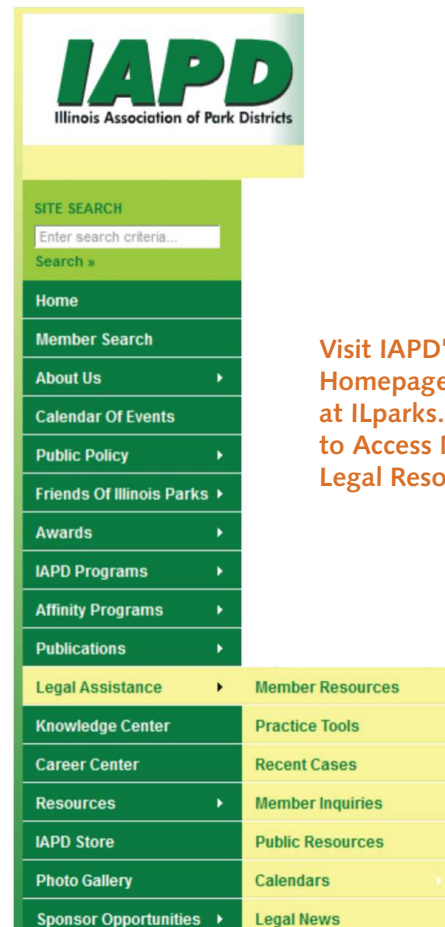
Continuing Education Key Aspect of Leadership and Board Development

One of my first *Statehouse Insider* columns provided readers with a primer on the main provisions of the Open Meetings Act. Four years later, that resource is still helpful and available under the Legal Assistance section of IAPD's website (ILparks.org). However, because the Open Meetings Act is often the subject of new legislation and court decisions, it is necessary for even the most seasoned commissioner to participate in ongoing training to stay up-to-date on the latest requirements. To assist our members in these efforts, IAPD presents many educational opportunities each year including the Legal Symposium, commissioner boot camps and sessions at the annual conference.

Beginning next year, park district, forest preserve and conservation district board members will have yet another opportunity. Just as this issue went to press, Governor Quinn had just signed into law IAPD Platform bill **HB 4483 / Public Act 98-0900**, which allows IAPD to begin offering a live, in-person course for newly elected and appointed officials to satisfy their one-time Open Meetings Act training requirements. Previously, these officials could only satisfy this legal requirement online through the Attorney General's website. While IAPD's Open Meetings Act training will be of great benefit to newly elected and appointed officials who take office next year, it will also present a great opportunity for seasoned commissioners to take a refresher course on the rules that govern their activities at every meeting.

IAPD Member Inquiries Provide Valuable Insight

Another way to keep current on Open Meetings Act requirements and avoid legal missteps is to track IAPD's responses to questions that have been posed by other locally elected officials and professionals. Each year we receive hundreds of legal inquiries from our members. IAPD catalogs its responses to some of our most frequent member inquiries by legal category under the Legal Assistance section of the IAPD website.



Visit IAPD's
Homepage
at ILparks.org
to Access Numerous
Legal Resources

Not surprisingly, the Open Meetings Act is the most popular topic of those inquiries, probably because the law affects every single meeting of every IAPD member agency. Of those inquiries, the rules relating to closed session records are most prevalent. In fact, few issues are subject to more public scrutiny than closed sessions. This provides good reason for public officials to pay careful attention to strictly following the procedures for and rules governing closed meetings, and to make sure that all of the proper records are kept.

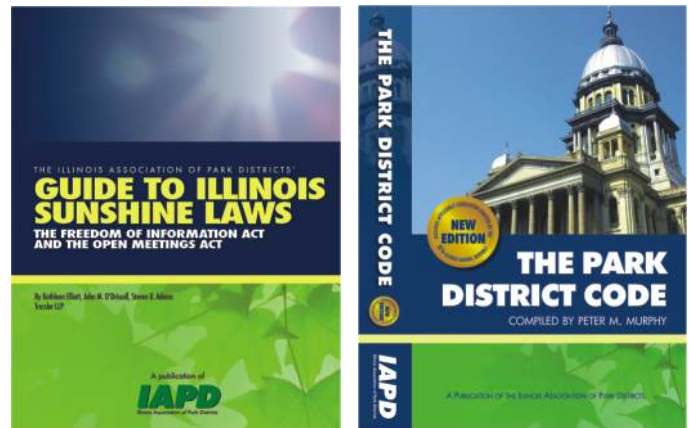
Like open meetings, the district must keep closed session minutes.¹ Closed session minutes can be kept confidential to the extent the need exists, but the district is required to review them at least semi-annually and determine whether the need for confidentiality still exists or if minutes or portions thereof can be made public because confidentiality is no longer needed. Although the board may discuss this review in closed session, it must report its determination in open session.² Unless and until the board determines to make these closed minutes public, they are exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act.³

Unlike open meetings, boards are required to make verbatim audio or video recordings of all closed sessions. Verbatim recordings must be kept for at least 18 months. Subsequently, if the minutes have been approved, the district can vote to destroy these tapes.⁴ Conversely, districts may choose to publicly release confidential closed meeting tapes, but release is not required. In fact, the OMA only requires that confidential verbatim recordings be disclosed in civil or administrative actions brought to enforce the OMA and only then for a determination by a judge or the Illinois Attorney General's Public Access Counselor of whether OMA violations occurred. Only if violations are found should such tapes be released and then only portions demonstrating the violation.⁵

Although all Open Meetings Act requirements serve an important purpose, failing to record a closed session and preserve the record for the requisite period of time is critical because it serves as evidence that the board acted appropriately in conducting the closed session. Failing to record a closed session would be a blatant violation of the Act and expose members to the criminal penalties identified below.

Other Valuable Resources Available

Another issue that generates considerable scrutiny is the requirement to allow the general public an opportunity to address public officials at meetings that are subject to the Act. While this requirement is not optional, public bodies have the ability to (and should) adopt reasonable rules governing the public comment portion of their meetings.⁶ IAPD's *Guide to Illinois Sunshine Laws*, which provides important guidance on the implementation and interpretation of both the Open Meetings Act and the Freedom of Information Act, includes sample rules governing the public's participation at public meetings and other model ordinances and policies to assist member agencies.



Order your copy of the *Guide to Illinois Sunshine Laws* and *The Park District Code* online at ILparks.org/store.

IAPD also offers a number of other valuable resources that contain information on the Open Meetings Act, including the *Park District Code*, the *Park District Law Handbook* and the Member Resources and Practice Tools webpages under the Legal Assistance section at ILparks.org.

Leadership Is not the only Reason to Follow the Law

While effective leadership is an important reason to follow the Open Meetings Act, it is not the most important. Failure to follow the Open Meetings Act can result in a range of consequences to both board members and the district. For individuals, violations are Class C misdemeanors punishable by up to 30 days in jail and a \$1,500 fine.⁷ For public bodies, courts have the ability to require meetings to be open to the public, grant injunctions against future violations, order disclosure of closed meeting minutes not authorized to be kept confidential, declare final actions null and void, and assess attorneys fees and costs in civil cases where a plaintiff substantially prevails. In other words, understanding the Act and following all of its requirements is a role that must be taken very seriously.

IAPD Is Your Source for Leadership and Board Development Tools

Effective leadership requires board members to participate in continuing education on their roles and responsibilities, including compliance with important laws like the Open Meetings Act. IAPD provides many opportunities and valuable resources on this topic such as educational seminars, webinars, online tools and publications. Take advantage of these opportunities and resources to help you be the best leader you can be!

¹ 5 ILCS 120/2.06

² 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21), 2.06

³ 5 ILCS 140/7(l)

⁴ Notification to and approval of the State Archivist under the Local Records Act is not required. 5 ILCS 120/2.06

⁵ 5 ILCS 120/2.06(e), 3.5 (b) & (g)

⁶ 5 ILCS 120/2.06(g)

⁷ 5 ILCS 120/4



4 LEADER BEHAVIORS

that Build or Break Trust

By **David Witt**, *The Ken Blanchard Companies*

There are two ways that leaders break trust with their people. The first is dramatic—a leader betrays a confidence, engages in self-serving behavior, or has a serious moral or ethical lapse. This type of breach usually ends up being very public—and once it occurs, the only remedy is damage control.

The second way that leaders break trust with people is more common, happens slowly, and usually is obvious to others but unknown to the leader. A pattern of behavior—often well-intentioned—will result in the leader undermining their credibility with their people. This type of trust-busting behavior is fixable, but only if a leader can identify the situation early and take steps to correct it.

In his new book, *Trust Works!: Four Keys to Building Lasting Relationships*, best-selling business author Ken Blanchard tackles this type of trust-busting behavior head on. Together with his coauthors Cynthia Olmstead and Martha Lawrence, Blanchard recommends that leaders evaluate their behavior in four key areas.

The ABCD Trust Model

A	ABLE do you demonstrate competence and skills?
B	BELIEVABLE do you act with integrity?
C	CONNECTED do you care about others?
D	DEPENDABLE do you maintain reliability?

In Blanchard's experience, leaders who are perceived as untrustworthy usually have an undermining behavior in one of these four areas. In *Trust Works!*, Blanchard guides readers through a self assessment designed to identify the subtle ways that leaders might be unintentionally self-sabotaging their relationships.

Self assessment is just the starting point

Once the self assessment is complete, Blanchard recommends that leaders ask the people they work with—both colleagues and direct reports—to assess their behavior in the same four areas. This is an important second step for two reasons, according to Blanchard.

One, it gives leaders an outside assessment of their behaviors from the people who are most impacted. This can be a real eye-opener for them, according to Blanchard.

“Many leaders inadvertently break trust by being unaware of how their behavior might be perceived by others. Even though you, as a leader, might consider your actions trustworthy, you may be surprised at how those same behaviors are being interpreted by others.”

Blanchard had exactly this type of experience when he asked his team to evaluate him in the four areas. While he was pleased to discover that his staff scored him well in the first three areas—Able, Believable, and Connected— they felt he could do better in the Dependable category.

This brings up an important second point that Blanchard likes to make. Trust is a sensitive issue for most work teams, especially when a leader is involved. On most teams, trust issues are rarely discussed, even when they are evident to everyone.

That's what made the Blanchard team's experience so unusual. Having data around the four areas of trust gave Ken and his team a place to start a conversation. It created a safe space to talk about the components of trust and made it less emotional. This allowed them to discuss the issue openly and pinpoint the behaviors that were causing the problem.





“Building trust is important in all relationships,
but it's particularly important when you hold a
position of authority.”

In Ken's case, the problem stemmed from his reluctance to say “no” to people. He loved new ideas, was always willing to give things a try, and wanted to say “yes” to people whenever possible. His intentions were good.

Utilizing the four-component ABCD model allowed the team to look at some of the behaviors that flowed from that mindset. They discovered that by saying “yes” so often, Ken ended up over committing, which sometimes led to disappointment and hurt feelings when commitments couldn't be honored.

Working together, the team was able to devise a new approach. In addition to helping Ken not to over commit, the team also devised a strategy where Ken now hands out his executive assistant's business cards instead of his own. This allows his executive assistant to check his schedule and set expectations appropriately.

The discussion and subsequent workaround did the trick. In the course of a few months, Blanchard saw his scores on being Dependable soar!

Rebuilding broken trust

For leaders who have created a serious breach of trust with their people, Blanchard has additional advice. In his experience, too many leaders prefer to act as if it didn't happen, try to justify the mistake, or use hierarchy and status to make the problem go away. This is exactly the wrong approach.

A healthier and more productive approach that Blanchard recommends involves five key actions.

- 1. Acknowledge and Assure** —begin the rebuilding process by addressing and acknowledging that a problem exists. As you acknowledge the problem, assure the other party that your intention is to restore trust between the two of you and that you're willing to take the time and effort to get the relationship back on track.
- 2. Admit** — the next step is to admit your part in causing the breach of trust. Own up to your actions and take responsibility for whatever harm was caused, even if you don't feel you're entirely at fault. Admit to your part in a situation.

- 3. Apologize** — the third step in repairing damaged trust is to apologize for your role in the situation. This takes humility. Avoid making excuses, shifting blame, or using qualifying statements. These will only undermine your apology.
- 4. Assess** — invite feedback from the other party about how they see the situation. Use the ABCD Trust Model to identify the behaviors that have damaged the relationship. Next, discuss the issues and identify clearly what needs to change.
- 5. Agree** — the final step in rebuilding damaged trust is to work together to create an action plan. Now that you have identified each other's perceptions and have identified the specific ways that trust has been broken, you can mutually identify the behaviors that will build trust going forward.

This approach worked well for Blanchard in his discussions with his team and it will work for your teams as well. For leaders, this means being open, candid, and vulnerable.

As Blanchard explains, “Building trust is important in all relationships, but it's particularly important when you hold a position of authority. If you're a leader, you can afford many kinds of mistakes, but the one thing you can't afford to lose is trust. By practicing behaviors aligned with the four core elements of trust, you'll not only set a healthy example, you'll also inspire enthusiasm and success in those who follow you.”

David Witt is a program director at The Ken Blanchard Companies. This article originally appeared in their **Ignite** monthly eNewsletter ©2014. To learn more about The Ken Blanchard Companies visit www.kenblanchard.com





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Leadership as A Lifelong Process

By Joe Petry, IAPD Chairman of the Board of Trustees

"The more you give, the more you receive." Over the course of 12 years of service on the Champaign park board and 8 years on the state IAPD board, I have consistently felt the truth of this adage. By contributing to the well-being of the community and state, I have been rewarded with lasting new friendships, indispensable new skills, and powerful personal growth. The field of parks and recreation truly is a wonderful place to grow as a leader.




A leader is ultimately responsible for charting an organization's course, and that includes the ongoing work of growing and building consensus.

While there are a myriad of resources available on leadership, no one resource holds the key for any single leader. In studying the behaviors of strong leaders, I have discovered transformational leadership requires continuous learning, self-reflection, flexibility and the courage to try and fail in the spirit of iterative growth. But perhaps most importantly, I believe great leaders learn how to move themselves and others from a focus on self or "I" to a focus on "we". As we lead in this time of increasing complexity, consensus and collaboration are foundational to our work in building excellence in our parks and recreational services. By way of reflecting and taking stock of these and other beliefs, I will first offer a few personal observations about leadership I have gleaned over the past 12 years. Afterwards, we will explore exciting new leadership opportunities made possible by IAPD.

Leadership is more important now than ever. Mobile technologies ensure that we are never out of touch with our staff or our residents, and this perpetual flow and incredible breadth of information requires constant decision-making on the go. We are connected to others via our smart phones on the weekends, evenings and even (admit it) during our family vacations. Our kids, and the kids we serve in our communities, are growing up quickly in a rapidly changing environment; and so our ability to serve our communities now and in the future is inextricably linked to our ability to respond to change. In fact, leadership is ultimately about moving people and organizations through change. As the world we live in now is in a constant state of flux, effective leaders are more important than ever. Leaders are not hired to manage the status quo - managers can do that just fine - leaders are hired to face new challenges and opportunities and ensure that our organizations move in a positive and directed path through rapidly evolving circumstances. This is our charge.

A great leader builds consensus. "My way or the highway" is not an effective leadership strategy. Recently, I have become fond of quoting an African proverb: "If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together." Sometimes, there is a quick and expedient way to get an item done in the short term, but oftentimes it comes at a high price if we do not first try to build consensus around that topic. Above all, great leaders listen, and they are aware of how little they know. They recognize that their opinion is only one opinion, and there is always going to be someone who knows more about a topic than they do. Perhaps more importantly, a great leader recognizes that the same set of facts may lead to very different conclusions because of varied perspectives and experiences.

However, this is not to say that leaders must wait for the approval of all team members before moving forward – that kind of a passive approach will weaken the organization and slow the ability to move forward – and that is why consensus must be "shaped," "grown," or "built" – all words that require action and oversight. A leader is ultimately responsible for charting an organization's course, and that includes the ongoing work of growing and building consensus. Indeed, even during this process, the leader's job is to guide discussion, exercise vision and decisiveness, and take responsibility for the ultimate decision. Nevertheless, taking the time to discuss and vet ideas and then using that feedback to shape your decisions is worth your time in an organization of any size, and will serve to both strengthen and improve your team.



The best leaders are defined by their refusal to be satisfied with the status quo and their constant desire to push themselves and their organization to be even greater.

Strong leaders are positive. Leaders inspire change and growth. And let's face it, people simply are not inspired by negative messages and negative personalities. A theory of organizational change called Appreciative Inquiry has helped develop understanding of the impact of approaching even the largest challenges from a positive angle. This theory says that when we are negative and focused on what does not work, we become depleted, uninspired and lack imagination. As a result, we cannot reach effective solutions to our problems. However, when we focus on the things that do work, even within a larger system that may need to be adjusted, we are inspired to build on what works and expand that until it begins to overshadow the aspects that do not work. It is much easier to change our behavior and even our organizational culture when we remain focused on the elements that work and the things that we can accomplish and change. Positive thinking starts with the leader.

A great leader is always growing. Great leaders are always working to become better, and they encourage those around them to do the same. Stephen Covey refers to this as "sharpening the saw," and it is a vital aspect of our role as leaders. In fact, the best leaders are always the most humble learners – willing to learn from everyone at all levels of their organization and willing to find a take away from the disgruntled employee or the angry resident. Humble leaders actively seek wisdom from each and every person they speak to, they seek inspiration from their peers and rivals, and they look for the teaching moment in every difficult situation they encounter. The best leaders are defined by their refusal to be satisfied with the status quo and their constant desire to push themselves and their organization to be even greater.

Leadership is a lifelong value. The traits that make a leader great also apply to many circumstances that we face in our personal and family lives. Perhaps that is why growing as a leader is so rewarding - the skills we learn may be applied in so many circumstances. In fact, a crucial step for any great leader is to apply their skills in their personal lives in positive and constructive ways. Indeed, ultimately leaders must have their personal house in order before they are able to effectively lead others. Doing so makes it clear that the most fundamental traits of good leadership revolve around character, namely honesty, integrity, trustworthiness. Great companies, organizations, and communities value these character traits above all because they are at the heart of all other crucial leadership skills.

Leadership can be learned. This may be the most important thing of all. Good leaders are developed, grown and mentored throughout their careers. The traits of a good leader are skills that can be learned with work, dedication, and constant development. This also means that all leaders, regardless of experience, must learn from their mistakes and get better. Each of us has a duty to those we lead to grow our skills and abilities for the better of all.

IAPD's Leadership Institute. In recognition of the constant learning that leadership requires, I am thrilled to be able to talk about the inaugural year of the IAPD's new Leadership Institute. This year's Institute consists of five sessions spread across the year – and we are already through our first two. I had the pleasure of attending both, and not only were they incredibly relevant and helpful, but they also helped me grow and introduced me to exciting new concepts like Ken Blanchard's "Situational Leadership." Situational Leadership is founded on the modern, fast-paced work world. Blanchard recognizes that the world of work is changing, and so are the rules and the nature of leadership. In order to accomplish more with fewer resources in real time, agencies need to develop strong yet flexible leaders. As a result, there is no one best leadership style that applies to all people and all situations. Blanchard calls this flexibility "Situational Leadership," and more precisely it is the idea that different situations require very different approaches. Situational Leadership outlines four distinct circumstances that require different amounts of supervision and direction to get the best results. Within just a few days of working through concrete situations where each approach applies, those of us in the sessions quickly learned what a difference this can make. I am happy to report that I have already used these skills in my leadership roles with positive outcomes - thank you IAPD! Both sessions were very rewarding, and helped to remind me how important it is to take time out for professional and personal development.

I believe the value of investing in staff and board members cannot be overstated. It is critical to build leadership competencies. IAPD is meeting an important need to build leadership bench strength in our parks and recreation departments. They have fully vetted the trainings and workshops so that participants are guaranteed to come away with practical new skills and abilities to govern more adeptly and purposefully. Upcoming IAPD Leadership Institute sessions will address building trust, performance management and leading change.

Joe Petry is the current Chairman of the IAPD Board of Trustees, serves as the Board President of the Champaign Park District and is a Clinical Professor of Economics and Finance at the University of Illinois. Joe is also an accomplished leader and coach with a passion for improving his community and mentoring future leaders in the classroom and beyond.

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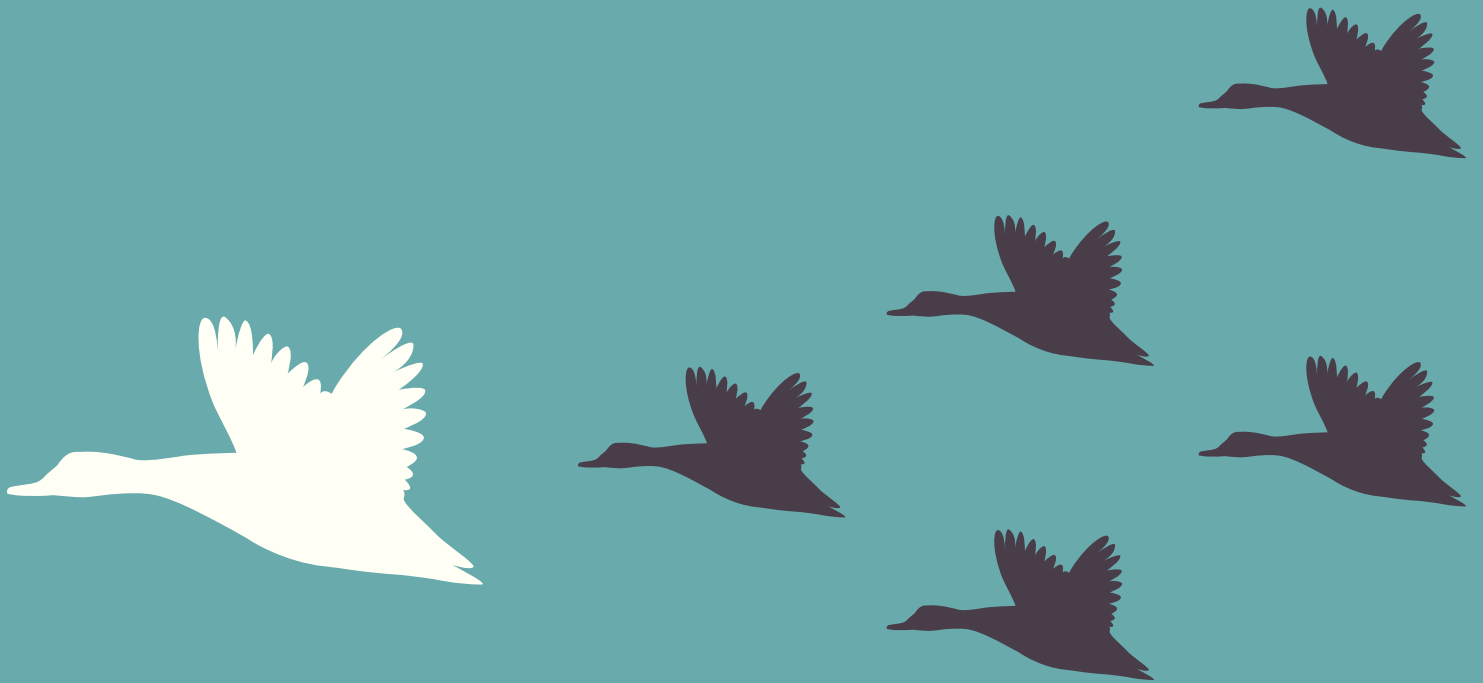
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By Adriane Johnson,
Buffalo Grove Park District



Leadership

Extends Beyond the Board Room

with the IAPD Board Member Development Program

After the local media buzz subsided, and I settled down from the euphoria of the Buffalo Grove Park District becoming the first park district in Illinois to have its entire sitting Board of Commissioners attain the Master Board Member status through the Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD), I realized the pivotal role that the IAPD Board Member Development Program plays in facilitating active leadership.

The Buffalo Grove Park District (BGPD) Board Members are all dedicated community leaders with a penchant for service excellence. We are a collegial group, we regularly break bread with each other and staff, we encourage staff and the Board to excel, and we partner to ensure the ongoing success of the BGPD. The BGPD Board Members actively pursued the Master Board Member distinction to show our collective commitment to staff, the Buffalo Grove community, and our ongoing leadership development.

Leadership extends beyond the bounds of the board room and traditional paradigms. Yes, many park commissioners are perceived as leaders in their communities by virtue of their elected position, their professional job title, or the power associated with these titles. However, title and power alone do not make a leader.

Active leadership is important for good leaders to practice. What is active leadership? Active leadership is a symbiotic relationship and ongoing process of continuous learning, honing skills, defining and modeling your agency's vision, and sharing knowledge and information with fellow commissioners and staff. It is through active leadership that commissioners demonstrate their commitment to helping their park districts thrive and succeed. Active leadership is also something that you do with people, and the IAPD Board Member Development Program affords commissioners with a myriad of opportunities to receive recognition for going above and beyond the call of duty, while sharpening their leadership skills, and for working with park district staff, legislators, and constituents to advance its agency's mission and vision.

Through the Board Member Development Program, commissioners from IAPD member agencies are awarded Board Development Units (BDUs) annually for participating in the program, and commissioners are recognized at the IAPD Annual Business Meeting at the IAPD / IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference. There are three levels a commissioner can achieve during the board-member-development journey: Notable Board Member, Distinctive Board Member, and Master Board Member. To attain this status, a commissioner must accumulate 100 BDUs, 400 BDUs, and 750 BDUs, respectively. With each milestone achievement, there are different levels of recognition, including being recognized in the *Illinois Parks & Recreation* magazine to receiving a special lapel pin and plaque. Master Board Members are also featured on the IAPD's website.

Here are a few key reasons why the IAPD Board Member Development Program enables active leadership:

1. The program encourages continuous education and awards BDUs for attending state and national conferences, participating in seminars, workshops and webinars;
2. The program inspires volunteer participation in IAPD and community-based programs;
3. The program promotes attendance at IAPD and park district events;
4. The program cultivates involvement with legislators and community leaders;
5. The program rewards members for their service on the IAPD Board and committee activities as well as officer-level involvement on the local board level;
6. The program inspires commissioners to write articles for the IAPD and other magazines, professional journals, and share their knowledge by presenting at conferences, park district events and community events.
7. The program acknowledges the commissioners' agency's involvement in park district development, including successful grant applications, building new facilities, land purchases and other development opportunities.
8. The program promotes other educational endeavors, including reading books associated with park district law, parliamentary procedures, or boardmanship, and other books related to leadership and development.

The benefits of participating in the IAPD Board Member Development Program abound. For a nominal annual fee, commissioners document and demonstrate active leadership, garner recognition from the media, legislators, colleagues and the public, and attain Notable, Distinctive or Master Board Member status, which can prove useful during the re-election process. However, the benefits tell only a part of the story in terms of why active leadership matters.

Why is active leadership important? Many park commissioners provide leadership and strategic direction for their park district, overseeing financial operations, maintaining the legal and ethical standing of their park district, serving as guardian of the public trust and ensuring the park district remains accountable to tax payers. Active leadership helps commissioners successfully manage their governing and ambassadorial obligations. Active leadership keeps commissioners motivated, energized, enthusiastic and passionate about their work. Unlike transformational leadership, which represents a particular leadership style, active leadership, like proactive leadership is about how you lead. It is also through active leadership that commissioners use their ability to anticipate change and trends to create policies and plans to meet opportunities and threats. Active leadership is about responding in the moment; a leadership approach that is interactive and dynamic.

Leadership extends beyond the board room, and commissioners must find leadership development opportunities that will facilitate intellectual stimulation, active community involvement, self-leadership development, inspirational motivation, out-of-the box thinking and organizational leadership.

Active leadership starts with you. Participation in the IAPD Board Member Development Program is a great way to start!

WebXtra



Leadership Practices for Effective Park District Management

By Maddie Kelly, Oak Lawn Park District

We have a great team at the Oak Lawn Park District and great teams take great leadership. Quality leadership is essential for an organization to be effective.

Leadership tasks are different than management tasks. Leadership deals more with change and uncertainty whereas management relates to the complexities of an organization—budgeting, staffing, controlling, etc. Some of the most important leadership tasks in a park and recreation agency are setting direction, aligning people and goals, motivating and inspiring.

The Chief Executive Officer is the individual who establishes the overall climate of the organization. This culture is built upon trust and respect. The CEO's words, actions, and body language influence the ethical conduct of the staff and board.

Good leadership utilizes several practices. As the director of the Oak Lawn Park District, several of my favorite leadership practices include “challenging the process,” “inspiring a shared vision,” “modeling the way,” “enabling others to act,” and “encouraging the heart.” I try to enact each of these practices, whether collaborating with staff, the public or our Board of Directors.

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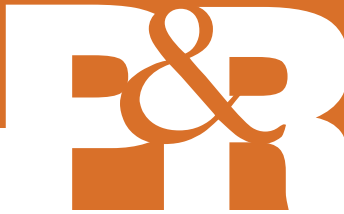
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Jan/Feb	Conference & Healthy Lifestyles	10/1/14*	11/14/14*	11/14/14*	11/28/14*
March/April	Going Green & Photo Contest with a Spotlight on Forest Preserve Districts	1/12/15	1/16/15	1/16/15	1/23/15
May/June	Partnerships	3/16/15	3/20/15	3/20/15	3/27/15
July/August	Aquatics & Themed Park Activity Areas	5/11/15	5/15/15	5/15/15	5/22/15
Sept/Oct	Leadership & Board Development	7/13/15	7/17/15	7/17/15	7/24/15
Nov/Dec	Marketing Your Park & Recreation Agency: Strategies that Work	9/14/15	9/18/15	9/18/15	9/25/15
Jan/Feb 2016	Conference & Putting Grant Money to Work for Your Agency: Success Stories	10/1/15*	11/16/15*	11/16/15*	11/30/15*

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PEOPLE & PLACES



The Carol Stream Park District Names Jim Reuter as New Executive Director

Jim Reuter, of Elgin, has been named the executive director for the Carol Stream Park District. Jim is currently the director for the Village of South Elgin Parks and Recreation Department. He has served there since 1997. During his tenure, he led his department to state accreditation - the first municipal department ever to do so. He is also credited with securing \$3.6 million in grants and overseeing multiple construction projects including restoration of shoreline and bike trails along the Fox River. In addition, Jim

founded a supporting 501C3 foundation that raises funds and manages volunteers for the department.

Jim has served on the boards of the Fox Valley Special Recreation Association and its foundation, the Fox River Ecosystem Partnership, and the Illinois Park and Recreation Association. He is an active member of the National Recreation and Park Association, the Illinois Park and Recreation Association and Illinois Association of Park Districts.

Park board commissioners hired the Illinois Association of Park Districts to help launch a successful nationwide search for a new director.



Plainfield Park District Hires Carlo Capalbo as Executive Director

After working extensively with the Illinois Association of Park Districts, the Board of Commissioners of the Plainfield Park District has hired **Carlo Capalbo** to serve as its next executive director. He will begin employment on September 8th. Carlo has 17 years of experience in the field and for the past seven years has served as the director of parks and recreation for the Worth Park District. He has also worked at the Streamwood, Berwyn and

North Berwyn Park Districts in a variety of roles.

Carlo holds a master's degree in publication administration and a bachelor's degree in political science. He was the recipient of the Young Professional of the Year Award in 2002 from the IPRA Recreation Section. And, at the 2014 IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference, received the IPRA Chairman's Award.

With his diverse experience and strong educational background, Carlo is eager to lead the Plainfield Park District.



Zion Park District Names Eric Bradley as New Superintendent of Administrative Services

Eric Bradley comes to the Zion Park District with over ten years of experience in finance and accounting and has worked in both private industry and the public sector. Eric grew up in a near-by community of Wadsworth and spent much of his time enjoying the high quality recreational programs and facilities offered by the Zion Park District.

Eric received a bachelor's degree in finance from Illinois State University and earned his MBA from DePaul University's Kellstadt Graduate School of Business. He is also a licensed CPA.



River Trails Park District Hires Bret Fahnstrom as New Executive Director

After conducting a search with the Illinois Association of Park Districts' Director Search Service, the River Trails Park District welcomes **Bret Fahnstrom** as their new executive director. With 24 years of parks and recreation experience, Bret's background will help continue to lead the River Trails Park District into their next strategic plan toward an even stronger agency.

Bret has served as executive director for the Golf Maine Park District for the past six years and previously held the position of superintendent of recreation. He has also worked for the Park District of Oak Park as a manager and community center director.

Bret earned a bachelor's degree in parks and recreation administration from Western Kentucky University. He has received his Certified Parks and Recreation Professional certification and attended the National Parks and Recreation Association Revenue Development School. Bret has served on the Illinois Park and Recreation Association Recreation Section and Professional Development School Board of Regents.



Glenview Park District Names Brian Montgomery as Manager of Program Services at the Glenview Ice Center

The Glenview Park District recently hired **Brian Montgomery** as the new manager of program services at the Glenview Ice

Center. Montgomery is a graduate of The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign with a bachelor of science in recreation, sport and tourism with a concentration in recreation management and a minor in philosophy. He completed his internship with the Glenview Park District and went on to gain valuable experience at the Mt. Prospect and Veterans Park Districts.

In his new position, he will be responsible for all Ice Center programs and special events and will oversee the figure skating director, hockey director and customer service positions, as well as general operations positions. "I am looking forward to his youthful exuberance, his creativity with programming and his warm personality in customer service," said Jim Weides, Ice Center general manager.



The Zion Park District Announces the Retirement of Doug Congdon

Doug Congdon retired from the Zion Park District after completing 43 years of service. Doug began his career at the Zion Park District in May of 1971 at the age of 15. He completed his degree in parks and recreation at Western Illinois University in

1978. Doug was named leisure center director in 1980 and continued his service to the Zion Park District. In 1985, Doug was named superintendent of recreation. He completed his MBA in 1989 at Keller School of Management. In 2008, Doug was named superintendent of administrative services and served in that capacity up to his retirement. His dedication to the district and to the community of Zion is greatly appreciated.

Schaumburg Park District Announces New Hires



Derek Dvorak has been named athletics supervisor at the Schaumburg Park District. Derek previously worked for the Lombard Park District as the athletic program manager for five years. He was the athletics coordinator for the Urbana Park District from 2007 to 2009. A 2006 graduate of the University of Illinois, Derek earned his master of science degree in sports management and a bachelor of science in marketing in 2005.



The Schaumburg Park District would like to welcome **Teresa Varco** as the new early childhood supervisor. In 1999, Teresa began as a preschool teacher at the Park Ridge Park District. She then became the supervisor for preschool and early childhood in 2007. A 2003 graduate of Northeastern University, she earned a bachelor of science degree in early childhood. Teresa currently resides in Des Plaines.



Kathleen Benson has been appointed as the Bock Neighborhood Center manager for the Schaumburg Park District. Benson joined the Glenview Park District in 2008 as the recreation supervisor after graduating from the University of Illinois in 2008 with a bachelor of science degree in recreation, sport and tourism. In 2012, Kathleen moved to the Arlington Heights Park District as the assistant golf operations supervisor. Kathleen lives in Elgin.



Mike Wold has become the Sport Center assistant manager for the Schaumburg Park District after serving as athletics supervisor since 2013. An Illinois State University graduate of 2006, Wold joined the Hanover Park Park District as the athletics supervisor after completing his bachelor of science degree in park and recreation administration. In 2008, Mike moved to the Itasca Park District as the athletics supervisor. Mike currently lives in Pingree Grove.

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