

illinois

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# PARKS AND RECREATION

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



marketing  
your park and  
recreation agency:

# strategies that work

PLUS: The 2016 Legal Calendar & Best of the Best Awards Gala Winners





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## FROM THE EDITOR



This issue is dedicated to marketing your park and recreation agency. Marketing isn't always easy but it is imperative to the success of your agencies. Without marketing, your residents would not know about the programs and services you offer. Whereas with a strong marketing plan, people are eager to sign up for your programs and use your facilities.

In this issue, you will be able to read about different strategies that work for various agencies as well as delivery methods including print, digital media and more. Don't forget to check out our WebXtra section for more great articles on marketing.

You will also find a Legal Calendar providing insight to every legal date you need to know in the world of parks and recreation.

Congratulations to all the winners of the Best of the Best Awards Gala! You'll be able to see a summary of the winners from the Gala held on October 2, 2015 on page 17.



### "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](http://ILparks.org/PhotoContest). Please send us your photos soon. The deadline for entry is December 2, 2015.

*Rachel Laier*

— Rachel Laier, Editor



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Peter M. Murphy, J.D., CAE  
IAPD President and CEO

## Educational Opportunities Abound at IAPD

The mission of the Illinois Association of Park Districts is to provide outstanding educational experiences for locally-elected officials and executive staff from park districts, forest preserves, recreation and conservation agencies. This year's sold-out Legal Symposium is a fine example of this, but it is only one of a series of the educational opportunities that we offer.

This issue of the *Illinois Parks and Recreation* magazine is focused on marketing strategies that work and is accompanied by two webinars on the topic taking place on November 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. These are offered on a complimentary basis to IAPD members and can be seen again on the IAPD website at [ILparks.org](http://ILparks.org). This issue's WebXtra also provides additional robust articles on marketing including:

- *Improving Your Marketing Workflow*, by Chelsea Norton, Director of Marketing and Communications, Champaign Park District
- *Kankakee Valley Park District's Perpetual Dilemma...Marketing Your Agency to a Multi-Dimensional Demographic*, by Ron Jackson, Kankakee Valley Park District
- *Fundamental Marketing Efforts at the Godley Park District*, by Ryan Togliatti, Godley Park District
- *Mastering Strategic Park Signage: 10 Tips for Success*, by Ashley Eccles, The Village of Hawthorn Woods

Read the full articles online. Go to [ILparks.org](http://ILparks.org) and select Publications/IP&R Magazine/WebXtras from the left column.

There are many excellent online resources on the topic of marketing and one that I would commend to your attention is The Evangelist Marketing Minute. Subscribed to online, it comes in the form of a free weekly email. Written by Alex Goldfayn, it is designed to be a weekly thinking launch point specifically for executives and always takes less than 60 seconds to read. For more information, go to [www.EvangelistMktg.com](http://www.EvangelistMktg.com).

### Legendary Service

Another do not miss educational opportunity is IAPD's continuing Leadership Institute program featuring M.J. Coulson, Director of Consulting Services with The Ken Blanchard Companies. I have heard many speakers over the years, but none better than M.J. Coulson. She is simply amazing. The program she is delivering is entitled, *Legendary Service – Getting Customers to Think “Wow”!*

This workshop not only focuses on how to provide exceptional customer service through improved employee engagement, but also on attentiveness and responsiveness which triggers boards and staff to think about the internal and external customers they serve and what their specific preferences are in terms of how they like to be served. This workshop is a fast-paced program that also covers active listening skills, how to deal with difficult situations and the use of best practices for board and staff when interacting with citizens. The deadline for this December 3rd workshop is Friday, November 27, 2015.

“An investment in  
knowledge pays the  
best interest.”  
– Benjamin Franklin



### IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference

This year's IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference has some exciting changes including moving the keynote to Saturday morning, creating a 150-minute session format, and launching a comprehensive new mobile app that will provide up-to-date conference information wherever you go. This app will bring the entire conference program to your fingertips, provide you with session alerts, interactive maps, session evaluations and speaker information. It will also allow you to personalize your schedule. The new conference mobile app is powered by Mousetrap Mobile. Text SOAR to 57780 or download the app from the Apple App Store or Google “Play for Android.”

In keeping with past conferences, there will be a wealth of sessions on boardmanship, leadership and management, governance and legal issues, finance and information technology, marketing and communication, to name but a few.

Registration and housing for the IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference taking place January 28-30, 2016 at the Hyatt Regency Chicago is now open. The early registration deadline is Monday, December 7, 2015. For further information on registration, housing and educational offerings, please refer to the September/October issue of the *Illinois Parks and Recreation* magazine, call IAPD, or go to the conference website at [ILparksconference.com](http://ILparksconference.com).

### Illinois Gold Medal Award Winners

On behalf of the entire IAPD membership, I would like to congratulate the Park District of Oak Park and the Oak Brook Park District boards and staff for winning the National Gold Medal Award at this year's National Recreation and Park Association Congress. This is the highest recognition a park and recreation agency can achieve and it takes years of work and dedication to even qualify as a finalist. The Fox Valley Park District and the Itasca Park District were recognized as finalists for their excellence in park and recreation management.

Founded in 1965, the Gold Medal Awards program honors communities in the U.S. that demonstrate excellence in parks and recreation through long-range planning, resource management, volunteerism, environmental stewardship, program development, professional development and agency recognition, as well as unparalleled service to the community.

Since 1966, Illinois park districts have won the National Gold Medal twice as often as California who has the second highest number of Gold Medal Award winning agencies.

Please see the sidebar for the dates of IAPD programs and events that are already scheduled for next year. Plans are also underway for the addition of a new series of Leadership Institute workshops, programs and webinars. These will be announced shortly and will take the place of the commissioner Boot Camps which are offered in election years to new and seasoned commissioners.

I also want to draw your attention to the People & Places section of the magazine on pages 24 and 25 where some of our most outstanding leaders are recognized, as well as the passing of some of the finest, most dedicated board members and professionals that have ever served Illinois park districts.



**WebXtra**  
ILparks.org

## 2016 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Jan 28-30  
**IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference,**  
Hyatt Regency  
Chicago

Aug 20  
**Park District Conservation Day,**  
Illinois State  
Fairgrounds,  
Springfield

Apr/May  
**Flying 4 Kids Months,**  
Statewide Kite Fly

Sep 19  
**IAPD Summer Golf Tour #4:**  
Highland Park Country Club,  
Park District of Highland Park,  
Highland Park

May 3  
**Parks Day at the Capitol,**  
Illinois State Capitol,  
Springfield

May 3  
**Legislative Reception,**  
Illini Country Club,  
Springfield

Oct 6-8  
**NRPA Congress & Exposition,**  
America's Center  
Convention Center,  
St. Louis, MO

May 4  
**Legislative Conference**  
Crowne Plaza,  
Springfield

Oct 21  
**IAPD Best of the Best Awards Gala,**  
Chevy Chase Country Club,  
Wheeling Park District,  
Wheeling

Jun 6  
**IAPD Summer Golf Tour #2:**  
Foxford Hills Golf Club,  
Cary Park  
District/GolfVisions  
Management, Inc.,  
Cary

Nov 3  
**IAPD Legal Symposium,**  
McDonald's  
University/Hyatt  
Lodge,  
Oak Brook

Jul 14  
**Joint Legislative Awareness Golf Outing,**  
White Pines Golf Club,  
Bensenville Park  
District, Bensenville

Jan 19-21, 2017  
**IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference,**  
Hilton Chicago

Aug 15  
**IAPD Summer Golf Tour #3:**  
PrairieView Golf Club,  
Byron Forest Preserve  
District, Byron

**IAPD**  
Illinois Association of Park Districts

For the most up-to-date Calendar of Events, please visit the IAPD website at [www.ILparks.org](http://www.ILparks.org).

# EYE ON THE PROFESSION

A CLOSER LOOK AT TRENDS AND ISSUES IN THE PARK AND RECREATION PROFESSION



By Debbie Trueblood, CAE  
IPRA Executive Director

## IPRA Looking Forward and Looking Back in 2015 and 2016

IPRA is in the middle of our rolling five year strategic plan started in 2014 and adjusted annually. Our current plan takes us through 2020. As we look back at 2015, here are some of our accomplishments this year:

In membership, we have more professional members than we have had in recent history going back to 2011 or before. We conducted a three-month free trial membership last fall and rolled out a discount for our non-Chicago Metro members. Right now, we have 2,179 professional members and in total with students, advocates, and commercial members, we have 2,420 members.

We rolled out our new online communities, IPRAConnect and now have 14 communities to serve specific interest areas for our members. This also allows us to reduce the amount of email we send to focus on the most important only and the rest are done through segmented marketing.

We rolled out a new speaker management system for our conference, making it easier for volunteers and staff to review and manage all the proposals that come in.

We continue to build relationships with our friends in other associations, like Illinois Afterschool Network as well as our friends at the American Camp Association-IL and our park and recreation association colleagues in other states. In fact, IPRA's webinar series now has attendees from seven states and one of our in-person training programs even had someone from Germany attend! We also continue to build our relationships with colleges and universities in Illinois who are training the next generation of park and recreation professionals.

We rolled out our new mentoring program, ProConnect. It had a 97% satisfaction rating and 24% of those who were not already Executive Directors were promoted in the year since they applied for the program. IPRA won a national award for innovation for ProConnect in its first year. We even expanded it to roll it out in far Southern Illinois too with ProConnect South. This program is in partnership with University of St Francis in Joliet.

We have streamlined all of our scholarships into one process, making it easier for students and professionals to apply for this continuing education funding source.

We continue to communicate about parks and recreation all over the country. In fact, we are so proud that the PhD student we have been working with these last two years, Gus Hallmon, will be presenting his research and representing us in Missouri and in Canada in the coming months.

As we look to next year, here is a summary of our goals from the 2016 portion of our five year strategic plan.

For IPRA, 2016 will be a planning year for us, we will continue with our five year plan, but we will take some time to research and check in with our members to make sure we are still moving in the right direction for them. For example, we will be asking members for some detailed feedback about our educational programs to ensure we continue to provide the best education for park and recreation professionals.

The board will lead IPRA through a streamlining process, looking specifically at the committees, task forces, sections, and ensure we have the best structure to serve our members, then look at terms and term limits to ensure that those who wish to volunteer have opportunities to do so.

"For IPRA, 2016 will be a planning year for us, we will continue with our five year plan, but we will take some time to research and check in with our members to make sure we are still moving in the right direction for them."



We have opened up membership as a free benefit for students. We will redouble our efforts to connect with college and university students all over Illinois and help them to connect with each other and with professionals statewide. We will develop a brochure just for students showing them the role IPRA can have in their professional growth. A new on-line community for students and faculty will connect students with each other statewide and will become an avenue for sharing information about internships and early career positions.

We will host a Leadership Summit. We will invite the state association boards and top staff from our five border states to join us and share information reciprocally to help each other learn and grow and better serve professionals in our respective states.

We will expand our successful webinar series to serve more Illinois organizations as well as those in other states.

We will work with outside support to outsource grant writing, building on our existing and future partnerships to identify ways to help each other grow.

Our foundation will continue to develop the now streamlined



scholarship program for students and professionals and raise funds to create more scholarship opportunities.

We will roll out a membership recruitment campaign to better reach more of our prospective members all over Illinois to grow IPRA's network. We will continue to identify specific ways to serve our members in Central and Southern Illinois, hosting events and supporting our affiliates there.

The Community Campaign Task Force is getting ready to roll out the first phase of our community campaign to support professional members in educating their communities on the value of parks and recreation. In 2016, we will move to phase two, directly educating the public about the value of parks and recreation through a new website for consumers and a marketing campaign.

We will continue to develop ProConnect with our partner, the University of St Francis and ProConnect South with our affiliate, Southern Illinois Park and Recreation Association (SIPRA) through our newly formed Board of Regents.

We will continue to develop our newsletter by sharing guest articles from our partners, schools and universities, other states, and subject matter experts.

We will provide improved technology to make our job board more user friendly for our members, so that it can continue to be a top ranked member benefit.

IPRA has had a great year in 2015 and 2016 looks to be even better. It is an exciting time to be a part of serving our communities together in Illinois. If you would like to share your feedback on IPRA's direction, feel free to reach out to me at [debbie@ilipra.org](mailto:debbie@ilipra.org). For more information go to [www.ilipra.org](http://www.ilipra.org). I look forward to seeing you at the conference!

Don't let this be your **LAST ISSUE** of the Illinois Park and Recreation Magazine. For the members of IPRA who are **READING THIS**, please make note that your membership **EXPIRES** on **DECEMBER 31, 2015**. We would hate to lose you! And we would hate for you to lose all of the **MEMBER BENEFITS** you only get with IPRA.



Learn. Connect. Inspire.

Your membership includes: **DISCOUNTED PRICING** on event registrations like the annual conference and Leadership Academy, access to up to seven **SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS**, volunteer and **LEADERSHIP** opportunities, networking, mentoring programs like ProConnect, online communities with IPRA Connect and much, much **MORE**. Please don't delay, and **RENEW** today at [ILIPRA.ORG](http://ILIPRA.ORG).

## IPRA Calendar of Events

**December 1, 2015**

### **Director's L.A.B. - Leadership Academy Breakfast -**

IPRA welcomes Executive Directors, future leaders, commissioners and guests to join us for the Director's Leadership Academy Breakfast (LAB). This event includes a light breakfast, networking and an interview with a transformational leader. Our December interview will be with Adam Fox, President and CEO of the WNBA's Chicago Sky.

**December 9 & 17, 2015**

### **Skills Development Webinar Series: Essential Tools and Ensuring Relevance**

The challenges of today are multi-faceted and can range from social ills to business models. Do we attempt to solve them all or identify what problems our agency's effectively address? What is most important is to understand how to be relevant, thus making parks and recreation a critical success factor to the success of a community.

**January 28-30, 2016**

### **IAPD/IPRA 'Soaring to New Heights' Conference**

As the premier state conference for park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies in Illinois, the IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights conference brings together more than 4,400 professionals and elected officials for three exciting days of quality educational programming, networking and professional development.

**February 9, 2016**

### **Director's L.A.B. - Leadership Academy Breakfast**

IPRA welcomes Executive Directors, future leaders, commissioners and guests to join us for the Director's Leadership Academy Breakfast (LAB). This event includes a light breakfast, networking and an interview with a transformational leader. Our February interview will be with Sonya Evanosky, MBA Vice President of Finance, Chamberlain College of Nursing.

Details available online at [ILipra.org](http://ILipra.org)



For a complete list of upcoming events, and to register, visit [ILipra.org](http://ILipra.org)



Jason Anselment  
Legal/Legislative Counsel

## Measure of Success is Relative

Recently, my nine-year-old daughter, Maria, was invited to run a mile race. Having never run an official race, she was unsure how long it would take or whether she could even finish. “What would be a good finish time,” she asked. With my lawyer hat in hand, I responded, “it depends.”

I explained that she should be proud to simply finish her first race and that a time under 10 minutes would probably be a good goal for runners her age that practice. Because she was interested, we looked up the IESA record for the 1600 meter dash, which is 5:03.80. “So,” Maria concluded, “a good finish time depends on a lot of things like practice, the distance, my age and probably even the weather.” I proudly smiled and assured her that success often depends on a lot of things.

I thought a lot about that conversation as I was preparing my presentation for last month's IAPD Legal Symposium. Every legislative session requires resilience and perseverance, but this year has been particularly challenging for nearly everyone involved in, or affected by, the legislative process. The impact of the state budget impasse on important capital construction projects and the effect a statewide property tax freeze would have on decision-making by locally elected officials are just two of the important issues IAPD and its member agencies have confronted this year.

While those two issues remain at the forefront as this issue goes to press, hundreds of other bills impacting park districts, conservation districts, forest preserves, recreation and special recreation agencies were also in the mix. IAPD's advocacy efforts positively impacted a number of those bills. When those results are measured in the context of this particular session, we have enjoyed relative success this year.

### OSLAD Protected from Special Fund Sweeps

With park and recreation capital construction projects still halted by the suspension of OSLAD and PARC grants, it would be easy to forget our monumental achievement in protecting these dedicated funds from the \$1.4 billion of special fund sweeps back in March. However, had these funds been among the 108 other special funds that were swept, the State would have been unable to fulfill its obligations and commitments to match the local contributions to

these projects, and the grants would have been terminated rather than suspended. While a State budget is still needed to reappropriate these funds, it is important to recognize that our efforts to preserve this funding was critical to save the projects, not to mention the integrity of the OSLAD and PARC programs.

### IAPD Platform Bills Signed into Law

If anything, this session has demonstrated how difficult it can be to pass any piece of legislation. Yet, in the past five years, our efforts have resulted in the passage of **17 IAPD Platform bills**. Few, if any, associations have matched that total during the same time period. Three IAPD Platform bills were signed into law this session to clarify existing practices and procedures and avoid potential problems in the future.

**HB 1363 / Public Act 99-0271 (Fine, L. / Holmes, L.)** amends the section of the Park District Code that allows for joint programming to bring it into conformity with the broad authority under the Intergovernmental Cooperation Act that permits joint programming with any unit of local government regardless of whether or not it is contiguous. **HB 405 / Public Act 99-0053 (Sandack, R. / LaHood, D.)** clarifies that the notice that is required under the Park Commissioners Land Sale Act must be provided at least ten days before the day of the court hearing on the petition, and **HB 3882 / Public Act 99-0016 (Moffitt, D. / Jones III, E.)** removes an expired provision of the Park District Code.

Our efforts also resulted in the passage of a fourth IAPD Platform bill this session. **SB 1271 (McGuire, P. / Walsh, Jr., L.)** would have raised the mandated bid limit threshold under the Park District Code, Downstate Forest Preserve District Act and the Conservation District Act from \$20,000 to \$25,000, resulting in more local control and cost savings for taxpayers on smaller purchases. Unfortunately, **SB 1271** was one of 64 bills that the Governor vetoed. We are working with the Administration to address the concerns raised in the Veto Message, and we are optimistic that a new bill can be introduced and signed into law in the second year of the 99<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.



## IAPD's Advocacy Efforts Result in Important Amendments

A significant IAPD member benefit is our review and analysis of every piece of legislation that is introduced to determine impact on member agencies. So far this year, we have reviewed 6,511 bills and 1,911 amendments; we are closely tracking approximately 500 bills because of their impact.

As legislation moves through the process, IAPD plays an active role by attending and testifying at committee hearings and participating in numerous meetings with legislators, staff and other interested groups. The trust and relationships we have developed with members of the General Assembly for more than 35 years is key to our success in helping to eliminate or mitigate the costs of unfunded mandates or, in some cases, to avoid unintended consequences that could otherwise result from certain legislation.

By way of example, **SB 7 / Public Act 99-0245 (Raoul, K. / Mitchell, C.)**, contains many new mandates for school districts concerning concussions and head injuries, including return-to-play protocol. An earlier version of the bill would have applied these mandates to park districts and youth sports leagues that use park district facilities even though they operate much differently from schools.

Park districts certainly recognize the critical nature of this safety issue and have been working for many years to help address these concerns voluntarily without the need for state mandates. IAPD offers park districts and other member agencies valuable educational resources and training opportunities, and members use these resources to educate youth sports leagues and other facility users, including coaches, parents and players about the nature and risk of concussions and head injuries. In recognition of these efforts and because of IAPD's work behind the scenes, the final version of **SB 7 / Public Act 99-0245** that was signed into law authorizes and encourages park districts to continue to disseminate educational materials rather than imposing costly mandates that would have been difficult, if not impossible, for park districts to satisfy.

Another example is **SB 792 / Public Act 99-0367 (Bush, M. / Scherer, S.)**. This new law amends the Truth in Taxation Law to require taxing districts with websites maintained by full-time staff to also post any required "black box" newspaper notice on their website beginning in 2016.

As originally introduced, the legislation would have required all taxing districts with websites to post any required Truth in Taxation notice on their websites. At IAPD's request, the bill was amended with language from the Open Meetings Act to address concerns for smaller agencies that may not have the resources to hire full-time staff to regularly maintain their websites. The amendment also contains other important language from the Open Meetings Act to protect local governments by providing that the failure of a taxing district to post the notice on its website will

not invalidate the newspaper notice or any action taken on the tax levy.

These are just two examples. IAPD's efforts also resulted in numerous other amendments to bills that have not passed both chambers. If these bills move forward in the second year of the 99<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, this session's work will pay even bigger dividends.

One example is **HB 248 (Kay, D. / McCarter, K.)**, which amends the Open Meetings Act and has passed the House but not the Senate. The introduced version of the bill would have created uncertainty with regard to the finality of every action taken at an open meeting. IAPD worked with the bill sponsor and other legislators on an amendment to clarify that a court's authority to invalidate an action is limited to situations where 1) a civil action alleging the violation is commenced within 60 days of that meeting, and 2) the alleged violation is directly and substantially related to that final action.

These important amendments would not be possible without IAPD's expertise, connectivity and proximity to the Capitol. For one thing, the process can move very rapidly. At times, amendments may be filed, posted and heard in committee in a matter of hours and pass both chambers within a couple of days. IAPD closely monitors amendments and committee hearing notices multiple times each day as bill deadlines approach. IAPD's vigilance helps ensure that members' concerns are addressed before bills move forward.

For example, **SB 914 (Connelly, M. / Sandack, R.)**, which has passed the Senate but not the House, would amend the Public Officer Prohibited Activities Act to prohibit all units of local government, local officials, and school districts from sending promotional materials to residents during specified periods leading up to consolidated elections and general elections. As soon as the amendment was filed, IAPD quickly raised concerns that the broad language, which was intended to restrict election-related promotional materials, did not clearly allow for other promotional materials such as seasonal brochures, newsletters, or similar informational materials that describe recreational programs, events, activities or registration information that are commonly distributed by park districts, forest preserves and other conservation and recreation agencies. In response to IAPD's concerns, the Senate sponsor readily agreed to work with IAPD to address these concerns. Again, while this bill remains in the House for now, these timely efforts may help avoid unintended consequences down the road.

These are just a few of the many examples of our positive impact this year. Without IAPD's reliable and trusted voice at the Capitol, numerous other bills may have also led to unnecessary and costly mandates, exposure to potential liability and expensive litigation in the future. So while many challenges still exist, we have enjoyed much success this year in terms of helping to ensure the ability of park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies to deliver the highest quality services to their citizens as efficiently and effectively as possible.

# legal calendar 2016

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*The following park district calendar includes key dates based on a fiscal year that begins on May 1 and ends on April 30. For those park districts that have adopted another date for the commencement of the fiscal year (70 ILCS 1205/4-4), this calendar must be adjusted for those duties that must be performed at times related to the fiscal year. The calendar is also established around regular park board meetings held on the third Thursday of each month selected. Selected election dates are based on the General Primary Election to be held on March 15, 2016, and the General Election to take place on November 8, 2016. For additional election dates, consult the Practice Tools Section of the IAPD website, [ILparks.org](http://ILparks.org).*

All references are to the Illinois Compiled Statutes (ILCS).

## ANNUAL REQUIREMENTS

### AT THE BEGINNING OF THE CALENDAR (OR FISCAL) YEAR:

Post the date, time and place of park district regular meetings for the year. Mail copies to the news media. (5 ILCS 120/2.02)

Review the requirement that all closed sessions are to be recorded verbatim by audio or video. (5 ILCS 120/2.06)

Review requirement that open meeting minutes must be approved within 30 days after the meeting or at the public body's second subsequent regular meeting, whichever is later, and made available for public inspection within 10 days after approval. (5 ILCS 120/2.06)

Review the requirements that all Open Meetings Act and Freedom of Information Act officers must complete the Attorney General's annual training requirements. Newly appointed officers must complete the training within 30 days after designation or assuming the position. (5 ILCS 120/1.05; 5 ILCS 140/3.5(b))

Review requirement that newly elected or appointed members of a public body must successfully complete a course on the Open Meetings Act offered by the Illinois Association of Park Districts or the electronic training curriculum on the Open Meetings Act developed by the Illinois Attorney General's Public Access Counselor within 90 days of their oath of office or otherwise assuming their responsibilities if no oath is required. (Public Act 98-0900; 5 ILCS 140/1.05)

Review requirement that all local governments with Internet websites are required to post on that website an email address for their elected officials for the public's use in contacting those officials and to post a hyperlink on the local government's homepage to allow the public easy access to the contact information. (Public Act 98-0300)

Review with the park district treasurer the requirement that all funds of the district not immediately needed for disbursement must be invested

within two working days at prevailing interest rates or better. (30 ILCS 225/1)

Review the requirement that every person, other than the treasurer, receiving money for the district must keep a triplicate record of the money, and deliver the money to the treasurer not later than the middle of the month following the month of receipt. (30 ILCS 20/1)

The American flag must be displayed and flown each day of the week from each City Hall or Village Hall and Village Square and at the principal entrance to all supervised public parks. (5 ILCS 465/3b)

Contributions to the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF) must be deducted each pay period from covered employees' pay and remitted to the IMRF along with the contribution from the local government. This requirement is mandatory for municipalities over 5,000 population where Social Security is not provided, and elective for others. (40 ILCS 5/7-132, 7-172, 7-173)

Districts that have employees under Social Security must send their FICA contributions at such times as may be designated by the Internal Revenue Service. (40 ILCS 5/21-105.2, 21-109)

Review the requirements that all newly hired employees must be reported to the Illinois Department of Security. (820 ILCS 405/1801.1)

Review the requirement that while participating in a public works project, each contractor and subcontractor must submit a certified payroll to the public body in charge of the project every month. The public body must maintain these records submitted prior to January 1, 2014 for at least 3 years. Pursuant to Public Act 98-0328, the public body must maintain these records submitted on or after January 1, 2014, for at least 5 years, but can do so in paper or electronic format. (820 ILCS 130/5)

For persons or entities required to report under the Lobbyist Registration Act, review reporting requirements for expenditures made during the 2015 calendar year. (25 ILCS 170/6, 170/6.5)

Beginning January 1, 2015, all employers must post a notice developed by the Illinois Department of Human Rights (IDHR) and include information concerning an employee's rights in any employee handbook. Samples of these required notices are available on the IDHR's website. (Public Act 98-1050)

### EVERY SIX MONTHS

Unpublished written minutes of all closed meetings are to be reviewed not less than semiannually. Minutes are to be reviewed to determine if (a) the need for confidentiality still exists as to all or part of those minutes, or (b) if the minutes or portions thereof no longer require confidential treatment and are available for public inspection. The results of the review are to be reported in the open session of the board of commissioners. (5 ILCS 120/2.06)

Check IAPD database to verify that all information is up-to-date for your agency.

### OCTOBER 2015

#### OCTOBER 15

First day notice of intention to file a petition to create a political subdivision, whose officers are to be elected rather than appointed, may be published in a newspaper within the proposed political subdivision, or if none, in a newspaper of general circulation within the proposed territory for the General Primary Election. (10 ILCS 5/28-2(g))

### NOVEMBER 2015

#### NOVEMBER 16

Last day notice of intention to file a petition to create a political subdivision, whose officers are to be elected rather than appointed, may be published in a newspaper within the proposed political subdivision, or if none, in a newspaper of general circulation within the proposed territory for the General Primary Election. (10 ILCS 5/28-2(g))

### NOVEMBER 16

Last day to file petitions (must contain original sheets signed by voters and circulators) to create a political subdivision with the appropriate officer or board (for park districts, circuit court clerk) for the General Primary Election. (10 ILCS 5/28-2(b))

NOTE: The specific statutory provisions governing the creation of political subdivisions can be found in the relevant Code governing such subdivisions.

NOTE: Objections can be filed on or before the date of the hearing with the appropriate circuit court clerk. (10 ILCS 5/28-4)

NOTE: If initial officers are to be elected at the election for creation of a new unit of government, candidates for such offices shall file nomination papers 113-106 days before such election (November 23 – November 30, 2015). (10 ILCS 5/10-6)

NOTE: The circuit court clerk shall publish the hearing date for a public policy petition filed in his/her office not later than 14 days after the petition is actually filed, but at least 5 days before actual hearing. Final orders within 7 days of hearing. (10 ILCS 5/28-4)

### NOVEMBER 23

Last day to file objections to a petition to create a political subdivision in the office of the appropriate officer where the petitions were originally filed (for park districts, circuit court clerk) for the General Primary Election. (10 ILCS 5/10-8, 28-4)

### DECEMBER 2015

#### DECEMBER 14

Last day for filing petitions (must contain original sheets signed by voters and circulators) for referenda for the submission of questions of public policy (local) for the General Primary Election. Objections to petitions for local referenda are filed with the same officer in which the original petitions were filed. (10 ILCS 5/28-2(a), 28-6, 28-7)



EXCEPTION: Proposition to create a political subdivision, referenda held under the Liquor Control Act, and Section 18-120 of the Property Tax Code.

#### DECEMBER 21

Last day to file objections to petitions for the submission of questions of public policy (local) for the General Primary Election. Objections to petitions for local referenda are filed with the same office that has the original petitions. (10 ILCS 5/10-8, 28-4)

EXCEPTION: Proposition to create a political subdivision, referenda held under the provisions of Article IX of the Liquor Control Act, and Section 18-120 of the Property Tax Code.)

#### DECEMBER 28

Last day for local governing boards to adopt a resolution or ordinance to allow binding public questions to appear on the ballot for the General Primary Election. (10 ILCS 5/28-2(c))

#### DECEMBER 28

Last day for County, Municipal, School, Township and Park Boards to place advisory referenda on the ballot by resolution for the General Primary Election. (55 ILCS 5/5-1005.5; 60 ILCS 1/80-80; 65 ILCS 5/3.1-40-60; 70 ILCS 1205/8-30; 105 ILCS 5/9-1.5)

### JANUARY 2016

#### JANUARY 7

Last day for the circuit clerk and the local election official to certify any binding public question or advisory referenda to the election authority having jurisdiction over the political subdivision for the General Primary Election. (10 ILCS 5/28-5)

#### JANUARY 12

Regular January board meeting.

#### JANUARY 28-30

Attend the IAPD/IPRA Annual Conference, Hyatt Chicago.

#### JANUARY 31

Last day to file with the chief county assessment officer for all tax-exempt real estate an affidavit/certificate of exempt status stating whether there has been any change in the ownership or use of the exempt real estate and the nature of any such change to continue the exemption of park property from real estate taxes. (35 ILCS 200/15-10)

NOTE: Copies of leases or agreements related to exempt property that is leased, loaned, or otherwise available for profit must be filed with the assessment officer. (35 ILCS 200/15-15)

### FEBRUARY 2016

#### FEBRUARY 1

Last day by which the chief administrative officer or his or her designee for a unit of local government with persons described in items (h), (i) and (k) of Section 4A-101 shall certify to the appropriate county clerk a list of names and addresses of those persons described in items (h), (i) and (k) of Section 4A-101 that are required to file statements of economic interest pursuant to the Illinois Governmental Ethics Act. In preparing the lists, each chief administrative officer or his or her designee shall set out the names in alphabetical order. (5 ILCS 420/4A-106)

#### FEBRUARY 16

First day for the election authority to publish a notice of any question of public policy to be voted upon within the jurisdiction at the General Primary Election. (10 ILCS 5/12-5)

#### FEBRUARY 18

Regular February board meeting.

### MARCH 2016

#### MARCH 8

Last day for the election authority to publish a notice of any question of public policy to be voted upon within the jurisdiction at the General Primary Election. The election authority shall also post a copy of the notice at the principal office of the election authority. The local election official shall also post a copy of the notice at the principal office of the political or governmental subdivision. If there is no principal office, the local election official shall post the notice at the building in which the governing body of the political or governmental subdivision held its first meeting of the calendar year in which the referenda is being held. (10 ILCS 5/12-5)

#### MARCH 15

General Primary Election

#### MARCH 17

Regular March board meeting.

### APRIL 2016

#### APRIL 1

Last day by which the county clerk of each county shall notify all persons whose names have been certified to him, other than candidates for office who have filed their statements with their nominating petitions, of the requirements for filing statements of economic interests. The Illinois Governmental Ethics Act, 5 ILCS 420/4A-101, requires the following persons to file verified written statements of economic interests: (g) Persons who are elected to office in a unit of local government, and candidates for nomination or election to that office; (h) Persons appointed to the governing board of a unit of local government and persons appointed to a

board or commission of a unit of local government who have the authority to authorize the expenditure of public funds but not members of boards or commissions who function in an advisory capacity; (i) Persons who are employed by a unit of local government and are compensated for services as employees and not as independent contractors and who:

1. are, or function as, the head of a department, division, bureau, authority or other administrative unit within the unit of local government, or who exercise similar authority within the unit of local government;
2. have direct supervisory authority over, or direct responsibility for the formulation, negotiation, issuance or execution of contracts entered into by the unit of local government in the amount of \$1,000 or greater;
3. have authority to approve licenses and permits by the unit of local government (this item does not include employees who function in a ministerial capacity);
4. adjudicate, arbitrate, or decide any judicial or administrative proceeding, or review the adjudication, arbitration or decision of any judicial or administrative proceeding within the authority of the unit of local government;
5. have authority to issue or promulgate rules and regulations within areas under the authority of the unit of local government; or
6. have supervisory responsibility for 20 or more employees of the unit of local government. (5 ILCS 420/4A-106; 5 ILCS 420/4A-101)

#### APRIL 5

The suggested date to prepare the budget and appropriation ordinance in tentative form and place on file for public inspection at least 30 days prior to final action. (All park districts are required to adopt a combined budget and appropriation ordinance within or before the first quarter of each fiscal year.) (70 ILCS 1205/4-4)

NOTE 1: IMRF employers must post on their website or at their principal office the total compensation package of employees with a total compensation of \$150,000 or more per year at least 6 days before the employer approves the total compensation package. The employer must also post the total compensation package within 6 business days after approving their budget for employees with a total compensation package in excess of \$75,000 or more. (5 ILCS 120/7.3)

NOTE 2: Before an IMRF employer increases the earnings of an officer, executive or manager by more than 12%, the employer must obtain a "Pension Impact Statement" from the IMRF which states the effects of the salary increase on the employee's pension benefits. (40 ILCS 5/7-225)

#### APRIL 21

Regular April board meeting.

### MAY 2016

#### MAY 1

The last date for filing Statements of Economic Interest for persons who have not previously filed during the calendar year. (5 ILCS 420/4A-105)

NOTE 1: Failure to file a statement of economic interests within the time prescribed shall not result in a fine or ineligibility for, or forfeiture of, office or position of employment, provided that the failure to file results from not being included for notification by the appropriate agency, clerk, secretary, officer or unit of government, and that a statement is filed within 30 days of actual notice of the failure to file. (5 ILCS 420/4A-105)

NOTE 2: All statements of economic interests shall be available for examination and copying by the public at all reasonable times. (5 ILCS 420/4A-105)

NOTE 3: Any person required to file a statement of economic interests who willfully files a false or incomplete statement shall be guilty of a class A misdemeanor. Failure to file a statement within the time prescribed shall result in ineligibility for, or forfeiture of, office or position of employment, as the case may be; provided, however, that if the notice of failure to file a statement of economic interests is not given by the county clerk, no forfeiture shall result if a statement is filed within 30 days of actual notice of the failure to file. (5 ILCS 420/4A-107)

NOTE 4: The County Clerk with whom a statement is to be filed may, in his or her discretion, waive the late fees & penalties, and the ineligibility for or forfeiture of office or position for failure to file when the person's late filing or failure to file is due to (i) serious or catastrophic illness that renders the person temporarily incapable of completing the statement or (ii) military service. (5 ILCS 420/4A-105)

#### MAY 1

Suggested date to send notice to the Illinois Department of Labor requesting determination of current prevailing rate of wages for the district's area. (820 ILCS 130/4; 130/9)

#### MAY 1

(Beginning of new fiscal year.) The date to post the dates, times and places of park district regular meetings for the fiscal year. Mail copies to news media. (As an alternative, this can be done at the beginning of the calendar year.) (5 ILCS 120/2.02; 2.03)

#### MAY 1

The date to start the annual audit. Every governmental unit is required to make an annual audit to cover the immediately preceding fiscal year. The audit must be completed and the audit report filed with the Comptroller within six months after the close of the fiscal year. All governmental units are also required to file a copy of the completed

report with the county clerk. (50 ILCS 310/2 and 310/3)

**NOTE 1:** Any governmental unit receiving revenue of less than \$850,000 for any fiscal year is required to file a financial report with the Comptroller in lieu of an audit. Pursuant to Public Act 98-1019, beginning with fiscal year 2016 those governmental units receiving revenue less than \$850,000 for any fiscal year must also provide copies of this annual financial report to each member of that governmental unit's governing board of elected officials and present it either in person or by a live phone or web connection during a public meeting and have the financial report approved by a 3/5 majority vote. Otherwise, that unit must cause an audit of the account to be made once every four years in addition to filing the annual financial report with the Comptroller.

**NOTE 2:** Any governmental unit receiving revenue of \$850,000 or more shall, in addition to complying with the audit requirements, file a financial report on forms required by the Comptroller. (50 ILCS 310/3)

**NOTE 3:** Pursuant to 50 ILCS 310/2 and 310/3, these reports must be submitted to the Comptroller electronically unless the governmental unit provides the Comptroller's Office with sufficient evidence that the reports cannot be filed electronically and the Comptroller waives the requirement.

**MAY 1**  
The date to begin preparation of the Statement of Receipts and Disbursements. (30 ILCS 15/1)

**MAY 1**  
Update IAPD database with information pertaining to commissioners and verify accuracy of other information.

**MAY 3-4**  
Attend the IAPD Legislative Conference in Springfield. The Legislative Reception is held the evening of May 3 with the conference starting the next morning on May 4. May 3 is Parks Day at the Capitol with park district, forest preserve, conservation district and special recreation displays lining the Capitol Rotunda.

**MAY 6**  
The suggested date to publish notice of public hearing on the budget and appropriation ordinance (must be done at least one week prior to hearing). (70 ILCS 1205/4-4)

**MAY 19**  
Regular May board meeting. This is the suggested date to hold the public hearing on the budget and appropriation ordinance and the date for enacting the ordinance at the board meeting following the hearing. (70 ILCS 1205/4-4)

**NOTE 1:** The budget and appropriation ordinance must be made available in tentative form for public inspection at least 30 days prior to final action thereon.

**NOTE 2:** All taxing districts are also required to file a certified copy of their budget and appropriation ordinances with the county clerk within 30 days of adoption, as well as an estimate, certified by the district's chief fiscal officer, of revenues, by source, anticipated to be received by the taxing district in the following fiscal year. Failure of a district to file the required document will authorize the county clerk to refuse to extend the tax levy imposed by the governing authority until such documents are filed. (35 ILCS 200/18-50)

**MAY 31**  
General Assembly scheduled to adjourn.

## JUNE 2016

**JUNE 9**  
First day notice of intention to file a petition to create a political subdivision, whose officers are to be elected rather than appointed, may be published in a newspaper within the proposed political subdivision, or if none, in a newspaper of general circulation within the proposed territory for the General Election. (10 ILCS 5/28-2(g))

**JUNE 16**  
Regular June board meeting.

**JUNE 17**  
The last day for filing a copy of the district's budget and appropriation ordinance with the county clerk, as well as a certified estimate of revenue by source anticipated to be received in the following fiscal year (assuming a passage adoption date of May 19).

**JUNE 30**  
The last day to: (a) investigate & ascertain prevailing rate of wages to be paid for work on public works projects, and (b) publicly post or keep available for inspection in the main office of the public body its determination of such prevailing wage rates. The district must promptly file, no later than July 15 of each year, a certified copy of its determination with the office of the Illinois Department of Labor. (820 ILCS 130/9)

**NOTE:** Pursuant to 820 ILCS 130/4, a park district may request the Illinois Department of Labor to ascertain the prevailing rate of wages.

**NOTE:** Pursuant to Public Act 98-173, a public body is no longer required to also file a certified copy of its determination with the Illinois Secretary of State.

## JULY 2016

**JULY 11**  
Last day notice of intention to file a petition to create a political subdivision, whose officers are to be elected rather than appointed, may be published in a newspaper within the proposed political subdivision, or if none, in a newspaper of general circulation within the proposed territory for the General Election. (10 ILCS 5/28-2(g))

**JULY 11**  
Last day to file a petition (must contain original sheets signed by voters and circulators) to create a political subdivision with the appropriate officer or board (for park districts, circuit court clerk) for the General Election. (10 ILCS 5/28-2(b))

**NOTE:** The specific statutory provisions governing the creation of political subdivisions can be found in the relevant Code governing such subdivisions.

**NOTE:** Objections can be filed on or before the date of the hearing with the appropriate circuit court clerk. (10 ILCS 5/28-4)

**NOTE:** If initial officers are to be elected at the election for creation of a new unit of government, candidates for such offices shall file nomination papers 113-106 days before such election. (July 18 - 25, 2016). (10 ILCS 5/10-6)

**NOTE:** The circuit court clerk shall publish the hearing date for a public policy petition filed in his/her office not later than 14 days after the petition is actually filed, but at least 5 days before actual hearing. Final order within 7 days of hearing. (10 ILCS 5/28-4)

**JULY 15**  
Last day to file a certified copy of prevailing wage rate determination with the office of the Illinois Department of Labor. (820 ILCS 130/9)

**NOTE:** Pursuant the Public Act 98-173, a public body is no longer required to also file a certified copy of its determination with the Illinois Secretary of State.

**JULY 18**  
Last day to file objections to a petition to create a political subdivision in the office of the appropriate officer where the petitions were originally filed (for park districts, circuit court clerk) for the General Election. (10 ILCS 5/10-8, 28-4)

**JULY 21**  
Regular July board meeting.

## AUGUST 2016

**AUGUST 1**  
First date nominations for the Board of Trustees of the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund Board are to be made for terms beginning the next January 1. (Between August 1 and September 15.) (40 ILCS 5/7-175)

**AUGUST 8**  
Last day for filing petitions (must contain original sheets signed by voters and circulators) for referenda for the submission of questions of public policy (local) for the General Election. Objections to petitions for local referenda are filed with the same officer in which the original petitions are filed. (10 ILCS 5/28-2(a), 28-6, 28-7)

**EXCEPTION:** Proposition to create a political subdivision, referenda held under the provisions of Article IX of the Liquor Control Act, and Section 18-120 of the Property Tax Code.)

**AUGUST 14**  
The last date to publish determination of prevailing rate of wages and mail copies of rates to requesting parties if filed with Department of Labor on the last possible date (July 15). (Publication must be within 30 days of date of filing with Department of Labor.) (820 ILCS 130/9)

**AUGUST 15**  
Last day to file objections to petitions for the submission of questions of public policy for the General Election. Objections to petitions for local referenda are filed with the same office that has the original petitions. (10 ILCS 5/10-8, 28-4)

**EXCEPTION:** Proposition to create a political subdivision, referenda held under the provisions of Article IX of the Liquor Control Act, and Section 18-120 of the Property Tax Code.

**AUGUST 18**  
Regular August board meeting.

**AUGUST 22**  
Last day for local governing boards to adopt a resolution or ordinance to allow binding or advisory public questions to appear on the ballot for the General Election. (10 ILCS 5/28-2(c))

## SEPTEMBER 2016

A good month to review and update park district policies and ordinances.

**SEPTEMBER 1**  
Last day for the circuit court clerk and the local election official to certify any binding public question or advisory referenda to the election authority having jurisdiction over the political subdivision for the General Election. (10 ILCS 5/28-5)

**SEPTEMBER 15**  
Regular September board meeting.

## OCTOBER 2016

**OCTOBER 1**  
The suggested date to review documents to determine which records can be destroyed. Permission of Local Records Commission required. See 50 ILCS 205/7 for authorization to digitize records. (50 ILCS 205/1)



### **OCTOBER 6-8, 2016**

Attend the NRPA Congress in St. Louis, Missouri

### **OCTOBER 11**

First day for the election authority to publish a notice of any question of public policy to be voted upon at the General Election within the jurisdiction. (10 ILCS 5/12-5)

### **OCTOBER 20**

Regular October board meeting. Review non-referendum bonding needs preparatory to selling bonds before close of calendar year. (70 ILCS 1205/6-4)

NOTE: Before adopting any ordinance selling non-referendum general obligation bonds or limited bonds, the district must hold a public hearing concerning the intent to sell the bonds. Although the hearing may be part of a regular meeting, the ordinance authorizing the bonds may not be adopted for a period of 7 days after the hearing. Notice of the hearing must be published not less than 7 nor more than 30 days before the hearing. (30 ILCS 352/10, 352/15, 352/25)

### **OCTOBER 20**

The suggested date for the board to determine the amount of money estimated to be necessary to be raised by the tax levy ordinance and to determine whether the funds to be raised exceed, by more than 105 percent of the amount, which has been extended or is estimated to be extended, upon the final aggregate levy of the preceding year. (This determination must be made at least 20 days prior to enactment of the levy ordinance.) (35 ILCS 200/18-60; 200/18-65)

NOTE 1: Local governments must file either a certificate of compliance or a certificate indicating the inapplicability of the Truth in Taxation Law with the tax levy ordinance filed with the county clerk. (35 ILCS 200/18-90)

NOTE 2: 35 ILCS 200/18-185 provides park districts in the tax cap counties the authority to levy a tax for handicapped programs outside the restrictions of the tax cap.

NOTE 3: It is recommended that the park district attorney review all determinations and proceedings relating to this reference, which is the Truth in Taxation Law. (35 ILCS 200/18-55 *et seq.*)

### **OCTOBER 31**

Last day for the election authority to publish a notice of any question of public policy to be voted upon within its jurisdiction at the General Election. The election authority shall also post a copy of the notice at the principal office of the election authority. The local election official shall also post a copy of the notice at the principal office of the political or governmental subdivision. If there is no principal

office, the local election official shall post the notice at the building in which the governing body of the political or governmental subdivision held its first meeting of the calendar year in which the referenda is being held. (10 ILCS 5/12-5)

### **OCTOBER 31**

The last day to publish annual statement of receipts and disbursements and file a copy with the county clerk for districts on a May 1-April 30 fiscal year. In lieu of publishing the annual statement of receipts and disbursements, the district can publish a notice of availability of its audit report that includes the time period covered by the audit, the name of the firm conducting the audit, and the address and business hours where the audit may be publicly inspected. (Must be accomplished within six months after expiration of fiscal year.) (30 ILCS 15/1; 15/2)

### **OCTOBER 31**

The last day to file annual audit report (or financial report if district received revenue of less than \$850,000) with the Comptroller of the State of Illinois and county clerk (within six months of close of fiscal year) and make a copy open to public inspection. Pursuant to Public Act 98-1019, beginning with fiscal year 2016 those governmental units receiving revenue less than \$850,000 for any fiscal year must also provide copies of this annual financial report to each member of that governmental unit's governing board of elected officials and present it either in person or by a live phone or web connection during a public meeting and have the financial report approved by a 3/5 majority vote. Otherwise, that unit must cause an audit of the account to be made once every four years in addition to filing the annual financial report with the Comptroller. Any governmental unit receiving revenue of \$850,000 or more shall, in addition to complying with the audit requirements, file a financial report on forms required by the Comptroller. (50 ILCS 310/2; 310/3; 310/6)

NOTE: Pursuant to 50 ILCS 310/2 and 310/3, these reports must be submitted to the Comptroller electronically unless the governmental unit provides the Comptroller's Office with sufficient evidence that the report cannot be filed electronically and the Comptroller waives the requirement.

### **OCTOBER 31**

Update IAPD database with financial information from audit report and verify accuracy of other information.

### **NOVEMBER 2016**

### **NOVEMBER 3**

Attend the IAPD Legal Symposium, McDonald's University/Hyatt Lodge, Oak Brook

### **NOVEMBER 7**

The suggested date to publish notice of hearing (Truth in Taxation Law) if the district's proposed levy is greater than 105 percent of last year's extension or estimated extension. Must publish not more than 14 days, nor less than 7 days prior to the date of the public hearing. Publication date assumes a hearing date of November 14-18, 2016. Pursuant to Public Act 99-367, the notice must also be posted on the taxing district's website if the taxing district has a website that is maintained by the full-time staff of the taxing district. (35 ILCS 200/18-70; 200/18-75)

NOTE: The form of the notice is set forth in the Truth in Taxation Law. Be sure to check special publication requirements found in statute. Further, any notice that includes information in excess of that specified and required by the Act shall be considered an invalid notice. (35 ILCS 200/18-80)

### **NOVEMBER 8**

General Election

### **NOVEMBER 17**

Regular November board meeting and the suggested date to hold a hearing pursuant to the Truth in Taxation Law. (35 ILCS 200/18-55 *et seq.*)

### **NOVEMBER 17**

The suggested date to enact tax levy ordinance at the regular meeting following the Truth in Taxation hearing (if required).

### **NOVEMBER 29**

Last day for appropriate canvassing board to canvass the results of referenda submitted to the voters at the November 8, 2016 General Election. (10 ILCS 5/22-17)

### **DECEMBER 2016**

### **DECEMBER 1**

The suggested date to verify that, for real estate acquired in 2016, appropriate applications have been filed to exempt the real estate from real estate taxes. (35 ILCS 200/15-5)

### **DECEMBER 2**

(If levy ordinance was enacted on November 17, 2016) the last day to publish Truth in Taxation notice if levy amounts as enacted exceed prior published figures, or if levy exceeds 105 percent of last year's extension and there was not prior publication. Pursuant to Public Act 99-367, the notice must also be posted on the taxing district's website if the taxing district has a website that is maintained by the full-time staff of the taxing district. (Notice must be given within 15 days of the date the levy ordinance was enacted.) (35 ILCS 200/18-85)

### **DECEMBER 6**

The suggested date to confirm that a certified copy of the levy ordinance was properly filed with the county clerk. (70 ILCS 1205/5-1 and 35 ILCS 200/18-15 require that a certified copy of the levy ordinance be filed with the county clerk not later than the last Tuesday in December.)

### **DECEMBER 15**

The regular December board meeting date and suggested date to enact bond ordinance for non-referendum bonds to be issued prior to the end of calendar year. (70 ILCS 1205/6-4)

### **DECEMBER 27**

The suggested date to prepare and file with the Supervisor of Assessments the annual affidavit/certificate of exempt status stating whether there has been a change in the ownership or use of the district's exempt real estate and the nature of any such change to continue the exemption of park property from real estate taxes. (Last day for filing is January 31, 2017.) (35 ILCS 200/15-10)

### **DECEMBER 27**

The suggested day by which bond ordinances should be filed with county clerk in order to receive extensions of taxes for the payment of principal and interest on general obligation bonds or limited bonds for 2016 taxes collected in 2017. The filing must actually take place prior to March 1, 2017. (30 ILCS 350/16)

NOTE: This filing has no relationship to the General Tax Levy filed by park districts.

### **DECEMBER 27**

In most counties the last day to: (a) file certified copy of tax levy ordinance with county clerk (70 ILCS 1205/5-1; 35 ILCS 200/18-15), and (b) file board president's certificate of compliance with county clerk. (35 ILCS 200/18-90)

NOTE 1: State statutes require a certified copy of the tax levy ordinance to be filed with the county clerk on or before the last Tuesday in December.

NOTE 2: State statute requires that all local governments file either certificate of compliance or a certificate indicating the inapplicability of the Truth in Taxation Law with the certified copy of the tax levy ordinance filed with the county clerk.

### **JANUARY 2017**

### **JANUARY 11**

Newly elected members of the General Assembly shall convene and organize their respective chambers (Illinois Constitution Article IV, Sections 5 (a) & 6 (b))

# IAPD ENERGY PARTNER

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Park District**





# Congratulations

## Illinois Association of Park Districts 2015 Best of the Best Awards Gala Winners

*IAPD's ninth annual Best of the Best Awards Gala was a night to remember, with more than 250 guests enjoying an evening of celebration and inspiration.*

*More than 50 awards were presented to board members, agencies, citizen volunteers, businesses and members of the media in recognition of their remarkable contributions to Illinois parks, recreation and conservation. Congratulations to all of our Best of the Best Awards Gala winners!*

### Top Journalist

**WCIA**, nominated by the Champaign Park District

**The Journal & Topics Newspapers**, nominated by Golf Maine Park District

### Best Friend of Illinois Parks – Small Business

**Bloomington Bank & Trust**, nominated by the Bloomington Park District

**Sola Gratia Farm**, nominated by the Champaign Park District

**Hawthorn Woods Country Club**, nominated by the Village of Hawthorn Woods Parks & Recreation Department

**Graue, Inc.**, nominated by the Lincoln Park District

### Best Friend of Illinois Parks – Large Business

**Enbridge Inc.**, nominated by the Forest Preserve District of Will County

**UTC Aerospace Systems**, nominated by the Rockford Park District

**Vista Health System**, nominated by the Waukegan Park District

### Intergovernmental Cooperation

**Chicago Park District** with the City of Chicago and the Trust for Public Land

**Forest Preserves of Cook County** with the Cal-Sag Trail Coalition

**Wheeling Park District** with the Village of Wheeling and the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

### Partnership

**Mundelein Park & Recreation District** with **Vernon Hills Park District**

**Rockford Park District** with Rockford Sharefest

**Veterans Park District** with Proviso Township Mental Health Commission

**Wheaton Park District** with Play for All Playground & Garden Foundation

### Helen Doria Arts in the Park

**Chicago Park District, City of Chicago and The Trust for Public Land for The 606**

**Community Park District of LaGrange Park Washington Park District**

### Best Green Practices

**Dolton Park District**

**Frankfort Park District**

**Rockford Park District**

### Good Sportsmanship

**Mack Hodges**, nominated by the Champaign Park District

### Outstanding Citizen Volunteer of the Year

**Aura Duke**, nominated by the Forest Preserve District of Will County

**Kathleen Garness**, nominated by the Forest Preserves of Cook County

**John & Nancy Slivka**, nominated by the Glenview Park District

**Dr. Bruce Goldberg**, nominated by the Palatine Park District

### Board Member Service Anniversary Awards

#### 5 Years of Service

**Michele Piotrowski**, Butterfield Park District

#### 10 Years of Service

**Lina Hovde**, Barrington Park District

**Jim Lundmark**, Barrington Park District

**Susan M. Stocks**, Bartlett Park District

**Jack Schmerer**, Buffalo Grove Park District

**Jane L. Solon**, Champaign Park District

**Catherine Mahoney**, Downers Grove Park District

**George Yarzak**, Freeport Park District

**Anita Michelle Hemp-Anderson**, Hazel Crest Park District

**Bob Haderlein**, Homewood-Flossmoor Park District

**Art Schultz, Jr.**, Joliet Park District

**Jim O'Brien**, Park Ridge Park District

**Richard (Dick) Volker**, Princeton Park District

**Karsten Goettel**, Saint Charles Park District

**David J. Doerhoefer**, Vernon Hills Park District

**Diana Gunderson**, West Chicago Park District

**KerryLynn Hunter**, West Chicago Park District

**Derek T. Gordon**, Westchester Park District

### 15 Years of Service

**Larry Montgomery**, Butterfield Park District

**Michael Kryger**, Butterfield Park District

**Lisa Saunderson**, Butterfield Park District

**George P. Longmeyer**, Schaumburg Park District

### 20 Years of Service

**Christine H. Garry**, Barrington Park District

**Bob Schaefer**, Beardstown Community Park District

**William Klicka**, Mt. Prospect Park District

**Robert L. Johnson, Sr.**, Pleasure Driveway and Park District of Peoria

**Michael D. Daniels**, Schaumburg Park District

**Jim Jones**, West Chicago Park District

**Joe Kubal**, Woodridge Park District

### 25 Years of Service

**Becky Jones**, Beardstown Community Park District

**Phil Stanko**, Cary Park District

### 30 Years of Service

**Dominic Luciano**, Westchester Park District

**Larry Kight**, Beardstown Community Park District

**Jack Mahoney**, Woodridge Park District

### 35 Years of Service

**Dennis P. Clower**, Channahon Park District

**Sandra Smith**, Westmont Park District

### Agency Anniversary Awards

#### 50 Years

**Butterfield Park District**

**LeRoy Community Park District**

**Medinah Park District**

**River Trails Park District**

**Roselle Park District**

**Worth Park District**

#### 100 Years

**DuPage County Forest Preserve District Forest Preserves of Cook County**

By the Bloomingdale Park District Leadership Team:  
**Carrie A. Fullerton**, CPRE, Executive Director  
**Joe Potts**, CPRP, Director of Parks and Planning  
**Sandy Vangundy**, CPRP, Director of Recreation  
**June Fergus**, Director of Finance  
**Andrea Pindak**, Director of Administration



# Marketing...

A PART OF EVERYONE'S JOB!



Marketing and communications departments have had a humble, unfairly diminished role in the early years of park and recreation agencies considering the powerhouses they have become in supporting all that we do. In the past, the marketing department primarily created the brochure, posters, flyers and press releases. The technology, social media, business plans, and strategic communication had yet to be born or embraced. In today's "highly marketed" environment, services, programs, and parks can get lost in all of the world's "communication noise." It is critical that we recognize that the vast majority of ALL that we do has a relationship with marketing and communications.

At the Bloomingdale Park District, we have embraced the philosophy that marketing is everyone's job. Under the careful watch and leadership of the marketing department we've adopted several key strategies to engage and include all of our team members in the marketing mix.

Read on to learn more about some of the initiatives that each of our departments focuses on to support the overall marketing efforts of our agency.



## Recreation Department:

### Top Twenty More is More Campaign

Created with the assistance of a sales consultant, creative marketing techniques are encouraged and rewarded as we get the word out about each top twenty program to the targeted markets.

- Twenty programs/services are designated each season to be a Top 20 program.
- Programs are highlighted in the seasonal brochure with a smiley face as a “staff pick.”
- Teams are assigned to promote the designated programs with added attention and care. Teams work closely with the marketing department to creatively promote programs.
- The two teams whose programs receive the highest or most increased enrollment/attendance are recognized with a reward designated by the executive director.

### Marketing on the Road

Each season our director of marketing and communications organizes a “field trip” around town for the recreation programmers. The teams visit various agencies around town such as beauty salons, dentists, pediatricians, etc... distributing targeted marketing material for various programs and services.

### Instructor Referrals

This is a program that was developed to encourage front line instructors to promote their own programs as well as other programs to the public. Instructors have the opportunity to refer patrons (and earn incentive prizes) by handing out “referral” cards to participants.

### S.M.I.L.E.

**S**atisfaction **M**akes **I**ndividuals **L**eave **E**xcited! The SMILE program encourages patrons to come back and register for another program. Normally offered to participants when a program is cancelled, patrons receive a \$10 off SMILE coupon, a travel mug and a smile pin. The coupon is redeemable in person at the customer service desk giving us the opportunity to make personal contact with patrons.

## Parks and Facility Operations and Maintenance Departments:

The perception your parks and facilities create in the minds of your guests is the basis upon which they form their opinion of your agency and of crucial importance to your marketing efforts.

### Park and Facility Use/Rentals

Whether you host athletic tournaments, weddings, corporate retreats, or family picnics, the appearance of your facilities and parks must meet or exceed your community's expectations. For your marketing and recreation departments to lead a successful facility rental/use program, the maintenance department plays a critical role in assuring return customers and positive references.

### Special Events

Special events are a great opportunity to introduce your parks and facilities to new customers. Your marketing department has drawn the crowd. Your maintenance department helps keep them there and hopefully inspires return visits. They do this by ensuring the site is well-maintained upon arrival of your visitors and remains clean, safe, and attractive throughout the event. Marketing future events and attracting people to them gets easier when your guests leave the event with positive perceptions of the site.

### Capital Projects

Sometimes we carry out our annual or new capital projects without ever notifying the people who benefit from them the most! Marketing your new/replacement playgrounds or general improvements is an

important way to convey your agency's commitment to quality parks and facilities. Your maintenance and marketing departments need to work closely so your residents can be informed of your improvements through effective on-site signage and other modes of communication.

### Commercial and Residential Real Estate

The most common things we hear buyers are looking for: good schools, well-maintained parks and solid medical services. Sometimes we lose sight of where parks and recreation fits into the community development economic engine. Your marketing department and local realtors can develop a mutually beneficial relationship if your parks and facilities are safe, clean, attractive, and most of all marketable for both!

### Finance Department

The finance department works “behind the scenes” to make sure the agency finances are both easy to access and easy to understand. This is especially important in this time of uncertainty and general distrust of government. The annual reporting of our financial statements on our website provides clear, concise, comparable data for the public and interested audiences. We strive to provide additional information in our *Annual Report* that is easy to understand and sufficiently comprehensive in order to provide a clear picture of our past and future financial status.

### Administration/Front Desk

Customer service staff are some of our best assets in making positive contributions to our marketing efforts. Face to face conversations with residents and users of our programs creates a unique environment for promoting the many opportunities we provide.

### Ideas for Customer Engagement and Building Relationships

- Hire a sales consultant to work with and train your front-line team
- Up-sell and promote other programs for same age/gender/interest
- Remind participants of discounts and coupon availability
- Offer a free drop-in for first time class participants
- Keep your registration software updated to garner new and improved ways to engage your participants
- Keep your IT systems updated; i.e. mobile websites, etc. so that it is simple for your customer to stay in touch with you

### Department Head Support

- Prepare and practice an “elevator speech” on the benefits of participation in agency programs and services
- Attend community events: ribbon cuttings, chamber lunches, Lions Club meetings, Rotary Club meetings, participate in Character Counts, etc.
- Volunteer as a team at church, local food pantry and other non-profits
- Speak at IAPD/IPRA and other industry conferences

Just like picking up litter you see in the parks is everyone's job; creating and maintaining a solid agency image is also everyone's job. One weak department link equates to a potential loss of sales and service. The professionals in the marketing department have a special set of skills that allows them to look at the whole agency – everyone and everything from a place of connectivity.

As we progress as an industry, it is critical that every department in your organization learns to recognize opportunity and view it from a connectivity perspective. If recreation, parks, and facilities are the revenue engine of an agency, then the marketing department is without a doubt the transmission that guides the agency to success and everyone needs to be a part of the journey!



## THE UNTAPPED POTENTIAL OF

# Billboard

## ADVERTISING

By **Sandy Manisco**, Communications & Marketing Superintendent,  
**Dean Bostrom**, Executive Director &  
**Gary Buczkowski**, Director of Planning, Hoffman Estates Park District

Does it really exist? Imagine an advertising medium that has such power it provides results almost instantly....A marketing channel so effective that it causes internal and external groups to climb over each other for a chance to promote their messages....one that has the potential to bring in thousands of dollars each month and makes the Village and residents happy.

This year, our full-service fitness center Prairie Stone Sports & Wellness Center is tracking at 146% higher than the previous year with new membership totals tracking above monthly goals for the last 8 out of 10 months. Summer ice skating lessons increased 23%, hockey programs increased 10%, summer preschool camps increased 21%, and summer gymnastics programs increased 14%.

Our once flailing adult basketball program increased the number of teams from 30 to 36. Easter brunch reservations sold out a week prior to the event, much earlier than in previous years. Our foundation golf outing sold out for the first time ever, a week before the event. Our Party in the Park event saw record attendance this year.

How did we do it? This is the significant impact that four digital LED marquee signs have had on our entire park district in 2015. The signs expose our park district to new audiences that we previously did not have access to: people who do not read our *Program Guide* or receive our email and do not visit our website or facilities.

According to Arbitron's 2009 National In-Car Study, 71% of travelers 18+ years of age often look at the messages on roadside billboards. What's more, today's digital LED screens go far beyond their static two-dimensional predecessors providing dynamic programming with bright, eye-catching graphics. The potential impact of digital billboards is huge.

And yet, in spite of all these impressive statistics, few parks and recreation agencies have capitalized on the effectiveness of billboards, presumably due to the price. As park districts, we have few programs or facilities where the expense to rent a billboard would result in ROI. However, as the owner of the billboard, we have reaped the benefits of the medium at the Hoffman Estates Park District (HEPD).

"We saw the value in billboards, and decided to explore owning versus renting," said HEPD executive director Dean Bostrom. "We knew if we could overcome the obstacles, we would have a big competitive advantage."

HEPD operates six facilities, four of which are located on state highways with very high traffic. These four facilities had outdated, block-letter-type marquee signs that displayed only one message at a time and had many limitations. The opportunity to build digital marquees first presented itself when it was clear that the old signs would need to be replaced.

In November 2014, two larger boards (10x20', 16 millimeter pixel LED screen) and two smaller boards (8x16', 16 millimeter pixel LED screen) went live with huge illuminated screens displaying a colorful new message every 10 seconds. Dynamic features include up-to-the-minute scheduling that can be dependent on time or temperature.

As soon as the signs were live, inquiries about advertising poured in. "We were flooded with calls," said Gary Buczkowski, HEPD director of planning and development. "The signs brought awareness to the park district as an organization that local business owners want to associate their brands with. It has resulted in new sponsorship relationships for us."



## BARRIERS ABOUND

However the road to completion was not easy; in the end, it turned out to be a seven year process. "Anything worth owning is worth the effort to obtain it," said Bostrom. With that motto in mind, we set out to overcome the barriers, both political and financial.

### POLITICAL BARRIERS

There are three layers of ordinances and legislation restricting signage. In 1965 the U.S. Department of Transportation's Highway Beautification Act restricted signs on federal roads. State lawmakers soon followed with similar laws, as did municipalities.

Our first step was to amend an existing Village ordinance prohibiting electronic billboards and off-site advertising, which was also regulated by the state. We succeeded by educating Village officials on the benefits that new signage technology provided to the community. We created a win-win scenario giving the Village access to the signs to promote their events, programs and emergency alerts as a giveback to the community and allowing Amber Alerts and emergency messages to pre-empt all others.

"The community giveback element went a long way to ensure the success of the project at the Village level," said Buczkowski.

We assured Village officials that the primary focus would be to promote park district programs and events; as such we agreed that advertising would not occupy more than half of the content.

The next step was to apply for permits from the Illinois Department of Transportation because the signs would be located on state highways. After months of waiting, the permits were approved. Fortunately, we had no federal laws that applied so we set out to overcome our second barrier: financing.

### FINANCIAL BARRIERS

Projected construction costs were considerable at \$1.1 million for four signs. We began exploring ways to reduce or offset the financial capital and operating expenses to fund the project without taxpayer dollars.

The signs at the Triphahn Community Center & Ice Arena and the Vogelei Park and Barn are located in commercial zones with thousands of cars passing daily. Given the marketing appeal of these locations, selling off-premise commercial advertising was the most obvious solution.

We understood that the other two signs at Willow Recreation Center and Bridges of Poplar Creek Country Club, located in residential areas, would not be used for off-premise advertising. As a result, we reduced the size of these signs to lower the cost. "Even at the smaller size, these signs still have great impact," said Buczkowski.

In the end, construction costs totaled \$990,000.

Through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process, an agreement with an outside marketing firm was established to sell advertising, manage billing, collections and record keeping. The firm earns 20% commission. During the RFP process, another firm proposed to build the signs and lease them back to us. "That's when we really knew there was great potential," said Bostrom. "But we wanted ownership of the signs and the larger percentage of the revenue."

Each side of the signs is sold separately at prices ranging from \$1,200-2,000 per month. Projections suggest a potential of up to \$350,000 annually in gross revenues from advertising sales alone; this figure does not include additional revenue from programs, facilities and events.

We established a list of advertising categories that we won't accept including any company in direct competition with a district program or service or one of our major sponsors' competitors. In addition, advertising for firearms, alcohol, cigarettes, gambling or anything sexual in nature is also not allowed.

### MANAGING THE TIME

With three entities contributing to content (the park district, the Village and the marketing firm) the next question became how to divide the time. We established ten 10-second "slots". The Village has slot #1; advertising runs in even slots #2-10; park district content appears on odd slots #3-9. Each entity inputs and manages its ads via a web-based program.

### THE RESULTS

From the start, advertising revenue was on target to meet revenue projections, and aside from a few bumps in the road, continues to demonstrate the potential. Overall, the signs have proven to be an effective marketing medium that continues to generate advertising inquiries.

"Program managers are always clamoring to get their programs and events on the marquees," said Sandy Manisco, superintendent of communications and marketing. "We have to remind them sometimes that we have many effective ways to promote programs, but the marquee is definitely the coveted channel because they know it works."

Relations with the Village were good prior, but are now even better. "The signs have facilitated an even more cohesive relationship with the Village," said Bostrom. "Nine out of ten of the residents have been happy with the signs, too. It's been a win-win-win for everyone."

### BY THE NUMBERS SIDEBAR:

- Construction Costs \$990,000 million
- Annual Gross Revenue Projections: \$98,000-350,000
- Years to Replacement 10-12

**Average commute time in Hoffman Estates is 29 minutes**

#### Demographics within a 10 minute drive:

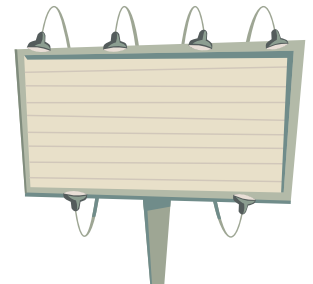
- Population: 150,783
- Median Household Income: \$76,353
- Fees spent on Participant Sports: \$9,665,776
- Fees spent on Recreational Lessons: \$10,180,020

#### Statistics on Each Sign:

- Sign 1: Vogelei Park – Golf & Higgins Roads (20 million annual impressions)
- Sign 2: Triphahn Center & Ice Arena – Higgins Road (11 million annual impressions)
- Sign 3: Bridges of Poplar Creek Country Club – Golf Road (16.3 million annual impressions)
- Sign 4: Willow Recreation Center – Algonquin Road (8.9 million annual impressions)

#### First Year Results:

146% Increase in memberships at Prairie Stone Sports & Wellness Center  
23% increase in summer Figure Skating lessons  
21% increase in Summer Preschool Camps  
14% increase in Summer Gymnastics programs  
10% increase in Hockey programs  
Adult Basketball increased teams 30 to 36 teams  
SOLD OUT Foundation Golf Outing  
SOLD OUT Easter Brunch  
RECORD ATTENDANCE Party in the Park

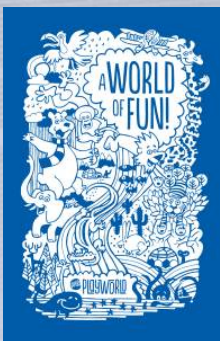


# Rebranding

to Create Buzz and Revenue

Personality of a Facility Can Be the Inspiration for Marketing Message

by Denise Delanty, Rockford Park District Marketing and Communications Manager & Laura Gibbs-Green, Rockford Park District Public Relations Manager

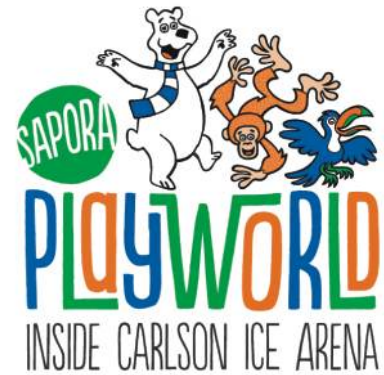


In November 2014, the Rockford Park District completed a two-month renovation of Sapora Playworld, a multi-level indoor play area located inside Carlson Ice Arena in Loves Park, IL. Rockford Park District's marketing department used the time leading up to the big reveal to re-invent the brand and create a very extensive re-opening marketing campaign. Sapora Playworld is a high-energy place where kids can laugh, run, slide, jump and have fun. Our marketing department strived to incorporate those facility qualities into every aspect of the re-branding process from marketing messages to logo design, every piece was creative and colorful.

Sapura Playworld opened in 1997 and provides three levels of fun for children ages 5-12, and a Tiny Tots area for little ones four and under. Sapora Playworld was named in honor of Dr. Allen Sapora, who was a major advocate of recreation education and research. In the 1950s, Dr. Sapora conducted a study to compare Rockford recreational facilities and opportunities to those in the state and nation. Dr. Sapora believed that parks enhance the community, and recreational programming raises the quality of life by strengthening families and reducing crime. Dr. Sapora passed away in 2004.



**Consistent messaging was achieved by maintaining and integrating this messaging across a multi-media marketing platform including: radio, television, newspaper, postcards, newsletters, web site, social media channels and even a marketing partnership with Pepsi.**



Construction began in September 2014 as crews took apart the old play structure in order to install new padding throughout the entire facility. Renovation highlights include adding the following features and amenities:

- Triple Wave Slide
- Tots Multi-Unit Play Area
- Big Ball Room and Sit-n-Spin
- Two giant pogo sticks
- Updated party rooms
- New benches and seating
- New rubber flooring
- New changing stations
- New color scheme and logo

“Sapora Playworld is a safe and secure environment where kids can be active, develop social skills, make new friends, and just play! The renovations allowed us to add new amenities, and enhance the experience for both kids and parents. We even did a lot of behind the scenes improvements, things guests might not visibly see such as UV Air Purification system, the first of its kind in the district,” said Amy McIntyre, Sapora Playworld operations manager.

### Reviving the Brand

The new brand communicated that Sapora Playworld is a fun, and high-energy place that is "a world of fun where kids 12 and under rule the world." This message was selected to attract the desired customer demographic - kids 12 and under. The creative team kept the word "world" in the messaging, which was also part of the facility's name. Consistent messaging was achieved by maintaining and integrating this messaging across a multi-media marketing platform including: radio, television, newspaper, postcards, newsletters, web site, social media channels and even a marketing partnership with Pepsi. The new logo, color scheme, and Rocky the Bear character were incorporated in the re-design of the facility as well as into all marketing elements. The three main colors used in the logo were taken straight from the playground structure, including wall paint and floor tiles. The typeface "Populaire" was chosen for it's playful, hand-drawn quality, and certain letters were tweaked to create a maze of beginning and end points, just like Playworld itself. The illustrated characters which were all hand drawn in-house thanks to Nathan McDonald, a very talented Rockford Park District graphic designer. The characters were done from the same hand-drawn style as the typeface and were meant to depict animals from different parts of the world in reference to "world" in the Playworld name. Along with the logo, Nathan incorporated the characters and new tag line into staff tshirts, placemats, birthday party invitations, signage, and event giveaways.

### Grand Re-Opening Marketing Plan

The marketing campaign's overall message was to inform the public that the 18-year-old facility was "new and improved" with a remodeled play area and a cool new Tiny Tots area. We selected a multi-media approach of communication to convey the message of Sapora's new remodel to ensure that many people in the Rockford

and surrounding communities were aware of the positive enhancements to this facility. Each media selected was used for its strengths. We utilized strong reach mediums such as TV, radio, and newspaper, targeted mediums including direct mail, posters, and our school newsletter. In addition, we also utilized our web site and social media channels, a news release to reach the media, and partnered with Pepsi to further extend our communication reach.

The grand re-opening campaign included the following elements:

- News release – sent to local media outlets
- Direct mail – postcard sent to 250 local dignitaries and special guests
- :30 radio spot – featured mascot Rocky the Bear's voice; aired on B-103FM
- :30 TV commercial – ran on local NBC affiliate WREX Channel 13
- Print ads – published in two local newspapers
- Posters – posted at Sapora and Rockford Park District Customer Service
- E-blast - Sent to over 7,000 people
- Facebook/Twitter - promoted heavily on social media
- Web site – created a special web site slider; posted on home page and linked to Sapora's web page, which was also revamped with new logos, a 360 virtual tour, and updated pricing and discount information
- School newsletter – featured story in District's school newsletter distributed to over 30,000 students
- Pepsi® promotion – Pepsi provided can panel coupons, on-pack coupons, and signage on their delivery trucks during November and December

The marketing campaign was not only extremely successful in creating awareness, but it also was responsible for increasing revenue and attendance goals by 62%. Success was measured by the number of admissions and revenue generated during the campaign which resulted in admissions being up by more than 3,000 compared to the same period in 2013, and revenue was up more than \$17,000. Attendance and revenue continue to increase as a result of this campaign including birthday parties and private rentals. The marketing campaign created a new perception of Sapora Playworld from an outdated indoor play area, to a bright, fun, new, and exciting place for kids 12 and under to have fun. The renovations were completed just in time as the winter of 2014/2015 was extremely cold and snowy which means kids often are less active. Parents made comments to the Rockford Park District about how nice it is to have a warm place where their kids can play, explore, and exercise in a safe, secure, soft play structure. The Rockford Park District believes that the benefits of "play" are endless and that everyone deserves the chance to play. Recreation is vital to people's health and well-being, and plays an important role in a balanced, healthy lifestyle. Sapora Playworld helps teach kids to run, climb, jump, spin, crawl, explore, and make new friends. Kids leave with a smile on their face and parents are just as happy since they know their kids learned a lot while playing. There is a saying that goes, "Everything you need to know about life starts on the playground" but in our case it's Sapora Playworld!

## PEOPLE & PLACES

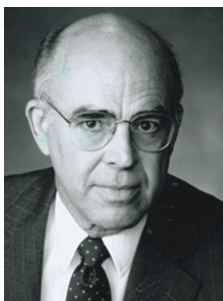


### Morton Grove Park District Welcomes New Executive Director, Jeffrey Wait

An experienced and enthusiastic leisure services professional, **Jeffrey Wait** has 18 years of experience managing community programs, projects and initiatives that enhance quality of life through recreational opportunities.

Jeffrey holds a master's degree in public administration from the University of Illinois at Chicago; and master's and bachelor's degrees in recreation administration from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. As a graduate student at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Jeffrey was one of the first five student directors of the Illinois Rural Recreation Development Project, providing recreational programs and activities to rural communities in Illinois. Jeffrey also had the honor of serving members of the United States military and their families through the Navy's Morale, Welfare and Recreation Department. Additionally, he has held positions at award-winning park districts and a city department around the Chicago area.

A native of Urbana, Illinois, Jeffrey spent much of his childhood enjoying Urbana Park District programs and facilities which inspired him to become a leisure services professional. He is also a proud husband, and father to two active children.



### In Memoriam

This year, we lost a park legend. More than that – a true representation of what it means to be a community. On September 15, 2015, **Robert Toalson** passed away at the age of 83.

Robert graduated from the University of Kansas with a degree in political science in 1954. Upon graduation, he served in the U.S. Marine Corps as a commissioned officer from 1954 to 1957. Following his military service, he received a master's degree in park and recreation

administration from Indiana University in 1958.

After completing a year as an intern in the Philadelphia park system, he moved to Oak Park, where he served as director of recreation for 11 years. In 1970, Robert became general manager of the Champaign Park District. Under his leadership, the National Park and Recreation Association's Gold Medal for Excellence was awarded once to Oak Park and three times to the Champaign Park District. In both Oak Park and Champaign, he was awarded the title Outstanding Citizen. During his career, Robert served as president of the Illinois Park and Recreation Society, president of the National Recreation and Park Association and founding member and president of the Academy for Parks and Recreation Administration.

Robert was a visionary and leader, and was very passionate about Champaign Park District and the people he served. Robert Toalson will be missed.



### John C. Potts Awarded Prestigious Pugsley Medal

**John C. Potts**, former director of the Champaign County Forest Preserve District, has been awarded the Honorable Cornelius Amory Pugsley Medal, the most prestigious

award recognizing outstanding contributions to the promotion and development of public parks in the United States.

Potts was with the CCFPD from 1992 to 2003, during which time the district added the River Bend Forest Preserve, developed its first master plan, and expanded its educational programming. Prior to this he was a long-time employee of the Peoria Park District, where he was chief of park police and then director of parks and planning for 15 years.

In 2005, while just settling in to retirement, he volunteered to help the American Red Cross after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. What started out as answering phones evolved into being deployed to the Mississippi coastal areas for more than a month. He has since been deployed 16 times over the past 10 years to national disaster areas that included those affected by forest fires, tornadoes, hurricanes and floods. He is currently the regional lead for government liaison for 78 counties in Illinois, Missouri and Iowa and the volunteer counterpart to the regional disaster director.

Potts was a charter faculty member of the National Parks & Recreation Administration Directors School, which is now in its ninth year. The American Academy Foundation established a scholarship in his name. Affectionately called "The Pottsie" it supports two outstanding first-year attendees of the school.

### Want to Read More?

Keep up with the latest milestones, new hires, promotions and award winners in the Illinois park and recreation industry online. Visit our website, [www.ILparks.org](http://www.ILparks.org), and click on the Publications tab on the left. Select IP&R Magazine and then People and Places.

### Want to submit news from your agency for People & Places?

E-mail information and jpegs to [editorialdept@ILparks.org](mailto:editorialdept@ILparks.org). Jpegs should be 300 dpi at about 2 inches tall.

## Three From Illinois Elected to the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration

Mike Clark, executive director of the Palatine Park District; Carrie Fullerton, executive director of the Bloomingdale Park District; and Arnold Randall, general superintendent of the Forest Preserves of Cook County have been elected to the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration. They were inducted recently at the Academy's Annual Meeting during the National Recreation and Park Association Congress in Las Vegas, Nevada.

The Academy is a group of distinguished practitioners and educators who are leaders in the field of park and recreation. They must have served for at least 15 years in a high level of administration in a park and recreation agency or as a recognized educator in parks and recreation administration, or they must manage a park and recreation department for an agency with a population of more than 500,000.



**Michael Clark**, CPRP, MBA is the executive director of the Palatine Park District in Palatine, IL. Palatine Park District serves a population of approximately 83,000 residents and is a northwest suburb of the Chicagoland area. Palatine employs 75 full-time employees and has an annual budget of \$22 million. Mike is a graduate, board member and instructor of the Indiana University Executive Development Program. He has an undergraduate degree from Illinois State University in park and recreation administration and earned his MBA from the Lake Forest Graduate School of Management. Mike also is a graduate from the NRPA Revenue Sources Management School.



**Carrie A. Fullerton**, CPRE has over 20+ years of diverse experience in the field of parks and recreation, and currently serves as the executive director of the Bloomingdale Park District.

She has also served as the director of parks and recreation for the Village of Hinsdale, superintendent of special facilities for the Wheaton Park District, as division manager of facilities for the Schaumburg Park District, as the adult

education/recreation coordinator for the Wheaton Park District, and as a facility manager/program supervisor for four different facilities with the Schaumburg Park District. Carrie holds both bachelor's and master's degrees in leisure studies (now known as the Department of Recreation, Sport and Tourism) from the University of Illinois with an emphasis on program management and administration. She also holds an associate's degree in cardiac technology.



**Arnold L. Randall** is the general superintendent of the Forest Preserves of Cook County and is responsible for the day-to-day management of the nation's oldest and largest forest preserve system. He was appointed to this position by Forest Preserves Board President Toni Preckwinkle in December 2010.

Key highlights of his tenure include an increased focus on restoring and protecting Cook County's most precious natural areas; the development and execution of strategic plans, including camping, recreation, trails and habitat restoration; the launch of a multi-year Centennial celebration to bring new and diverse audiences to the Preserves; and expanding the Preserves' important role in the scientific and academic communities.

More information on the Academy as well as additional biographical information on Clark, Fullerton and Randall is available at [www.aapra.org](http://www.aapra.org).

## In Memoriam



**Bruce Larson** of Urbana passed away on September 30, 2015. Bruce served 42 years as a commissioner of the Urbana Park District and was board chairman for 33 years. His strong focus on environmental education was the force behind the 1979 opening of the Anita Purves Nature Center. Bruce was actively involved with land acquisition and helped to increase the number of parks in Urbana from six to more than twenty. His enthusiasm and dedication

to the field of parks and recreation was duly recognized in 1992 with the Commissioner of the Year award for demonstrating the highest example of community service, personal integrity and ingenuity. He was the founder of the Urbana Parks Foundation and in 2014 the Urbana Park District named a park in honor of his 42 years of service to the park district.

Bruce served on the IAPD Board of Trustees from 1976 to 1978 and from 1990 to 1998, and served as board president in 1996. In 1978, while serving on the IAPD Constitutional Bylaws Committee, he was the major revision author of the state association's bylaws. Bruce dedicated his time and great personal talents to numerous IAPD committees. In 1997 he served as chairman of the IAPD History Task Force and was instrumental in researching and documenting the association's 70-year history. Bruce was the founding chairman of the Illinois Parks Association Risk Services (IPARKS) Committee, the risk management insurance pool of Illinois park districts, and was an integral member of the committee from 1991 to 2009.

## In Memoriam



**Frank "Moe" Duis**, 87, the city of Sterling's first parks director, passed away at CGH Medical Center. When Frank took the helm at Sterling Park District, there were no facilities, only land. Now the park district's most recognizable building bears his name – a tribute to the growth of the system during his nearly 40 years there, 23 as its leader.

Frank actually holds the distinction of being both the first part- and full-time director. A teacher and track coach at Challand Middle School, he also ran recreational programs for the park district during the summers. In 1965, the park district board made him the full-time director, the first of only three in the organization's history.

"He had an unbelievable work ethic, and he was still teaching when he was a part-time director," said Pete Dillon, a longtime friend and colleague. "As the scope of the job grew, he finally quit teaching and worked full time as parks director."

"He played a big role in acquiring the old Newman football field where the junior tackle games are played," Dillon said. "He was a tremendous track coach, who was very dedicated to the kids." "He was outgoing, and seemed to always know what people wanted," Dillon said. "He was so detail-oriented that people had confidence that he could pull off anything he tackled."



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# IPARKS Members Receive iGrant Funds

The IPARKS iGrant Program permits IPARKS Members to apply for up to \$500 in grant money to fund, or partially fund, safety items that will aid the Member in loss control or risk management efforts.

Any safety item whose purpose is the prevention or reduction of liability claims or property losses will be considered. Examples of items that would qualify for the \$500 in iGrant funds include (but are not limited to):

- Playground surface material;
- Safety signage;
- Safety cones or other hazard warning items;
- Automated External Defibrillators;
- Fire extinguishers; and,
- Life jackets.

If you would like more information about the iGrant Program or are interested in learning about IPARKS Membership, please contact an IPARKS Representative at 800.748.0554. We look forward to speaking with you!



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