

illinois

Volume 55, Number 6 | November/December 2024

P&R

PARKS AND RECREATION

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



inclusion
& belonging



What an IPARKS Membership Means to You!



EASY

IPARKS IS RISK MANAGEMENT MADE EASY



EMPOWERED

IPARKS' PARTNERSHIPS EMPOWER YOU TO PROTECT YOUR DISTRICT, ASSETS AND THOSE YOU SERVE



CUSTOMIZED

IPARKS IS TAILORED TO THE UNIQUE EXPOSURES OF ILLNOIS PARKS AND RECREATION



Your IPARKS membership makes it easy for you to provide safe places to **Play, Relax, and Enjoy.**

IPARKS IS THE RISK MANAGEMENT AFFINITY PARTNER OF THE IAPD

Photo Credit: Freeport Park District

Contact an IPARKS representative at 800.748.0554 or visit www.iparks.org

IN THIS ISSUE



4 **From the Editor**
Everyone Has a Seat at the Table

6 **Get on Board**
Board Members - The January Conference is Not Only For Staff: It's For You!

8 **Eye on the Profession**
Unity Through Diversity

10 **Statehouse Insider**
The Annual Conference Offers a Great Return on Investment

12 **Education Corner**
Low-Cost, High-Value: Continuing Education with Associations

14 **Legal Calendar**

20 **Beyond Words: Crafting an Authentic Land Acknowledgment**

24 **Achieving Disability Inclusion for Park Districts: More Than Ramps and Elevators**

30 **DEI(B) - Diversity, Equity, Inclusion = BELONGING**

34 **2024 Best of the Best Awards Gala**

35 **People and Places**
Updates and tributes in the park, recreation and conservation family

39 **IAPD Corporate Members**

43 **IPRA Commerical Members**

FROM THE EDITOR

Everyone Has a Seat at the Table

As families and friends gather for the upcoming fall and winter holidays, I'm always thinking about "how am I going to make sure I have a chair for everyone?" It's an important thought for a few reasons: you don't want anyone to feel left out and you also want to be able to see all those present in one place. This mindset is one that drives park and recreation agencies throughout the entire year.



Being part of a park district, forest preserves, conservation district, recreation department, or special recreation association means making sure all residents can be not only heard and seen, but also fully served to the greatest intent possible.

How do you make sure everyone's needs are met? How do you create programs that can be accessible to all? Where are you lacking in inclusivity, diversity, and equity? These are questions you more than likely ask yourself every single time you step through the door.

Not only is it important to make sure needs are met, but we must also make sure everyone can feel a sense of belonging. How we connect with those we serve and how we bring them a feeling of safety and security are essential to creating an environment that is welcoming to all.

This issue has some incredible stories of how we can look at our respective communities and reach everyone. In *DEI(B) = Diversity, Equity, Inclusion = Belonging* on page 30, Tracey Crawford and Oralethea Davenport examine what it means to belong. *Beyond Words: Crafting an Authentic Land Acknowledgement* on page 20 examines how the McHenry County Conservation District and Trickster Cultural Center came together to honor the histories and lifeways of Indigenous groups. Finally on page 24, Samyuktha Neeraja speaks about what it takes to make park districts friendly to those with disabilities in *Achieving Disability Inclusion for Park Districts: More Than Ramps and Elevators*.

Different perspectives help us to realize the entire scope of the work we do each and every day and I hope these viewpoints open your eyes to a way of thinking you might not have considered.

— Wayne Utterback, Editor



Photo Credit: This issue's cover photo was a 2023 Give Us Your Best Shot photo submission by Maggie Beaudin of the West Chicago Park District.



211 East Monroe Street, Springfield, Illinois 62701-1186 217.523.4554 FAX 217.523.4273 iapd@ilparks.org www.ilparks.org www.ilpra.org

Managing Editor
PETER M. MURPHY, President and Chief Executive Officer, IAPD

Graphic Design
GOSS ADVERTISING, 217.423.4739, www.gossadvertising.com

Editor
WAYNE UTTERBACK, IAPD

Advertising Sales Representative
TODD PERNSTEINER, 952.841.1111, info@pernstainer.com

JOINT EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

IAPD Representatives

GARY GILLIS, Co-Chair, Pekin Park District
LORI FLORES-WEISSKOPF, Park District of Highland Park
CAROLYN UBRICCO, Elmhurst Park District

IPRA Representatives

KARI FELKAMP, CPRP, IPRA Co-Chair, Elmhurst Park District
CHERYL BUHMANN, Vernon Hills Park District
JOAN SCOVIC, CPRP, Northbrook Park District

ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF PARK DISTRICTS

GARY GILLIS, Chairman, Pekin Park District
TED SCHULZ, Chairman-Elect, New Lenox Community Park District
JEFF RIGONI, Immediate Past Chair, Lockport Township Park District
CHRISTOPHER CALDWELL, Vice-Chairman, Channahon Park District
WILLIAM "BILL" CASEY, Vice-Chairman, Glenview Park District
DR. KRISTIN WHITE, Vice-Chairman, Decatur Park District
MALLORY WESTCOTT, Treasurer, Springfield Park District
MARTESHA BROWN, Rockford Park District
MARY ANN CHAMBERS, Northbrook Park District

BILL COHEN, Woodridge Park District
ROBERT JOHNSON, SR., Peoria Park District
ROBERT KAPLAN, Hoffman Estates Park District
BERNIE O' BOYLE, Tinley Park Park District
JESSE ORTEGA, Mundelein Park & Recreation District
ROBERT SCHMIDT, Schaumburg Park District
JOSEPH SCHMITT, Alsip Park District
CAROLYN UBRICCO, Elmhurst Park District
MELISSA VICTOR, Cary Park District

IAPD HEADQUARTERS

211 East Monroe Street, Springfield, IL 62701-1186 217.523.4554 www.ilparks.org

PETER M. MURPHY, President and Chief Executive Officer
JASON ANSELMANT, General Counsel
KARI CATTON, Executive Secretary
BOBBIE JO HILL, Director of Public Relations & Membership Engagement

ALAN HOWARD, Director of Finance & Human Resources
MITCHELL REMMERT, Director of Advocacy & Strategic Initiatives
SHANNON SARTAIN, Legal/Legislative Secretary
SUE TRIPHANN, Director of Education & Conferences
WAYNE UTTERBACK, Director of Communications & Digital Content

ILLINOIS PARK & RECREATION ASSOCIATION

CHAIR
ANDREW THURMAN, CPRP, Executive Director, Geneseo Park District

SOUTHERN REGION REPRESENTATIVE
ANDREW DALLNER, CPRP, Director of Parks and Recreation, O'Fallon Parks and Recreation

CHAIR ELECT
ERIKA STROJINC, CPRP, Executive Director, Buffalo Grove Park District

CENTRAL REGION REPRESENTATIVE AND SECRETARY
DEREK HARMS, CPRP, Executive Director, Springfield Park District

PAST CHAIR
LISA SHEPPARD, CPRP, Executive Director, Glencoe Park District

CHICAGO METRO REGION REPRESENTATIVE
KEITH WALLACE, CPRP, Executive Director, Lincolnway SRA

SECTION DIRECTOR COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE
LAURE KOSEY, CPRE, Executive Director, Oak Brook Park District

NORTHWEST REGION REPRESENTATIVE
DAN JONES, CPRP, Executive Director, Cary Park District

AT LARGE REPRESENTATIVE
JOAN SCOVIC, CPRP, Director of Marketing & Communications, Northbrook Park District

IPRA HEADQUARTERS

536 East Avenue, LaGrange, IL 60525-6815 708.588.2280 www.ilpra.org

SUZI WIRTZ, IOM, Executive Director
VINCE DAVIS, CPRP, Digital Strategy & Membership Manager
BARRY FRANKS, Finance Director
CINDY GALVAN, CMP, Manager, Conference & Sponsorships

KIM LAPER, CPRP, Community Engagement Manager
DUANE SMITH, CPRP, Education Director
HEATHER WEISHAAR, Communications & Marketing Director
MARIA MCGUIRE, Administrative Assistant

Illinois Parks and Recreation (ISSN 0019-2155) is published bimonthly at 211 E. Monroe Street, Springfield, Illinois, by the Illinois Association of Park Districts and the Illinois Park and Recreation Association. Annual subscription rates: \$12 for IAPD/IPRA members; \$50 for non-members; \$60 foreign; \$20 educational institutions. Single copies: \$2 members; \$10 nonmembers. Periodicals postage paid at Springfield, Illinois and additional post offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Illinois Parks & Recreation, 211 E. Monroe Street, Springfield, IL 62701-1186. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily express the official views of the IAPD/IPRA. Likewise, the publication of any advertisement is not to be construed as an endorsement of the product or services offered. Members of the IAPD and the IPRA and other interested persons are encouraged to submit articles and illustrative photos for possible publication in the magazine. Send for manuscript guidelines and deadline dates: Editor, Illinois Parks & Recreation, 211 E. Monroe Street, Springfield, IL 62701-1186, 217.523.4554, iapd@ilparks.org, www.ilparks.org. By submitting articles for publication, authors are assigning the copyright to the Illinois Association of Park Districts.

Copyright © by the Illinois Association of Park Districts and the Illinois Park and Recreation Association. All rights reserved. Reprints of articles in whole or in part without prior written permission are prohibited.





Partnerships matter.

It's always good to have a partner when it comes to investing—one you can count on in all types of challenging situations. At IPDLAF+ Class, our professional team bases its investment philosophy on safety and preservation of principal so that we can assist you in any investment climate.

Why rely on us? Learn more at IPDLAF.org or talk with our representative, Michelle Binns.

Michelle Binns, Senior Managing Consultant
312.523.2428 | binnsm@pfmam.com

*This information is for institutional investor use only, not for further distribution to retail investors, and does not represent an offer to sell or a solicitation of an offer to buy or sell any fund or other security. Investors should consider the Trust's investment objectives, risks, charges and expenses before investing in the Trust. This and other information about the Trust is available in the Trust's current Information Statement, which should be read carefully before investing. A copy of the Trust's Information Statement may be obtained by calling 1-800-731-6870 for the IIIT Class and 1-800-731-6830 for the IPDLAF+ Class and is also available on the Trust's websites at www.iiit.us and www.ipdlaf.org. While both the IIIT and IPDLAF+ Classes of the Illinois Portfolio seek to maintain a stable net asset value of \$1.00 per share and the Illinois TERM series seek to achieve a net asset value of \$1.00 per share at its stated maturity, it is possible to lose money investing in the Trust. An investment in the Trust is not insured or guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or any other government agency. Shares of the Trust are distributed by **PFM Fund Distributors, Inc.**, member Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) (www.finra.org) and Securities Investor Protection Corporation (SIPC) (www.sipc.org). PFM Fund Distributors, Inc. is an affiliate of PFM Asset Management LLC.*

Illinois Park District Liquid Asset Fund Plus is sponsored by the Illinois Association of Park Districts and the Illinois Park & Recreation Association



Peter M. Murphy, Esq., CAE, IOM
IAPD President and CEO

Board Members - The January Conference is Not Only For Staff: It's For You!

January is the perfect month to hone your leadership skills and learn about all things parks and recreation at the IAPD/IPRA state conference January 23-25, 2025.

The Soaring to New Heights Conference, the largest parks and recreation conference in the nation, offers a number of excellent sessions designed specifically for new and seasoned commissioners to expand their board knowledge, become more effective board members, and sharpen their leadership skills. Add in the exhibit hall brimming with the latest trends, equipment, and services and it equates to a one stop shop for you to stay on top of your game.

Take the opportunity to register today and plan to attend this outstanding conference. Here is a sampling of some of the excellent educational sessions available to you.

#101 Lessons From the Ballot Box

Thursday, January 23, 2025

3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Starting with the right preparation and planning, the passage of a referendum should almost be inevitable, not left to crossed fingers and high hopes. With lessons, steps and insights from experts in research, financing, election law and communications, you can confidently lead your Board of Commissioners and staff in a community engagement and education campaign in support of a ballot initiative to issue bonds or increase the limiting rate.

#112 Real Estate 101: What You Need to Know About Acquiring, Selling and Using Property

Thursday, January 23, 2025

10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

This session will focus on acquiring real estate and the ways to sell it. We will also discuss lesser interests in real estate such as easements, licenses and use agreements and key provisions to include in each of them. We will also talk about the use of park property, including zoning issues that your agency may face and how to resolve them. Additionally, we will discuss developer donations, or impact fees, and how to maximize them for the benefit of your agency.

#113 Unified Actions: Managing Protest Scenarios through Municipal Intergovernmental Cooperation

Thursday, January 23, 2025

1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Hear a case study on how two local government units successfully collaborated to provide a coordinated response, ensuring community safety and the protection of First Amendment rights during a protest.

#120 Can We and Should We Have Video Surveillance in Parks and Facilities?

Thursday, January 23, 2025

1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Video surveillance cameras are everywhere. What policies and procedures do park districts need to have in place before they start recording in parks and facilities? You will learn the best practices for utilizing video surveillance systems, the implications of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the Local Records Act. We will provide updated on recent case law related to the use of video surveillance.

Quote: "An investment in knowledge pays the best interest."

- Benjamin Franklin



#100 So You Want to Stay Out of Jail? What Park District Leadership Must Know About Ethics Requirements

Friday, January 24, 2025

8:30 a.m. – 9 :30 a.m.

This session will provide elected officials, officers, and employees with critical information on the Gift Ban Act, prohibited political activities, conflicts of interest, official misconduct, whistleblower protections and executive session confidentiality.

#102 Beyond the Basics: Navigating Politically Sensitive Community Projects and Issues

Friday, January 24, 2025

3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

This session will provide elected officials and employees with real world guidance on how to handle hot button community projects and issues. Attendees will learn tips for navigating contentious public meetings.

#103 Illinois Sunshine Laws: FOIA and Open Meetings Act

Friday, January 24, 2025

10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

This session will summarize the basic requirements of FOIA, including deadlines, the handling of burdensome requests, and common exemptions applicable to park district and recreation association records.

#104 Board Member to Board Leader Part I

Friday, January 24, 2025

8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

At the heart of every Park Board is a good-intentioned citizen who wants to give back to their community. This session will help individual board members ensure that they are being impactful in a positive way. If you're looking for a session that goes beyond the nuts and bolts and digs into real, meaningful, and applicable board topics, then look no further! This is just what you need to acquire new skills and energize yourself for a successful Board tenure!

#105 Board Member to Board Leader Part II

Friday, January 24, 2025

3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Dive into NEW topics like working with difficult residents, promoting long-term thinking, advancing agenda items, leading efficient meetings, and assessing your director. Participants will be able to bring practical suggestions and tools back to their fellow board members.

#110 Legal/Legislative Part I

Friday, January 24, 2025

8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

Recent tort liability cases that provide guideposts in your agency's day-to-day operations will also be covered. You will also receive information about the latest developments from the state capitol. Stay current on a wide variety of changes in the law and learn how these changes will affect the operation of your agency.

#111 Legal/Legislative II

Friday, January 24, 2025

10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Review the many new laws, regulations, court decisions and PAC opinions issued in 2024. We will explain how the new laws work, how they impact your agency, and tips and strategies for staying in compliance. Learn about new laws impacting your agency including OMA/FOIA, employment law, human rights, property tax and more.

#115 Responding to First Amendment Audits

Saturday, January 25, 2025

10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Every citizen in every park and facility you operate is a potential First Amendment auditor. Not just activists, but everyday patrons with a dispute can begin recording instantly, with the goal of capturing and spreading video evidence of a First Amendment violation or improper or embarrassing behavior. This session will explain the First Amendment Audit, what needs to happen before the auditor arrives, and the do's and don'ts for commissioners and employees while an audit is occurring. Specific examples of First Amendment audits will be given and the options available to the public agency in each example will be discussed.

#123 Direct & Deliberate: How to Successfully PASS a Referendum

Friday, January 24, 2025

10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Is your district or agency going on the ballot soon? Hear from a park district, consultant and their legal team how they passed their \$17M referendum with over 70% positive response in only a 25% voter turnout election. Go through the steps of getting to the referendum process, working with a consultant and leading the way to the end...all with a successful finish.

#124 Minutes Shouldn't Take Hours

Saturday, January 25, 2025

10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Learn how to streamline your minutes so members can find the information they are looking for quickly. Learn what belongs in the minutes and what doesn't. Learn to properly format minutes. Learn how your organization's rules may affect how your minutes are written.

#125 The Agenda: In What Order Should Business Take Place

Saturday, January 25, 2025

12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

How does an organization decide when to consider items of importance during the meeting? Robert's Rule of Order suggests a standard order of business as well as option items to help guide an organization through their meeting. Find out how your organization compares of how you can address other important issues in a timely and efficient manner.

#129 Boardmanship Essentials Part I

Saturday, January 25, 2025

12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

This session provides essential, practical information to ensure lawful and professional open and closed board meetings; avoid embarrassing and unlawful Open Meetings Act errors and practical tips and strategies for communicating and attending meetings electronically.

#130 Boardmanship Essentials Part II

Saturday, January 25, 2025

2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

This session explores the often difficult legal and practical challenges of governing with a challenging commissioner, a divided board, and/or an angry public. Obtain legal and practical strategies for managing defiant commissioners, moving forward with a divided board or a hostile public.

On behalf of the Staff and Board of the IAPD, I wish you and your family peace, joy, and happiness during this holiday season. I hope to see you in person at the **IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference, January 23-25, 2025, at the Hyatt Regency Chicago.**

EYE ON THE PROFESSION

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



By Suzi Wirtz, IOM
IPRA Executive Director

Unity Through Diversity

In today's increasingly interconnected but sometimes socially awkward world, celebrating diversity, fostering inclusion and a focus on belonging are more critical than ever. These actions shape our social landscapes and impact workplaces, agencies, government, educational institutions and the vast communities that you serve. The parks, recreation and conservation industry nationwide interacts daily with diverse audiences of all abilities. Last year, the NRPA Research team surveyed park and recreation leaders to better understand the efforts surrounding diversity, equity and inclusion practices. A few of the key findings were that 42% of park and recreation agencies have established, formal DEI activities, while 92% of agencies offer DEI education and resources to their staff. However, six out of seven park and recreation leaders agree that park and recreation inequity is a problem nationally.

IPRA aspires to be part of the solution, through Board commitment, strategic planning initiatives, volunteer committees, programs, education and being a role model for our members and other associations in Illinois, but also across the country.

Can't We All Just Belong?

As we all should know, diversity encompasses a broad range of human "differences," including race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, ability and socioeconomic status. It reflects the multitude of experiences and perspectives that individuals bring to every table—and they should be at every table. A variety of voices contribute to richer discussions, innovative problem-solving and more comprehensive solutions.

Next comes inclusion, which creates an environment in which all individuals feel welcomed, heard and respected. Inclusion means having equal access to opportunities and resources, and you know your voice is part of the decision-making processes.

So, if diversity focuses on the presence of differences, and inclusion provides the space - then belonging is really the outcome of inclusion. Belonging taps into the emotional experience of individuals within a group. If we learned anything in kindergarten, it's that when you feel that you belong, you are happy. You know you are accepted, valued

and integral to a community. Thus, you are more likely to engage fully, share your ideas and contribute to collective goals.

The relationship between diversity, belonging and inclusion is crucial and necessary. A culture that promotes belonging can enhance the benefits of diversity, encouraging collaboration and inclusivity.

Social Equity is Simply Equity

The IPRA Board approved a social equity statement recently that reads, "At the Illinois Park and Recreation Association (IPRA), we believe in the inherent dignity and worth of every individual. Our commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging is unwavering and integral to our mission of enhancing the quality of life for all Illinois residents and visitors through parks and recreation."

Beyond words, IPRA is proud to have eight special interest sections that provide a variety of ways for members to be included and ensure every voice is heard and valued. In this article, I'll describe two of those sections. The Diversity Section has existed for a number of years and consists of professionals aiming to expand the knowledge base and emphasize the importance of diversity in parks, recreation, therapeutic recreation and forest preserves. The focus is twofold: 1) Diversity as it relates to the individual professionally, and 2) Diversity as it affects the agency and the communities it serves.

In the wake of George Floyd's death four years ago, IPRA and the Diversity Section introduced Safe Zone Conversations (SZC), which discuss human topics that can be deemed sensitive, uncomfortable or complex in nature. These conversations foster a safe environment of mutual respect and inclusivity. These discussions were wildly successful, discussing topics such as dealing with political push back, belonging, racism, LGBTQ+, Latinx, mental health and disability matters. IPRA will once again offer these conversations in 2025 for members. IPRF (the Foundation that supports IPRA's educational and diversity efforts as well as scholarship programs) works to fund future diversity education and programming with a portion of the SZC donations. Keep an eye on the IPRA website and newsletters for more information.

Four years ago, we introduced a Diversity Education Institute as the signature event of the Diversity Section, which has grown in attendance and awareness exponentially. This one-day event in April provides exceptional speakers and a chance to network with like-minded individuals and share stories.

Illinois is Unique and Proud of It

Within Illinois, there are numerous agencies and associations doing amazing things when it comes to inclusion and belonging, most notably the special recreation associations (SRAs). And I was astounded when I learned that Illinois is the only state that allows park districts and municipalities to join together to create SRAs for people with disabilities. I've visited quite a few SRAs in the past 10 months and their facilities and opportunities are nothing short of amazing. Not to mention the dedication and passion of the staff members who work there.

IPRA also has a Therapeutic Recreation Section with a number of committees like: inclusion, adult day programs, support services and staffing and cultural arts, to name a few. The TR Section, with partial funding from IPRF, sponsors an annual TR Leadership Summit, designed for professionals with this specialty area. Held in September, this day-long event consists of three 75-minute breakout sessions presented by highly recognized professionals in the field.

The SRAs of IPRA

Lincolnway Special Recreation Association (LWSRA)
West Suburban Special Recreation Association (WSSRA)
Fox Valley Special Recreation Association (FVSRA)
Northwest Special Recreation Association (NWSRA)
Warren Special Recreation Association (WSRA)
Northern Will County Special Recreation Association (NWCSRA)
Northwest Special Recreation Association (NWSRA),
Waukegan Park District
Northeast Dupage Special Recreation Association (NEDSRA)
Northern Illinois Special Recreation Association (NISRA)
Maine-Niles Association of Special Recreation (M-NASR)
Northern Suburban Special Recreation Association (NSSRA)
Maine-Niles Association of Special Recreation, Maine-Niles
Association of Special Recreation (M-NASR)
Southwest Special Recreation Association (SWSRA)
Special Recreation Association of Central Lake County (SRACLC)
Western DuPage Special Recreation Association (WDSRA)
Kishwaukee Special Recreation Association (KSRA)
Southwest Special Recreation Association (SWSRA), South
Suburban Special Recreation Association (SSSRA)
South Suburban Special Recreation Association (SSSRA)
Heart of Illinois Special Recreation Association
River Valley Special Recreation Association (RVSRA)
Fox Valley Special Recreation Association
Heart of Illinois Special Recreation Association (HISRA)
Champaign- Urbana Special Recreation

Challenges We Can Address

As evidenced in the NRPA research, these issues are challenging. Many organizations struggle with unconscious biases, systemic barriers and a lack of understanding of the importance of inclusivity. And, sad but true, initiatives aimed at increasing diversity can sometimes be viewed as tokenism if they do not also promote belonging. All individuals need to feel valued and respected. Here are a few ideas for you:

Education and Awareness: Invest in training programs that raise awareness about unconscious bias and the value of diversity. Understanding different perspectives can help build empathy and encourage more inclusive behavior. Hosting a SZC conversation mentioned above is a step in the right direction.

Inclusive Policies and Open Dialogue: Implementing policies that support diversity and inclusion is crucial. This might include flexible work arrangements, mentorship programs and affinity groups that give underrepresented voices a platform. Get involved with IPRA's Sections.

Leadership Commitment: Leaders must model inclusive behavior and commit to diversity and belonging and inclusion as core values. This commitment should be visible in decision-making processes and resource allocation. Visit our website for the Social Equity Statement or talk to any one of IPRA's or IPRF's board members.

Celebrating Differences: Recognizing and celebrating diverse backgrounds and experiences fosters a culture of appreciation. Events, workshops and discussions that highlight various cultures can help strengthen community ties. Each IPRA section sponsors an annual signature event. Visit our website for more information on the sections, volunteer leaders and upcoming dates. www.ilipra.org

Diversity and belonging are not just buzzwords; they are essential components of thriving communities, agencies and associations. By fostering an environment that embraces diversity and actively cultivates a sense of belonging, I absolutely believe we will harness the full potential of every individual. This commitment requires ongoing effort, self-reflection and adaptation, but the result are well worth it. IPRA is here with you and for you, so please reach out to me or any staff member with questions or ideas.



Jason Anselment
IAPD General Counsel

The Annual Conference Offers a Great Return on Investment

As I was reviewing the Preliminary Program for the upcoming IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference, I was struck again this year by the number and breadth of the educational offerings. Whether you are a professional, commissioner, local counsel, volunteer, or vendor, the 153 concurrent sessions across 12 multi-disciplinary tracks along with 15 content-rich workshops offer plenty for everyone.

As past attendees can attest, the benefits of the Annual Conference extend far beyond all these learning opportunities. In fact, as your board and staff consider your strategic plans and goals for the new year, be mindful that there may be no better investment of your time or resources than the IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference. This is particularly true when weighing the potential cost of not attending. If you have not attended in the past or if you are not currently registered, I urge you to consider doing so now.

Top Experts, Latest Trends, Cost Saving Ideas, and Much More All in One Place

Collaboration rather than competition is a key quality that separates public park and recreation agencies from the private sector because in the private sector a profit motive is typically a disincentive to sharing ideas, best practices, and solutions. Conversely, the synergy that is created at the annual conference where so many leaders in public parks, recreation, and conservation are gathered is amazing.

One of the best avenues for building relationships at the Soaring to New Heights Conference is the Exhibit Hall, which provides an opportunity to speak one-on-one with dozens of consultants, manufacturers, distributors and designers. This unique experience offers the ability to engage with top experts and see firsthand the latest trends in equipment, software, and other features, which is often the first step for finding innovative solutions and cost-saving ideas. To attempt to replicate these experiences throughout the year would take days away from the park district and thousands of miles across the state and nation. During the Soaring to New Heights Conference, they are all under one roof.

The wide array of partnerships and intergovernmental agreements is another quality that distinguishes Illinois park, recreation, and conservation agencies from other local governments. As I have reviewed dozens of Efficiency Committee reports that have been submitted to IAPD the past month, I have been astounded by the number of intergovernmental agreements related to shared facility use, joint programming, cooperative purchasing, and hundreds of others.

There is no better place than the Soaring to New Heights Conference to learn about these opportunities from peers throughout Illinois. As you review the conference schedule, you will find several excellent sessions related to this topic. Again, however, while sessions are a great place to learn, as much or more knowledge can be obtained through collaboration among commissioners and professionals during the many networking opportunities that are available at the conference. In fact, I can think of no other time or place where there is greater access to park and recreation expertise under one roof.

Legal Updates and Best Practices

Each year, we field hundreds of legal and legislative inquiries from park district local counsel and member agencies. These calls and emails present some of the most interesting parts of any day, and we are grateful for the opportunity to help hundreds of members and their counsel each year. Yet, these calls often remind me that the best place to keep up with numerous legal and legislative changes is the annual conference, a fact that is evident from the number of sessions on legal topics like the Open Meetings Act, Freedom of Information Act, tax levies and other financial procedures, employment laws, bond referendum, and many others.

For local counsel, the continuing legal education track offers an excellent opportunity to keep current on new laws, regulations, court cases, and other developments that impact their local government clients while also satisfying continuing education requirements at an affordable cost. Board members who happen to be attorneys can also take advantage of this opportunity.

While the recently concluded IAPD Legal Symposium is also an excellent way to stay up to date on legal changes from the past year, the multiple days and length of conference sessions allows presenters to take a deeper dive into these important topics.

Build a Better Board at the Annual Conference

The annual conference also offers the very best opportunity to learn about the latest trends in parks, recreation, and conservation. Additionally, the schedule always includes numerous board building sessions on parliamentary procedure, ethics, boardmanship, open meetings rules, the commissioner's roundtable and much more. These are just a few of dozens of courses that can help build better boards by making meetings run more smoothly, preventing legal and ethical violations, and encouraging civility in governance.

In addition to classroom learning opportunities, the annual conference affords commissioners an opportunity to network with board members from other agencies. By collaborating with fellow commissioners and professionals throughout Illinois, elected officials can learn about programs, partnerships, techniques and other activities that have and have not worked at other agencies.

I often wonder how many legal pitfalls are avoided, how much money is protected through cost-saving programs, and how many new ideas are implemented each year as the result of education, training and networking at the annual conference. If you want to build a better board, lead by example and take advantage of the many resources at the annual IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference. There is no better way to build a better board through education and training.

Consider the Potential Cost of Not Attending the Conference

While critics occasionally attack the financial cost associated with attending conferences, they typically ignore the advantages of the information that is obtained, including ideas that save money. They also neglect to consider the costs and potential consequences of not obtaining continuing education. Failure to stay current with hundreds of legal changes exposes districts to liability. Not keeping up with best practices often ends up costing taxpayers exponentially more than the investment in conference registrations, while missed opportunities to network with other elected officials, professionals, and vendors may mean lost revenue generators and cost saving tips.

Critics also do not consider that attending the conference requires volunteer park commissioners to give up more of their own personal time to attend. So many are willing to do this every year because they realize that the investment is beneficial and can save time down the road. Meetings

run more smoothly because of a greater understanding of the Open Meetings Act and parliamentary procedures. Less study time may be needed to prepare for a meeting because there is a greater understanding of the process associated with financial procedures or because officials are more in tune with the latest trends.

Simply put, although attending the conference requires a commitment, those who make it return to the conference almost every year because they know the knowledge they receive more than pays for itself. This is especially true when considering the cost of not attending. A single revenue producing or money saving idea may last in perpetuity. A legal pitfall or other liability avoided may save money and avoid other damaging consequences, and the education and networking with other park commissioners and professionals throughout the state are priceless.

Continuing education and training are essential to the successful operation of any organization or business. Park and recreation agencies are no different, and the premier event to obtain this knowledge is the annual IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference. I look forward to seeing you there!

Calling All Commissioners: Top 5 Reasons to Attend the Soaring to New Heights Conference

- 1. Understand director/commissioner roles and responsibilities.** Commissioners who attend the annual conference gain a better appreciation of the role of a commissioner vs. the role of executive director.
- 2. Avoid legal pitfalls and stay out of the headlines.** Numerous educational sessions on the Open Meetings Act, ethics laws and prohibited activities provide commissioners with the do's and don'ts of elected office.
- 3. Help meetings run smoother.** Educational sessions on parliamentary procedure, the tax levy process, budget and appropriation ordinances, annual audits and many more give elected officials a greater understanding of important processes that help save time and energy down the road.
- 4. Build a better board.** In addition to building camaraderie among your board, commissioners who attend the conference learn good boardmanship from other commissioners and discover what has and has not worked at other agencies.
- 5. Recognize the need for investments in facilities and equipment.** In addition to dozens of educational sessions on the latest trends, more than 320 exhibitors showcase the hottest products and services to demonstrate the necessity of investing in your agency's facilities and equipment.



By Duane Smith, CPRP
IPRA Education Director

Low-Cost, High-Value: Continuing Education with Associations

Though I can't identify the day it happened, roughly a few years into my job as a practitioner in parks, recreation, and conservation I developed a profound motivation to advance my skills and stand among the industry professionals I aspired to be someday in my career. I did not have a desire, nor did I have the financial means to pursue a master's degree at that time, so I decided to pursue Certified Park & Recreation Professional (CPRP) certification through the National Recreation and Park Association (NPRA). I remember vividly the day and the exact moment when I learned that I passed the exam. I was energized, confident, and ready to move mountains because I now had the affirmation I needed to propel my career to next level success. Best of all, my former employer sponsored the associated fees, so I walked away with a valuable credential without accumulating financial debt that would have undoubtedly impacted my growing family.

There is a growing trend in the workforce toward pursuing continuing education opportunities, driven by the need to remain competitive as the world continues to evolve. Workers increasingly recognize that upskilling and reskilling are essential for relevancy, job security, and career advancement. Reports from sources such as *Associations Now*, *Modern Campus*, and *Higher Education Today* suggest a growing preference for educational programs offered by professional associations over traditional higher education institutions. Workers are drawn to association-provided credentials, certifications, and learning programs because these options are more affordable and better aligned with industry demands. Additionally, these programs are accessible, shorter, and focused on practical skills, thus offering career benefits without taking on the burden of student loans.

Supporting their employees' continuing education through associations offers employers strategic benefits too. By funding these initiatives, employers not only attract and retain top talent but also foster higher employee loyalty and job satisfaction, reducing turnover costs. Employees who earn certifications, credentials, and industry-specific knowledge through associations bring immediate value to the organization by applying relevant skills that align with the company's evolving goals. This targeted education also enhances internal mobility, empowering employees to transition into new roles or take on leadership positions, thus filling skill gaps from within rather than requiring costly external hires.

Here at the Illinois Park & Recreation Association, our mission is to provide and promote exceptional standards of education, networking, and resources for all professionals in the Illinois park, recreation, and conservation communities. With the support of an amazing staff and exceptional volunteer leaders, we continue to expand our continuing education portfolio to ensure Illinois professionals have access to timely and relevant educational opportunities that will help them better serve their respective communities. While we have some exciting initiatives in the works that will provide more accessible content and credentialing opportunities in the near future, take a look at the next page for IPRA's line-up of continuing education planned for 2025.

Don't be mistaken, there is tremendous value in pursuing degrees from higher education institutions. Degrees provide a broad and in-depth education, help increase your earning potential and career opportunities, and they give you credibility in the ever-changing job market. I'm simply encouraging you to keep an open mind about your continuing education and leverage associations to help you achieve professional goals. Create a plan, discuss with your agency, and before you know it you'll have the confidence to move mountains too.

CONFERENCE

Soaring to New Heights -
Workshops & Sessions

CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

ProConnect Mentorship Program
Professional Development School
Financial Sustainability
Playground Maintenance Course
Equity in Practice
Certified Youth Sports Administrator

CERTIFICATION

CPRE Virtual Exam Prep Course
CPRP Virtual Exam Prep Course
Certified Playground Safety Inspector Course / Exam
Aquatic Facility Operator Course / Exam
Certified Pool Operator Course / Exam
Mental Health First Aid Certification Course - Youth

SIGNATURE EDUCATION

Safety Symposium
Communications & Marketing Summit
Diversity Education Institute
Facility Management Workshop
Forest Preserve & Conservation Workshop
Supervisor Symposium
Therapeutic Recreation Leadership Summit

VIRTUAL EDUCATION

Skills Development Webinar Series
Section Webinars & Learning Labs
Lunch and Learns

COMING *Stay Tuned* SOON

Skills Development Webinar Series
February-December

CPRE & CPRP Virtual Exam Prep Courses - Series A
February 20 - March 27, 2025

Aquatic Facility Operator Course
March 5-6, 2025

Certified Playground Safety Inspector Course - Spring
March 11-13, 2025



ILipra.org

IT'S TIME TO RENEW

Membership expires December 31



ILipra.org

legal calendar 2025

Prepared by Peter M. Murphy, IAPD President/CEO & Jason A. Anselment, IAPD General Counsel

The following park district calendar includes key dates and duties based upon 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 election dates are based on the Consolidated Primary Election to be held on February 25, 2025, and the Consolidated Election to take place on April 1, 2025. For additional election dates, consult the Tools section of the IAPD website, ILparks.org.

This Legal Calendar was compiled by the Illinois Association of Park Districts as a resource for our members. It is not an exhaustive list of every law that may impact park districts or a substitute for individual legal research. As with any question requiring legal advice, you should contact your park district's attorney. For questions or additional information, you may also contact the IAPD.

All statutory 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 the 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 Illinois 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 the 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. (5 ILCS 140/1.05)

- Review the 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 post a hyperlink on the local government's homepage to allow the public easy access to the contact information. (50 ILCS 205/20)
- 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. (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 requirement that all newly hired employees must be reported to the Illinois Department of Employment Security. (820 ILCS 405/1801.1)
- For persons or entities required to report under the Lobbyist Registration Act, review reporting requirements for expenditures. (25 ILCS 170/6, 170/6.5)
- 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. 775 ILCS 5/2-102(K)
- For IMRF employers with a website, ensure that the district's website contains a hyperlink to the IMRF webpage that includes the statutorily required information pertaining to all participating municipalities (40 ILCS 5/7-135.5)
- Review the requirement that Illinois employers must provide sexual harassment prevention training to all employees at least once a year. (775 ILCS 5/2-109)
- All employers that provide group health insurance coverage to their employees must provide all eligible employees with a written list of covered benefits in a format that easily compares those covered benefits with the essential health insurance benefits that are required of individual health insurance coverage that is regulated by the state. The information must be provided upon hire, annually, and upon request, but the employer may do so by email or by providing the information on a website that an employee is able to regularly access.

- Upon commencement of employment and at least once each year of employment, every employee shall receive a written summary or a complete copy of Section 4.1 of the Public Officer Prohibited Activities Act pertaining to and prohibiting retaliation against whistleblowers. At the same time, the employee shall also receive a copy of the written processes and procedures for reporting improper governmental actions from the applicable auditing official. (50 ILCS 105/4.1)

EVERY SIX MONTHS

Unpublished written minutes of all closed meetings are to be reviewed at least every 6 months, or as soon thereafter as is practicable, taking into account the nature and meeting schedule of the public body, 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 the IAPD database to verify that all information is up to date for your agency.

NOVEMBER 2024

NOVEMBER 12

First day for candidates to file in office of the local election official or board of election commissioners, original nomination papers (must contain original sheets signed by voters and circulators) for nonpartisan candidates in park districts and forest preserves for the Consolidated Election. (10 ILCS 5/10-6(2))

NOTE: Filing is between 141-134 days prior to the Consolidated Election. November 11, 2024, is the 141st day prior to that election, but Veterans' Day is a State Holiday, so November 12, 2024, is the first day of filing.

NOVEMBER 18

Last day for candidates to file in the office of the local election official or board of election commissioners, original nomination papers (must contain original sheets signed by voters and circulators) for nonpartisan candidates for park district boards, forest preserve district boards, and road district, fire protection district, library district and municipal library boards, and school and community college boards for the Consolidated Election. (10 ILCS 5/10-6(2))

NOTE: The office in which petitions for nomination must be filed shall remain open for the receipt of such petitions until 5:00 P.M. on the last day of the filing period. (10 ILCS 5/1-4)

NOVEMBER 25

Last day for filing objections to nomination papers for nonpartisan candidates (whose nomination papers were filed during the period November 12-18, 2024) in the office of the election authority or the local election official with whom the nomination papers were originally filed for the Consolidated Election. (10 ILCS 5/10-8)

NOTE: The objection period consists of five business days. If the office of the election authority or local election official is closed (or open for less than 7 hours) for days that would normally be business days that office must extend the deadline for filing objections in that office.

NOVEMBER 25

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 Consolidated Primary Election. [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. (10 ILCS 5/28-2, 28-6, 28-7)]

NOTE: Petitions to initiate back door referenda must be filed under the deadline specified in the specific statute authorizing the referenda, but in no case later than 92 days prior to the ensuing election.

DECEMBER 2024

DECEMBER 2

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 Consolidated Election. (10 ILCS 5/28-2(g))

DECEMBER 2

Last day to file petitions (must include 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 Consolidated Election. (10 ILCS 5/28-2(b); 70 ILCS 1205/2-3)

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 141-134 days before such election (November 12-18, 2024). (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 the actual hearing (final orders within 7 days of hearing). (10 ILCS 5/28-4)

NOTE: See the specific statute governing the unit of local government to be established for filing procedures. (10 ILCS 5/28-4)

DECEMBER 4

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

NOTE: The objection period is five business days. If the office of the appropriate local election official is open on Friday, November 29, then the deadline to file an objection is Tuesday, December 3, 2024.

DECEMBER 9

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

DECEMBER 9

Last day for county, municipal, school, township, library, and park boards to authorize the placement of advisory referenda on the ballot by resolution for the Consolidated Primary Election. (10 ILCS 5/28-2(c); 55 ILCS 5/2-3002, 5-1005.5; 60 ILCS 1/30-205, 80-80; 65 ILCS 5/3.1-40-60; 70 ILCS 1205/8-30; 75 ILCS 5/4-18; 105 ILCS 5/9-1.5)

DECEMBER 9

Last day to file objections to petitions to create a political subdivision in the appropriate office where the petitions were originally filed (for park districts, circuit court clerk) for the Consolidated Election. (10 ILCS 5/10-8, 28-4; 70 ILCS 1205/2-3)

DECEMBER 19

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 Consolidated Primary Election. (10 ILCS 5/28-5)

DECEMBER 30

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

Consolidated Election. [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. (10 ILCS 5/28-2, 28-6, 28-7)]

NOTE: Petitions to initiate back door referenda must be filed under the deadline specified in the specific statute authorizing the referenda, but in no case later than 92 days prior to the ensuing election.

JANUARY 2025

JANUARY 7

Last day to file objections to petitions for referenda for the submission of questions of public policy (local) for the Consolidated Election. Objections to petitions for local referenda are filed with the same office in which the original petitions were filed. [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.] (10 ILCS 5/10-8, 28-4)

JANUARY 13

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

JANUARY 13

Last day for county, municipal, township, library, school and park boards to authorize placement of advisory referenda on the ballot by resolution for the Consolidated Election. (10 ILCS 5/28-2(c); 55 ILCS 5/2-3002, 5-1005.5; 60 ILCS 1/30-205, 80-80; 65 ILCS 5/3.1-40-60; 70 ILCS 1205/8-30; 75 ILCS 5/4-18; 105 ILCS 5/9-1.5)

JANUARY 16

Regular January board meeting

JANUARY 23

Last day for local election official to certify candidates and the offices they have filed for to the election authority for the Consolidated Election. (10 ILCS 5/10-15)

JANUARY 23

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

JANUARY 23-25

Attend the IAPD/IPRA Annual Conference, Hyatt Regency 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 2025

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 (a), (b) and (c) of Section 4A-101.5 of the Illinois Governmental Ethics Act shall certify to the appropriate county clerk a list of names and addresses of such persons who are required to file statements of economic interest. 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-106.5)

FEBRUARY 18

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 Consolidated Primary Election. Such notice shall be published once in a local, community newspaper having general circulation in the political or governmental subdivision. The notice shall also be given at least ten days before the date of the election by posting 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, or if there is no principal office 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 referendum is being held. (10 ILCS 5/12-5)

FEBRUARY 20

Regular February board meeting

FEBRUARY 25

Consolidated Primary Election

MARCH 2025

MARCH 20

Regular March board meeting

MARCH 24

Last day for the election authority to publish notice of the Consolidated Election. The notice must include the polling hours and the offices for which candidates will be elected. Such notice must also include a list of precinct polling addresses unless these are published separately at least ten (10) days prior to the Consolidated Election. (10 ILCS 5/12-4)

MARCH 24

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 Consolidated Election. Such notice shall be published once in a local, community newspaper having general circulation in the political or governmental subdivision. The notice shall also be given at least ten (10) days before the date of the election by posting 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, or if there is no principal office 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 referendum is being held. (10 ILCS 5/12-5)

APRIL 2025

APRIL 1

Consolidated Election

APRIL 1

Last day by which the county clerk of each county shall notify all persons whose names have been certified to him or her, 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-101.5, requires the following persons to file verified written statements of economic interests: (a) Persons who are elected to office in a unit of local government, and candidates for nomination or election to that office; (b) 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; (c) 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 adopt 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; 5 ILCS 420/4A-101.5)

APRIL 1

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 six days before the employer approves the total compensation package. The employer must also post the total compensation package within six business days after approving their budget for employees with a total compensation package in excess of \$75,000 or more. If the employer maintains a website, it may choose to post a physical copy of this information at the principal office of the employer in lieu of posting the information directly on the website, but the employer must post directions on the website on how to access the information. (5 ILCS 120/7.3)

NOTE 2: Before an IMRF employer increases the earnings of an officer, executive or manager by more than 12 percent, 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 17

Regular April board meeting.

APRIL 22

Last day for the county clerk or board of election commissioners to canvass the election results for the Consolidated Election. (10 ILCS 5/22-17)

APRIL 29-30

Attend the IAPD Legislative Conference in Springfield. The Legislative Reception is held the evening of April 29 with the conference starting the next morning on April 30. April 29 is Parks Day at the Capitol with park district, forest preserve, conservation district and special recreation displays lining the Capitol Rotunda.

MAY 2025

MAY 1

Update IAPD with information pertaining to new commissioners and verify accuracy of other information.

MAY 1

Register newly elected commissioners for IAPD Boot Camps. Commissioners will receive valuable information on the legal requirements of their new positions and will also successfully complete a course on the Open Meetings Act that is required within 90 days after they take their oath of office.

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-106.5)

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; provided, a filer's statement made in reasonable, good faith reliance on the guidance provided by the Illinois Secretary of State pursuant to Section 4A-102 or his or her ethics officer shall not constitute a willful false or incomplete statement. 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 and penalties, and the ineligibility for or forfeiture of office or position for failure to file when the person's late filing of 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

(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 receiving revenues of \$850,000 or more 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 Illinois Comptroller within 180 days 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. 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 2

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

MAY 15

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 2025

JUNE 13

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 15).

JUNE 19

Regular June board meeting.

JULY 2025

JULY 1

Deadline to report to the Department of Human Rights specific information regarding any adverse judgment or administrative ruling, which found sexual harassment or unlawful discrimination in the employee's favor and against an employer during the preceding calendar. (775 ILCS 5/2-108)

JULY 17

Regular July board meeting

AUGUST 2025

AUGUST 21

Regular August board meeting.

SEPTEMBER 2025

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

SEPTEMBER 16-18

Attend the NRPA Congress in Orlando, Florida

SEPTEMBER 18

Regular September board meeting.

OCTOBER 2025

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 16

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 seven days after the hearing. Notice of the hearing must be published not less than seven nor more than 30 days before the hearing. (30 ILCS 352/10, 352/15, 352/25)

OCTOBER 16

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: 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 27

The last day to file annual audit report (or financial report if district received revenue of less than \$850,000) with the Illinois Comptroller and county clerk (within 180 days of close of fiscal year) and make a copy open to public inspection. 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

The last day to publish the 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)

NOVEMBER 2025

NOVEMBER 6

Attend the IAPD Legal Symposium at The Conference Center / Hyatt Lodge (formerly McDonald's University), Oak Brook

NOVEMBER 10

The suggested date to publish the 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. The notice must be published not more than 14 days, nor less than seven days prior to the date of the public hearing. Publication date assumes a hearing date of November 17-21, 2025. If the taxing district has a website that is maintained by the full-time staff of the taxing district, the notice must be posted for a period of not less than 30 consecutive days near the top of the homepage or on a page accessible through a direct link from the homepage. (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 20

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 20

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

DECEMBER 2025

DECEMBER 1

The suggested date to verify that, for real estate acquired in 2025, appropriate applications have been filed to exempt the real estate from real estate taxes. (35 ILCS 200/15-5)

DECEMBER 1

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 5

(If levy ordinance was enacted on November 20, 2025) the last day to publish a 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. If the taxing district has a website that is maintained by the full-time staff of the taxing district, the notice must be posted for a period of not less than 30 consecutive days near the top of the homepage or on a page accessible through a direct link from the homepage. (Notice must be given within 15 days of the date the levy ordinance was enacted.) (35 ILCS 200/18-85)

DECEMBER 18

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

DECEMBER 19

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, 2026.) (35 ILCS 200/15-10)

DECEMBER 19

The suggested day by which bond ordinances should be filed with the county clerk in order to receive extensions of taxes for the payment of principal and interest on general obligation bonds or limited bonds for 2025 taxes collected in 2026. The filing must actually take place prior to March 1, 2026. (30 ILCS 350/16)

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

DECEMBER 30

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 the board president's certificate of compliance with the county clerk. The certification of levy and supplemental or supportive documentation may be submitted electronically pursuant to Public Act 102-0625. (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 a 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.

PlayCORE National Demonstration Site – A Commitment to Community Health and Wellness

By Michele Breakfield, Director of Marketing Cunningham Recreation

In the heart of Palos Hills, Illinois lies a one-of-a-kind outdoor area known as Bennett Park. The creation of Bennett Park stands as a lasting tribute to Mayor Gerald R. Bennett whose vision and commitment have profoundly enriched the surrounding community.

Bennett Park is the only outdoor area, in the United States to have all five GameTime/PlayCore National Demonstration Site™ designations. The NDS program led by PlayCore's CORE (Center for Outreach, Research, Education) is truly an industry differentiator that recognizes communities for turning research into practice. Bennett Park's design features evidence-based research and best practices for the following:

- Inclusive Play
- Youth Physical Activity (PlayON!)
- Adult Outdoor Fitness
- Nature Play
- Playful Pathways

This makes Bennett Park an opportunity for park visitors to pick the type of play that they enjoy most or would like to experience. Whether its children running around on the inclusive playground, or adults using the outdoor fitness area, or walking along a path learning facts about nature, there is something for everyone. See the video, photos and case study by scanning the QR code below.

Inclusive outdoor play and recreation environments are essential to community health and wellness. Research indicates that positive and measurable outcomes occur when evidence-based design best practices are implemented in the built environment. PlayCore's National Demonstration Site program helps communities use this research to build



meaningful outdoor environments. Then help measure their positive effect through data reporting and translation.

Designations like Inclusive Play ensure everyone regardless of age or ability have the opportunity to play. The NDS designations help ensure everyone in the community feels welcome and can actively participate in the outdoor recreation spaces. Inclusive play and fitness spaces not only get more children outdoors but provide opportunities for adults to stay healthy using outdoor fitness equipment, encourage social interaction, intergenerational play, as well as teach both children and adults to be better stewards of nature.

PlayCore National Demonstration Sites represent a commitment to communities and the outdoor spaces within them. The NDS design criteria, especially Inclusive Play, ensure that your community can maximize the value of your investment by implementing best practice



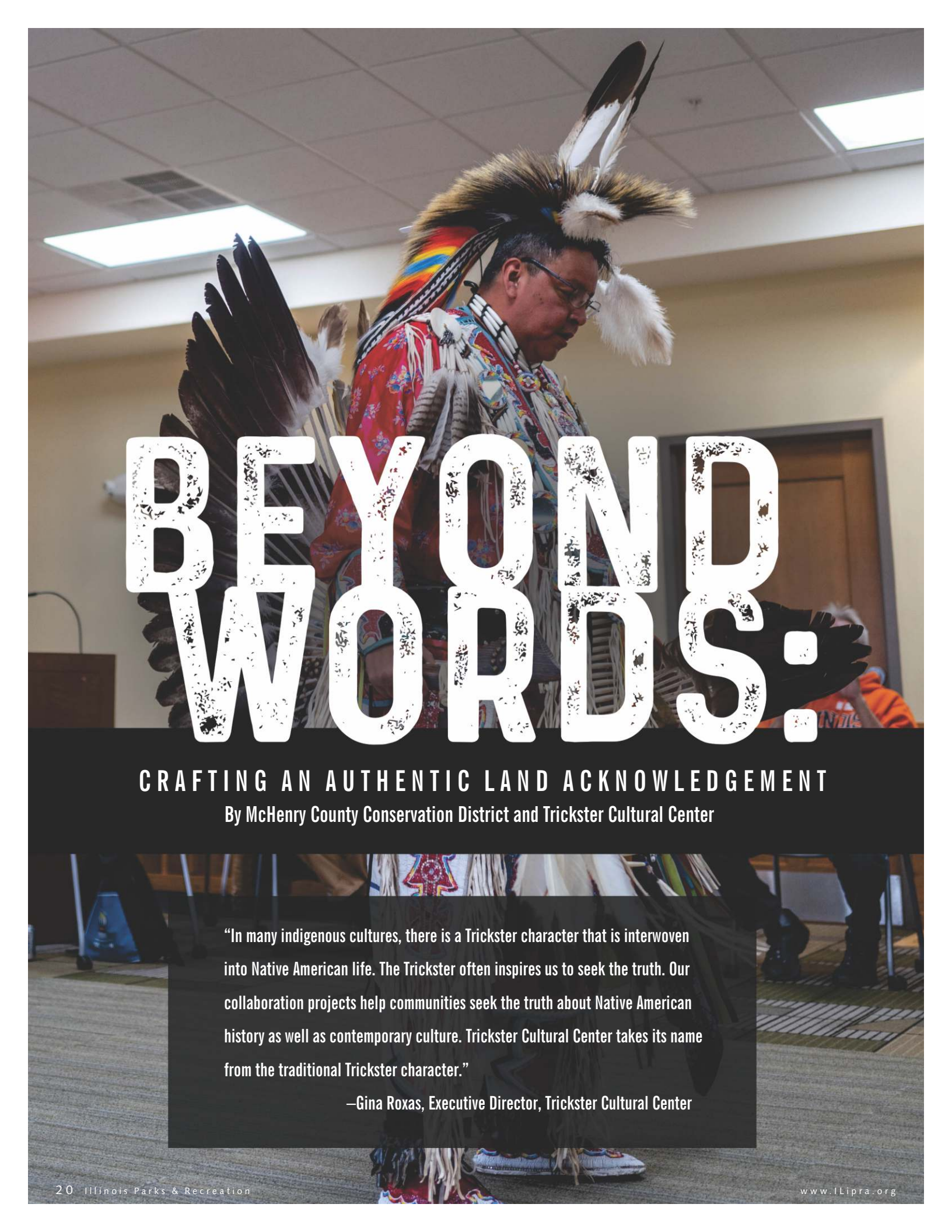
research to activate inclusive play and recreation destinations.

By partnering with Cunningham Recreation, we can design and build a destination play and fitness space based on research for best practices using the PlayCore NDS program. Your park district will receive recognition as a National Demonstration Site, be able to demonstrate impact through data services, and receive site-specific reports to share and showcase the impact on community health and wellness. And best of all, putting research into practice means creating outdoor recreation spaces children and their families can enjoy for years to come.

Another great case study for Inclusive Play using a community's cultural heritage with theme elements is Winterset City Park, a small-town rural community in Winterset, IA. Learn more about how they raised \$1.1 Million in less than 6 months. **Learn more at www.cunninghamrec.com/case-study-winterset-park**



To learn more, scan QR code or visit www.cunninghamrec.com/case-study-bennett-park



BEYOND WORDS:

CRAFTING AN AUTHENTIC LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

By McHenry County Conservation District and Trickster Cultural Center

“In many indigenous cultures, there is a Trickster character that is interwoven into Native American life. The Trickster often inspires us to seek the truth. Our collaboration projects help communities seek the truth about Native American history as well as contemporary culture. Trickster Cultural Center takes its name from the traditional Trickster character.”

—Gina Roxas, Executive Director, Trickster Cultural Center



STEP 1: BEGINNING WITH RESEARCH

It started with a conversation. In 2021, McHenry County Conservation District began considering the development of a land acknowledgement statement – a practice rooted in centuries of Native American tradition. The goal was to honor the histories and lifeways of Indigenous groups, past and present and to recognize their continued cultural connection to the land now under the district's stewardship. A land acknowledgement can also serve to raise awareness about the Indigenous perspectives and experiences and highlight a critical chapter in the land's history.

Through the district's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee, a subcommittee was formed to lead the effort. The team attended webinars, panel discussions and programs hosted by local organizations like the Chicago Wilderness Alliance, Morton Arboretum, American Indian Center and Wild Things. These programs centered on Indigenous voices and emphasized that such statements must be more than performative gestures. Instead, they should establish meaningful connections and relationships with Indigenous communities based on respect and reciprocity.

The research process included gathering information from Native Land Digital, an Indigenous-led nonprofit that identifies historical Native American territories and Indigenous languages spoken in these territories. Through

this research, it was found that McHenry County is the traditional homeland of eight Native American groups, spanning over 400 years. These groups include the Ho-Chunk, Kickapoo, Lakota Dakota, Mascouten, Miami, Peoria, Potawatomi, Sauk and Meskwaki.

STEP 2: BUILDING A FOUNDATION WITH HONESTY AND RECIPROCITY

The next step involved reaching out to tribal governments, historical preservation officers, and other Indigenous representatives and scholars to request consultation. While many initial calls and emails went unanswered, the team remembered the guidance they had received: avoid empty gestures and create meaningful, reciprocal relationships. "With those key ideas in mind, we reached out to Trickster Cultural Center," says Brenna Ness, Working Lands Ecologist for McHenry County Conservation District.

In the initial request to meet, the district was transparent about their intention to develop a land acknowledgement statement and that they were seeking help and support in the process. However, this approach was different—it included an offer to explore what the district could provide in return to benefit the local Native American community in collaboration with Trickster Cultural Center. This mutually beneficial proposal led to a meeting with Trickster Cultural Center's Executive Director Gina Roxas. During the discussion, Roxas shared the importance of bison to her community, as well as challenges like the lack of access to



land and native plants in the Chicago region. From this initial meeting, a strong foundation was built for the creation of an authentic relationship emerged between the District and Trickster Cultural Center, based on shared knowledge and resources.

STEP 3: GROWING MEANINGFUL AND MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL RELATIONSHIPS

Over the last two years, the district and Trickster Cultural Center have partnered on numerous programs and initiatives. Together, they began hosting Indigenous Outreach programming, compensating Indigenous partners for sharing their stories, knowledge and cultural practices with the community. Programs such as “Indigenous Perspectives on Stewardship;” “Indigenous Storytelling and Hike,” “Welcome Winter Solstice,” and sharing of drumming, singing and dancing at a “Weekend of Restoration” event provided opportunities for public learning, engagement and cultural exchange.

In considering Indigenous community needs, the partnership also initiated a Bison Observation Study. In 2021, the district began a bison grazing project, where land is leased to a bison operation (Ruhter Bison LLC), and these large native grazers have improved soil health and

plant diversity while creating habitat for grassland birds. Indigenous community members now visit to observe the herd once each season, reconnecting with nature and a species of deep spiritual and cultural significance.

Providing access to native plants and other material used in native traditions and customs was another way the district could give back. The district began hosting Trickster Cultural Center and other Indigenous groups for plant and seed harvesting. Half of the time was spent collecting items for the Indigenous community members' personal use, and the other half was spent harvesting seed for the district's restoration efforts. Harvesting from district sites for personal use is not permitted due to overuse and potential poaching, so these were special circumstances and supervised by district ecologists. Items were collected that hold medicinal, food, or other cultural value to native people. For instance, basswood was harvested and then used by Trickster Cultural Center to teach Indigenous youth how to make cordage.

In addition to these programs, the district and Trickster partnered with the Chicago Wilderness Alliance to plan and co-host a Native-led Climate Summit. This unprecedented event, to be held in January 2025, seeks to center

Indigenous perspectives, voices and stories to understand the issue of climate impacting urban Indigenous communities in the Chicago Region. The goal is to work collaboratively to explore ways native and non-native organizations and communities can work collaboratively to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

STEP 4: CRAFTING A STATEMENT WITH THE SUPPORT OF A COMMUNITY

While these new relationships were developing, the district simultaneously began drafting a land acknowledgement statement. The statement, along with accompanying documents, included recommendations for its use, pronunciation guides, reference maps, as well as historical and educational resources.

With the support and connections of Trickster, the district was able to form relationships with other Indigenous community members, tribal nations, native-serving organizations and scholars and received feedback from six different consultants who reviewed drafts of the statement and provided feedback. District staff were also invited to offer suggestions, making the document a product of

collective input. The result is a living document, one that can evolve as relationships with Indigenous communities deepen and more insights are shared. “It can, and likely will change over time, Ness reflects, “as the district continues to receive feedback from tribal representatives and community members.”

MCHENRY COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT'S LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT:

To many Indigenous groups and Tribal Nations, including the Ho-Chunk, Kickapoo, Lakota Dakota, Mascouten, Miami, Peoria, Potawatomi, Sauk and Meskwaki, McHenry County is part of their traditional homeland. We invite you to join us in offering respect to the Indigenous peoples living here today, and their ancestors' stewardship of the land. Together, we celebrate these special places, seek to learn and honor the history of those who came before us, and strive to forge meaningful relationships with Indigenous communities to deepen our collective connection to the land.

Pilot Rock[®]

PARK • STREET • CAMP
SITE PRODUCTS

Across our different product lines we offer
hundreds of choices in style, size,
features, materials and colors.

Commercial quality products able to
withstand years of use and exposure.

Made in the USA since 1959.

RJ Thomas Mfg. Co., Inc.
Cherokee, Iowa
800-762-5002
www.pilotrock.com
customerservice@rjthomas.com



ACHIEVING DISABILITY INCLUSION FOR PARK DISTRICTS: More Than Ramps and Elevators

By Samyuktha Neeraja, MPH, CAE

Growing up with dwarfism, I've encountered many challenges when it comes to navigating public places. While park districts are designed to bring people together through recreation and shared spaces, they can either be fully inclusive or unintentionally exclusive. Disability inclusion and accessibility are topics that are at the top of my mind, and over time, I've realized that making spaces truly accessible means going beyond ramps and elevators; it requires a deep commitment to understanding the diverse needs of every individual in the community.



Ensuring people of all body types, sizes, heights, and mobility levels can comfortably access park district facilities is key.

In this article, I share insights on prioritizing disability inclusion, current trends, and how park districts can create safe and fun environments that serve everyone.

Defining Disability Inclusion in Park Districts

Disability inclusion is multifaceted and touches on various aspects of accessibility. As someone who has experienced the limitations of non-inclusive spaces, I know firsthand that it's not just about mobility. Here are some major areas to implement:

- 1. Physical Accessibility:** Many park districts provide wheelchair ramps and elevators, but it is possible that other essential aspects can be overlooked. For example, as someone with dwarfism, I often find public amenities such as the front desk/reception area and restroom sinks hard to reach. Ensuring people of all body types, sizes, heights, and mobility levels can comfortably access park district facilities is key.
- 2. Sensory Accessibility:** In my DEIA+ advocacy work, I've noticed an increasing awareness of the importance of sensory-friendly spaces. This aspect benefits autistic individuals and people with sensory sensitivities, who may feel overwhelmed in crowded, loud environments. Parks can include quiet spaces or sensory gardens, for instance.
- 3. Tactile Accessibility:** Park districts can enhance accessibility for individuals who are blind or have low vision by installing tactile paving, offering tactile maps, and incorporating Braille and raised lettering on signs. Additionally, sensory-rich features like textured surfaces in gardens as mentioned above or in playgrounds can create a more inclusive environment.
- 4. Cognitive and Developmental Support:** Individuals with developmental disabilities benefit from adaptive programming that accommodates their learning styles and needs. Offering customized classes and sports programs will ensure full participation, instead of leaving them to watch on the sidelines.

Now, organizations, including park districts, are being called upon to reconsider how they approach accessibility, not just to meet compliance standards set by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), but to create spaces where all people can fully participate.



5. Communication Accessibility: For those who are deaf or hard of hearing, public announcements, instructions, or even social programs can feel inaccessible. Including visual aids or assistive technologies, such as closed captioning or sign language interpreters, ensures these individuals feel included.

6. Inclusive Programming: I've seen the impact of adaptive sports and inclusive events, not only for those with disabilities but also for families who want to participate together. These programs ensure that activities like swimming, soccer, and art workshops are accessible to all members of the community.

These are only some examples, and each demonstrates the need for achieving accessibility in these spaces. If a park district does not address the diverse needs of the community, then they unintentionally shut out significant portions of the community.

Has Discussion Around Disability Inclusion Been Rising Recently?

Based on my personal experience, it's clear that the conversation around disability inclusion is gaining traction. Previously, DEI efforts focused primarily on race, gender, and sexual orientation, but disability was often an afterthought.

Now, organizations, including park districts, are being called upon to reconsider how they approach accessibility, not just to meet compliance standards set by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), but to create spaces where all people can fully participate. Grassroots advocacy led by the disability community, as well as broader initiatives to add accessibility as a key component to DEI, have been driving these changes.

True disability inclusion doesn't happen overnight; it's an ongoing process that takes effort and collective commitment. It pleases me to see the acknowledgment that the disability community is a core aspect of achieving community equity.

Steps Park Districts Can Take to Ensure Full Inclusivity

If a park district is starting or reassessing its journey toward disability inclusion, here are some steps they can take:

- 1. Conduct Accessibility Audits:** Accessibility audits or assessments are crucial. These audits should cover more than just meeting ADA compliance standards; consider expanding your lens that take various disabilities into account, like those impacting height, dexterity, or sensory processing.

2. Community Engagement: I often speak about the power of lived experiences in my DEIA+ work. Engaging directly with individuals with disabilities and their families is essential for understanding real needs. Focus groups or one-on-one consultations can provide insights that you won't find in design manuals.

3. Staff Training: Inclusivity starts with knowledge. In my personal and professional experience, I know how much of a difference it makes when staff are properly trained in disability awareness. It's not just about knowing the law and checking boxes—it creates a sense of belonging and fosters empathy.

4. Inclusive Program Design: Adaptive programs can serve as a lifeline to individuals with disabilities. When I was younger, finding spaces where I could comfortably and confidently participate in activities was difficult. Park districts that design with disabled people in mind give us a sense of value and opportunity.

5. Partnerships with Disability Organizations: Partnering with disability rights organizations and advocacy groups is a terrific way to ensure your efforts are informed and sustained.

In my DEIA+ work, I've learned that certain groups are often left out of the conversation on disability inclusion:

- **Individuals with non-apparent disabilities:** People with chronic illnesses or mental health conditions are often overlooked and still face challenges in participating fully in public spaces.
- **Neurodivergent Individuals:** People with ADHD, autism, or other neuro-developmental disorders often benefit from customized approaches that aren't always offered in standard programs.
- **Older Adults:** Aging brings its own set of challenges, and older adults with mobility or sensory needs often need the same types of accommodation as younger individuals with disabilities. Designing parks and programs with this in mind creates environments that support both older adults and the broader disability community.

Overlooked Segments of the Population

izone
Imaging

SIGN SOLUTIONS
HPL PANELS + HARDWARE MOUNTS



Wayfinding | Interpretive Displays | Park Signage

888-464-9663 | izoneimaging.com

By ensuring that park districts address all areas of accessibility, we can create public spaces where everyone can belong.



Recent Inclusive Measures in Park Districts

From my observations, some park districts are leading the way with innovative inclusive measures, such as **inclusive playgrounds**. It brings joy to families when their children of all differences and abilities can play together.

Additionally, **adaptive sports programs** are becoming more mainstream. These programs make such a difference for individuals who may not have access to traditional sports. The Paralympics is an excellent example of highlighting adaptive sports, such as wheelchair basketball and swimming, as these sports accommodate different types of disabilities. Park districts can adopt similar approaches to make their recreational offerings more inclusive.

Another development is the rise of **sensory gardens**. These tranquil spaces are designed to cater to individuals with sensory needs and offer a reprieve from overstimulation. Incorporating nature in a way that's accessible to all can foster deep connections between individuals and their environment.



Recommended Resources for Park Districts

For those park districts wanting to take the next step in disability inclusion, here are a few recommended resources:

- **National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA):** This organization offers comprehensive guidelines for building inclusive park programs and designing accessible spaces.
- **ADA National Network:** A go-to resource for understanding and applying ADA guidelines, ensuring park facilities are compliant and truly accessible.
- **The Arc:** This organization supports individuals with developmental disabilities and offers resources to help public spaces become more inclusive.

For me, advocating for disability inclusion is not just professional—it's personal. It's also upholding our rights as human beings. By ensuring that park districts address all areas of accessibility, we can create public spaces where everyone can belong. The progress is encouraging, and there's still work to be done.



Samyuktha Neeraja, MPH, CAE, lives in the Chicago area and has been working in the association management industry for almost 9 years. Her current position is the State Association Relations Manager at the American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology. In this role, Samyuktha provides consulting services to state associations and assists them with their governance, leadership, and infrastructure-related needs.

Samyuktha is a disability advocate and steward of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. She has given various speaking engagements sharing her experiences as a South Asian woman with dwarfism and how organizations can better support people with disabilities. In addition, Samyuktha co-hosts the “A Little Perspective” podcast, which is a platform for lifting up voices from marginalized groups, co-authored the best-selling anthology, “A Little Perspective: Real Stories of Little Ladies, and is a member of the Association Forum’s Welcoming Environment Committee. Samyuktha also currently serves as Immediate Past President of Benedictine University’s Alumni Association Board of Directors and is a senior advisory group member for L.E.A.D.S, the University’s leadership program for undergraduate students.

Outside of her leadership and advocacy efforts, Samyuktha is a recipient of the 2023 Rising Star Alumni Award from Benedictine University, the Association Forum Forty Under 40 Award in 2021, and is an ASAE Diversity Executive Leadership Program (DELP) Scholar for the Class of 2023-2025.

Chicagoland’s largest supplier of certified playground mulch



MULCH • SOIL • COMPOST • AGGREGATES

Buy direct from the manufacturer

MULCHCENTER.COM
847-459-7200

PICKUP • DELIVERY • INSTALLATION

DEI(B)

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion =

BELONGING

We are all familiar, to some degree, with DEI and the terms diversity, equity, and inclusion. Diversity refers to the variety of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives among individuals. Equity focuses on fairness and ensuring everyone has equal opportunities and access. Inclusion means creating an environment where all people feel valued and respected. The whole purpose of DEI is to solidify that everyone belongs.

According to Cornell University, the definition of belonging is “the feeling of security and support when there is a sense of acceptance, inclusion, and identity for a member of a certain group.” “Belonging is defined as a unique and subjective experience that relates to a yearning for connection to others” as described by Psychologist Carl Rogers. Simply stated the “B” was added to the DEI acronym to identify the social and emotional aspects of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Belonging is about the experience that the individual feels. It is their connection to individuals, groups, teams, agencies, and to the community as a whole.

To truly understand this concept of belonging, we must first understand that belonging is not a “one size fits all” experience. Just like there is no simple check list or cookie cutter steps to follow when implementing DEI initiatives or starting on your own DEI journey. Belonging is often based on the contexts in which people experience connection and inclusion and identified in various ways. There are several types of belonging. Here are five various types of belonging:

1. **Social Belonging** - the feeling of being part of a group, having relationships, and being accepted by others. It is a sense of being valued and included.

2. **Cultural Belonging** - a sense of connection with a particular culture, including shared values, customs, traditions, and language. It can provide individuals with a sense of identity and pride.

3. **Community/Geographic Belonging** - a sense of being part of a specific geographic or interest-based community. People can experience belonging to a place, whether it's a hometown, city, or country. This type of belonging often involves a deep connection to the land, culture, and people in that specific location. Interest-based community belonging can refer to affinity groups and specific interests.



Belonging is key to accomplishing an inclusive environment, it encourages individuals to be authentic and true to themselves.



4. Organizational Belonging - is the feeling of being included, valued, and connected within an organization or workplace and within the agency's goals, values, and culture.

5. Interpersonal Belonging - is a deep sense of connection one feels with individuals and mentors and within relationships and friendships built on trust, empathy, and mutual support.

The types of belonging noted are based on general psychological and sociological theories of belonging, but are not pulled directly from any specific references or sources. These types of belonging are derived from well-known frameworks in social science, identity theory, and community studies.

Each type of belonging contributes to a person's sense of identity and well-being and may often overlap and influence one another. As noted by Vocabulary.com, "*Belonging* is a sense of fitting in or feeling like you are an important member of a group." Belonging is the ingredient that makes DEI happen! Verna Myers stated, being expected to be in the room, reflected in the room, and respected by others in the room leads to a sense of belonging. Belonging is key to accomplishing an inclusive environment, it encourages individuals to be authentic and true to themselves. Being your authentic self means showing up as who you are, without feeling as if you need to conform to others or suppress any part of your identity that makes up who you are.

As we think about all the ingredients and steps that create an inclusive environment, we must also consider the factors that can prevent someone from feeling that sense of belonging, which could ultimately prevent them from feeling welcomed and included.

1. DISCRIMINATION/ LACK OF REPRESENTATION

- Remember the "isms" and phobias such as racism, sexism, ableism, ageism, and homophobia and how they can make individuals feel unwelcome or unsafe in certain environments. Experiencing or anticipating judgment based on identity can suppress one's ability to feel welcomed and included.
- In spaces where there is little to no representation of one's race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, or other facets of identity, people may feel they don't belong or that they need to adapt to fit in.

2. CULTURAL/SOCIAL NORMS

- Societal or cultural pressures to conform to particular norms (e.g., gender roles, body image, behavior expectations) can force people to hide parts of themselves to fit in. Individuals may feel they need to conform to what they feel society, the community, the group expects rather than bringing their own sense of identity and diversity to the table.

- Pressure from family, friends, or society to follow specific paths (career, lifestyle, religion) that conflict with personal desires or identities can force individuals to hide parts of themselves to meet others' expectations.

3. FEAR/TOXIC ENVIRONMENTS

- Fear of being judged, ostracized, or rejected by peers, family, or community can push people to suppress their true identity, leading them to behave in ways that don't align with their authentic selves. This type of suppression can lead to anxiety, depression, and loneliness causing individuals to withdrawal rather than join and contribute.
- Hostile or unhealthy environments, such as workplaces, schools, or communities, can make it hard for individuals to feel safe being themselves. Bullying, harassment, intimidation and gaslighting are common in such environments.

4. TRAUMA/NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES

- People may internalize negative messages from society about their identities, leading to imposter syndrome, self-criticism, or feeling "not enough" (e.g., "not Black enough," "not feminine enough"). This can block someone from living authentically.

In conclusion, the concept of belonging is central to our sense of identity and well-being. It is not just about being physically present, but about feeling accepted and valued for who we truly are. However, societal pressures, unconscious biases, and exclusionary practices can create environments where individuals feel they must hide or alter parts of themselves to fit in. This not only undermines authenticity but also diminishes the richness of diversity that should be celebrated. To foster true inclusion, we must cultivate spaces where everyone feels free to show up as their authentic selves, where differences are seen as strengths, and where every voice is heard and valued. Only then can we create a culture of belonging that empowers individuals to thrive, contribute, and feel genuinely connected to one another.

By **Tracey Crawford**, CTRS, CPRP, Executive Director, Northwest Special Recreation Association & **Oralethea Davenport** MS, CPRP, Irwin Community Center Manager, Homewood-Flossmoor Park District

REFERENCES/SUPPORT DOCUMENTS

Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1995). *The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation*. *Psychological Bulletin*

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1986). *The social identity theory of intergroup behavior*. In S. Worchel & W. G. Austin (Eds.), *Psychology of intergroup relations*

Rogers, C. R. (1961). *On becoming a person: A therapist's view of psychotherapy*.

Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life*.

Crenshaw, K. (1989). *Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A Black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory, and antiracist politics*. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 1989(1),

Sue, D. W., Capodilupo, C. M., & Holder, A. M. B. (2008). *Racial microaggressions in the life experience of Black Americans*. *Professional Psychology*

Hooks, B. (2000). *Feminist theory: From margin to center*. Pluto Press.

Ahmed, S. (2012). *On being included: Racism and diversity in institutional life*. Duke University Press.

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Discrimination: What it is, and how to cope*.

Brown, B. (2012). *Daring greatly: How the courage to be vulnerable transforms the way we live, love, parent, and lead*.

Geoffrey L. Cohen's 2022 book, Belonging: The Science of Creating Connection and Bridging Divides.

Financial Incentives Available Now!

Ameren ILLINOIS
ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAM

Thousands of dollars in financial incentives are being awarded to communities just like yours to assist in energy-efficient upgrades!

Eligible projects include:

- Parks
- City structures
- Ballfields and outdoor sporting areas
- Community buildings
- Bike and walking trails
- And more...

Request your **FREE** Energy Consultation or visit AmerenIllinoisSavings.com/Gov to learn how other communities are using these incentives to save energy and improve safety and comfort.

SCAN HERE

THE BEST OF THE
Best
 AWARDS GALA

ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF PARK DISTRICTS

2024
**BEST OF THE BEST
 AWARDS GALA**

ILLINOIS PARKS' TOP JOURNALIST

Naperville Park District for Naperville Community Television (NCTV17)

BEST FRIEND OF ILLINOIS PARKS – SMALL BUSINESS

Arlington Heights Park District for Jen Ortman of The Ortman Group with Berkshire Hathaway Stark and Ian Beamer with Guaranteed Rate
 Bloomingdale Park District for Highlander Improvement Company

BEST FRIEND OF ILLINOIS PARKS – MID-SIZED BUSINESS

Plainfield Park District for NuMark Credit Union
 Waukegan Park District for Grand Appliance

BEST FRIEND OF ILLINOIS PARKS – LARGE BUSINESS

Lake County Forest Preserves for Wintrust
 Vernon Hills Park District for Rust-Oleum Corporation

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

Arlington Heights Park District with the Arlington Heights Memorial Library
 Cary Park District with the Cary Area Public Library
 Hoffman Estates Park District with Hoffman Estates School District No. 54
 Wilmette Park District with the Village of Wilmette
 Winnetka Park District with the Village of Winnetka

PARTNERSHIP

Bloomington Park District with the Bloomington Garden Club
 McHenry County Conservation District with Ruhter Bison
 Urbana Park District with the Urbana Parks Foundation
 Wheaton Park District with the Wesley Luehring Foundation

ARTS IN THE PARK

Decatur Park District
 Lake County Forest Preserves
 St. Charles Park District
 Urbana Park District

BEST GREEN PRACTICES

Glen Ellyn Park District
 Northbrook Park District
 Park District of Oak Park

GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP

Waukegan Park District for Coach Kenny Jones
 Woodridge Park District for Josh Williams "Coach Bubba"

OUTSTANDING CITIZEN VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Bloomington Park District for Rick Tayfel
 Champaign Park District for Carol Cope
 Dundee Township Park District for Jerry Christopherson
 Hoffman Estates Park District for Stephanie Felber
 Northbrook Park District for Mady Fern

**Board Member Service
 Anniversaries**

15 Years of Service

Julia Nephew
 Glen Ellyn Park District

Jim Goshorn
 Gurnee Park District

Michael Schyman
 Northbrook Park District

Bruce Robbins
 Vernon Hills Park District

Susan Stein
 Wheeling Park District

20 Years of Service

Mike Kenyon
 Forest Preserve District of
 Kane County

23 Years of Service

Brenda Gramann
 Carol Stream Park District

Brian Sokolowski
 Carol Stream Park District

25 Years of Service

Gail Towers
 Dolton Park District

Frank Scarpelli
 Dundee Township Park District

Thomas Barz
 Frankfort Park District

Mary Ann Chambers
 Northbrook Park District

Robert Thomson
 St. Charles Park District

40 Years of Service

Jack Mahoney
 Woodridge Park District

Agency Anniversaries

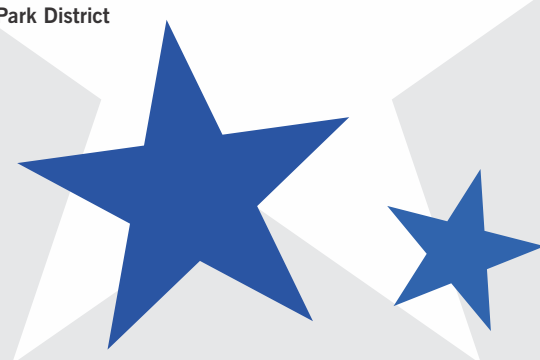
50 Years
 Northwest Special Recreation
 Association
 Round Lake Area Park District

100 Years
 Decatur Park District

105 Years
 Kewanee Park District

110 Years
 Park Ridge Park District

120 Years
 Winnetka Park District



PEOPLE & PLACES



Bloomington Park District Announces The New Director of Recreation

The Bloomington Park District announced the appointment of **Chris Tompkins** as the new director of recreation, succeeding Sandy Vangundy, who is retiring after nearly 30 years of dedicated service in the position. Chris began in his new role on September 23.

Chris brings a wealth of experience from his time as recreation & facility manager, where he demonstrated strong leadership and organizational skills, managing a wide range of recreation programs and facilities. His responsibilities included overseeing the daily operations of the Johnston Recreation Center, Westfield Gym, and Oasis Water Park. He supervised the cleaning company, assisted with facilities security, created staff and facility schedules, and coordinated park and facility rentals.



Byron Forest Preserve Announces Retirement of Administrative Services Coordinator after 35 years of Service

Michelle Gerke, CPRP, had her official last day at the Byron Forest Preserve District in Byron on September 18, 2024. Michelle began her journey with the forest preserve in 1987 as a contractual employee after graduating high school and for 3.5 decades was

able to serve her community through her work and dedication to the mission of the preserve.

During her time there she obtained her Certified Park and Recreation Professional Certification and served as president of the Northwest Illinois Association of Parks and Recreation. Michelle dedicated her time to this organization by networking and sharing upcoming events and programs to promote all the great things that were happening in the district. She took an active role in shaping the future of the district and what it is today.



Vernon Hills Park District Gets New Executive Director

Matthew LaPorte returns to Vernon Hills Park District as the agency's next executive director. Matt's career in parks and recreation includes over 20 years of experience,

having worked in several parks and recreation agencies, both locally and outside of Illinois. Most recently, Matt served as recreation director for the Village of Libertyville and superintendent of recreation for the Mundelein Park and Recreation District.

Matt's interest in parks and recreation began during his undergraduate years at the University of New Hampshire, when he studied recreation management. As a student, he began working as a recreation program aide for a local New Hampshire parks and recreation department and fulfilled various volunteering roles working with people with disabilities at several non-profit organizations. After graduating, Matt began his recreation career at the YMCA of Greater Boston as a sports director. Matt furthered his experience by working in parks and recreation in Colorado for eight years where he worked in programming, facility management and special events coordination. Matt and his family moved to Illinois in 2012, and he began working for Vernon Hills Park District. Matt was the first facility manager of Lakeview Fitness Center. He served in the position from 2012-2015, where he guided the facility through its transition from the Central Lake YMCA to the thriving Vernon Hills Park District fitness facility. These life and career experiences have cultivated his leadership skills and diversified his experience. Matt's familiarity with the park district, the community and the surround villages, has prepared him for the challenge of leading the agency.

PEOPLE & PLACES



Bloomingdale Park District Announces The Retirement of Board Commissioner Sebastian "Buzz" Puccio

The Bloomingdale Park District announced the retirement of Board Commissioner **Buzz Puccio**,

an influential leader who has volunteered to serve our community with dedication and commitment for nearly 30 years.

Buzz Puccio's journey in public service began 47 years ago in 1977 and has spanned over four decades, with significant contributions to both the Bloomingdale Park District and the Village of Bloomingdale. His name is synonymous with leadership and service, embodying the spirit of dedication helping to shape our community.

Buzz's remarkable career includes nearly 30 years of service on the Bloomingdale Park District Board of Commissioners, where he has been a guiding force in advancing the district's mission and vision. Serving as the President of the park district from 2009-2019, Buzz led with a vision for a vibrant, inclusive, and dynamic community. His leadership has been instrumental in securing grants for park development, overseeing major renovations, enhancing accessibility, and fostering partnerships with local organizations. In 2018, Buzz received the prestigious IAPD Commissioner of the Year award.

One of Buzz's most notable achievements was leading the successful passage of a \$9.9 million referendum in 2016, the first in 50 years, which provided critical funding for repairs, maintenance, and improvements to park district properties.

Buzz has been recognized as an IAPD "Living Legend" and has presented at the IPRA Leadership Academy, sharing his expertise and passion for community service with others. Under his leadership, the Bloomingdale Park District won the prestigious National Gold Medal Award in 2006, a testament to his vision and dedication.



Executive Director of Vernon Hills Park District Retires

Jeff Fougousse, executive director of Vernon Hills Park District, is retiring in October 2024 after 15 years of impactful leadership. Joining the district in 2009, Jeff's tenure is marked by significant accomplishments and a strong commitment to the community. His

leadership earned him the Illinois Association of Park Districts' Honored Professional of the Year in 2022.

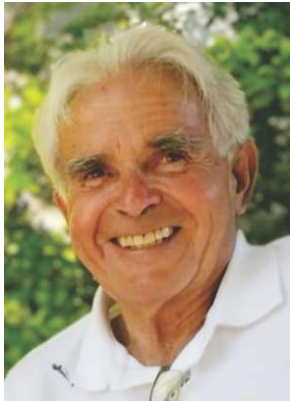
Jeff was instrumental in securing over \$10 million in grants and alternate revenue, and led key initiatives such as the acquisition of Lakeview Fitness, the Century Park South property, and the completion of several capital improvements, including the Park Maintenance Facility, Sullivan Community Center renovations, and Turtle Creek Waterpark enhancements including a 10,000 square foot sprayground.

Known for his compassionate leadership, Jeff built strong relationships with constituents, peers, and public officials, fostering partnerships with local organizations, schools, and community groups. He played a vital role in securing partnerships with the local school districts for the district's PALS Before and After School Program and the Turtles Swim Team, while also serving on various community and professional boards, including the Special Recreation of Central Lake County Board and Illinois Park and Recreation Association' Board Chairman.

Under Jeff's leadership, the district received numerous awards, including the National Recreation & Park Association's (NRPA) Gold Medal for Excellence Award in 2021 and three-time Distinguished Accreditation from the Illinois Association of Park Districts. His commitment to fiscal responsibility led to 14 consecutive Government Finance Officers Awards of Excellence. The Family Scholarship Program, benefiting over 400 families, reflects his dedication to community service.

Jeff's influence extends beyond the district, mentoring countless professionals in the parks and recreation field. His legacy as a respected and engaged leader will be deeply missed by his team and the entire community.

IN MEMORIAM



Morgan Powell

IAPD's board of trustees and membership would like to extend our condolences to the family of Morgan Powell, who passed away on Sept. 30, 2024.

Morgan served as a commissioner and president of both the Champaign Park District and president of the Illinois Association of Park

Districts' Board of Trustees in 1982. He believed that every resident should have a park nearby where neighbors and kids could play and connect with the world around them. Powell Park in west Champaign is named in his honor for his three decades of volunteerism and leadership.

Morgan was known for being generous, thoughtful and kind. He never passed up an opportunity to give to or help others, whether it be calling in a favor for a friend or giving a child free braces. He credited himself as fortunate, always being in the right place at the right time.



George Longmeyer

IAPD's board of trustees and membership would like to extend our condolences to the family of George Longmeyer, who passed away on October 30, 2024.

George served as president of the Illinois Association of Park Districts' Board of Trustees in 2010. He was

elected to the Schaumburg Park District in 2001 where he served until retired from government in 2021. During his time on the park district board he helped bring a number of projects to fruition including a new sports center, the Kay Wojcik Conservation Area, Atcher Island Water Park, Bison's Bluff Nature Playground, and the renovation of the Schaumburg Golf Club. Upon his retirement from public service in 2021, a lake at the Schaumburg Golf Club was named after him - Lake Longmeyer, that is home to many sleeves of golf balls, a few too many put there by George while playing every weekend with his standing foursome.

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, 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 wutterback@ILparks.org. Jpegs should be 300 dpi at about 2 inches tall.

Did you know that IP&R Magazine has a Digital Edition?

Read archived issues spanning more than a decade!



UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE® (All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications)

1. Publication Title: Illinois Parks & Recreation

2. Publication Number: 0019-2155

3. Filing Date: 11/15/2024

4. Issue Frequency: bi-monthly

5. Number of Issues Published Annually: 6

6. Annual Subscription Price: \$35.00

7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication (Not printer) (Street, city, county, state, and ZIP+4®): 211 E. Monroe, Springfield, IL 62701

Contact Person: Alan Howard
Telephone (include area code): (217) 970-7317

8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher (Not printer): 211 E. Monroe, Springfield, IL 62701

9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor (Do not leave blank)

Publisher (Name and complete mailing address): Illinois Association of Park Districts, 211 E. Monroe, Springfield, IL 62701

Editor (Name and complete mailing address): Wayne Utterback, IAPD, 211 E. Monroe, Springfield, IL 62701

Managing Editor (Name and complete mailing address): Peter Murphy, IAPD, 211 E. Monroe, Springfield, IL 62701

10. Owner (Do not leave blank. If the publication is owned by a corporation, give the name and address of the corporation immediately followed by the names and addresses of all stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, give the names and addresses of the individual owners. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, give its name and address as well as those of each individual owner. If the publication is published by a nonprofit organization, give its name and address.)

Full Name: Illinois Association of Park Districts
Complete Mailing Address: 211 E. Monroe, Springfield, IL 62701

11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities. If none, check box None

Full Name: _____
Complete Mailing Address: _____

12. Tax Status (For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at nonprofit rates) (Check one)
 The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes.
 Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months
 Has Changed During Preceding 12 Months (Publisher must submit explanation of change with this statement)

PS Form 3526, July 2014 (Page 1 of 4 (see instructions page 4)) PSN: 7530-01-000-9931 PRIVACY NOTICE: See our privacy policy on www.usps.com

13. Publication Title: _____

14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: _____

15. Extent and Nature of Circulation

		Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run)			
b. Paid Circulation (By Mail and Outside the Mail)	(1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	5222	5221
	(2) Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	0	0
	(3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS®	0	0
	(4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail®)	0	0
c. Total Paid Distribution (Sum of 15b (1), (2), (3), and (4))		5222	5221
d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (By Mail and Outside the Mail)	(1) Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County Copies included on PS Form 3541	241	241
	(2) Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies included on PS Form 3541	0	0
	(3) Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail)	0	0
	(4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means)	0	0
e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 15d (1), (2), (3) and (4))		241	241
f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and 15e)		5463	5462
g. Copies not Distributed (See Instructions to Publishers #4 (page #3))		38	38
h. Total (Sum of 15f and g)		5501	5500
i. Percent Paid (15c divided by 15f times 100)		96	96

* If you are claiming electronic copies, go to line 16 on page 3. If you are not claiming electronic copies, skip to line 17 on page 3.

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE® (All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications)

16. Electronic Copy Circulation

		Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Paid Electronic Copies			
b. Total Paid Print Copies (Line 15c) + Paid Electronic Copies (Line 16a)		5222	5221
c. Total Print Distribution (Line 15f) + Paid Electronic Copies (Line 16a)		5463	5462
d. Percent Paid (Both Print & Electronic Copies) (16b divided by 16c x 100)		96	96

I certify that 50% of all my distributed copies (electronic and print) are paid above a nominal price.

17. Publication of Statement of Ownership
 If the publication is a general publication, publication of this statement is required. Will be printed in the 12/1/24 issue of this publication. Publication not required.

18. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner: Alan J. Howard, Director of Finance and Human Resources
 Date: 11/15/2024

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

ACCOUNTANTS

Lauterbach & Amen, LLP
 Ron Amen
 ramen@lauterbachamen.com
 668 N. River Rd.
 Naperville, IL 60563
 www.lauterbachamen.com
 630-393-1483

Sikich LLP
 Anthony Cervini
 anthony.cervini@sikich.com
 1415 W Diehl Rd., Suite 400
 Naperville, IL 60563
 www.sikich.com
 630-566-8574

AQUATICS

Halogen Supply Company, Inc.
 Rich Hellgeth
 rhellgeth@halogensupply.com
 4653 W. Lawrence Ave.
 Chicago, IL 60630-2532
 www.halogensupply.com
 773-286-6300

Spear Corporation
 Sam Blake
 sblake@spearcorp.com
 12966 N. County Rd., 50 W
 Roachdale, IN 46172
 www.spearcorp.com
 765-577-3100

Vortex Aquatic Structures Intl.
 Ryan Eccles
 reccles@vortex-intl.com
 11024 Bailey Rd., Unit C
 Cornelius, NC 28031
 www.vortex-intl.com
 877-586-7839

ARCHITECTS/ENGINEERS

BFW Engineering & Testing Inc.
 Mark Thompson
 mthompson@bfwengineers.com
 500 S. 17th St.
 Paducah, KY 42003
 www.bfwengineers.com
 270-443-1995

Dewberry Architects Inc.
 Jeffrey Keppler
 jkeppler@dewberry.com
 132 N. York St., Suite 2C
 Elmhurst, IL 60126
 www.dewberry.com/projects/the-romeoville-aquatic-center
 847-841-0587

DLA Architects, Ltd.
 Lou Noto
 l.noto@dla-ltd.com
 2 Pierce Pl., Suite 1300
 Itasca, IL 60143
 www.dla-ltd.com
 847-742-4063

Eriksson Engineering Associates
 Michael Renner
 mrenner@eea-ltd.com
 145 Commerce Dr., Suite A
 Grayslake, IL 60030-7834
 www.eea-ltd.com
 847-223-4804

FGM Architects, Inc.
 John Dzarnowski
 johnd@fgmarchitects.com
 1211 W. 22nd St., Suite 705
 Oak Brook, IL 60523
 www.fgmarchitects.com
 630-574-8300

Gewalt Hamilton Associates, Inc.
 Tom Rychlik
 trychlik@gha-engineers.com
 625 Forest Edge Dr.
 Vernon Hills, IL 60061-4104
 www.gha-engineers.com
 847-478-9700

HR Green, Inc.
 Ajay Jain
 ajain@hrgreen.com
 1391 Corporate Dr., Suite 203
 McHenry, IL 60050
 www.hrgreen.com
 815-759-8331

TRIA Architecture
 James Petrakos, AIA, LEED AP
 jpetrakos@tria-arch.com
 901 McClintock Dr., Suite 100
 Burr Ridge, IL 60527
 630-455-4500

Wight & Company
 Robert Ijams
 rijams@wightco.com
 2500 N. Frontage Rd.
 Darien, IL 60561
 www.wightco.com
 630-739-6644

Williams Architects, Ltd.
 Karen Lellios
 ktellios@williams-architects.com
 500 Park Blvd., Suite 800
 Itasca, IL 60143
 630-221-1212

WT Group
 Troy Triphahn
 ttriphahn@wtgroup.com
 2675 Pratum Ave.
 Hoffman Estates, IL 60192
 www.wtengineering.com
 224-293-6333

ATTORNEYS

Ancel Glink
 Derke Price
 dprice@ancelglink.com
 140 S. Dearborn St., 6th Fl
 Chicago, IL 60603
 www.ancelglink.com
 312-782-7606

Chapman and Cutler LLP
 Kelly Kost
 kost@chapman.com
 111 W Monroe St 13th Fl
 Chicago, IL 60603-4011
 www.chapman.com
 312-845-3814

Robbins Schwartz
 Steven Adams
 sadams@robbins-schwartz.com
 190 S La Salle St., Suite 2550
 Chicago, IL 60603
 www.robbins-schwartz.com
 312-332-7760

Tressler LLP
 Andrew Paine
 apaine@tresslerllp.com
 233 S. Wacker Dr., 61st Fl
 Chicago, IL 60606
 www.tresslerllp.com
 312-627-4154

BACKGROUND CHECKS

NCSI
 David Rye
 davidr@ncsisafe.com
 807 Broadway St. NE, #300
 Minneapolis, MN 55413
 www.ssci2000.com
 802-829-1516

BRONZE PLAQUES/STATUES

Bronze Memorial Company
 Rick Gurrieri
 bronzememco@gmail.com
 1805 Beach St.
 Broadview, IL 60155
 www.bronzememco.com
 773-276-7972

**CONSTRUCTION
MANAGEMENT****Boller Construction**

Tom Lena
toml@bollerconstruction.com
3045 W. Washington St.
Waukegan, IL 60085
www.bollerconstruction.com
224-763-0647

F.H. Paschen

Caitlin Lahey
clahey@fhpaschen.com
5515 N East River Rd
Chicago, IL 60656
708-475-7169

Featherstone, Inc.

Thomas Featherstone
tomf@featherstoneinc.com
4610 Roslyn Rd.
Downers Grove, IL 60515
630-737-1990

Frederick Quinn Corporation

Jack Hayes
jhayes@fquinncorp.com
103 S. Church St.
Addison, IL 60101-3746
www.fquinncorp.com
630-628-8500

Henry Bros. Co.

Marc Deneau
mdeneau@henrybros.com
3217 Bellwood Ln
9821 South 78th Avenue
Hickory Hills, IL 60457
www.henrybros.com
708-430-5400

Lamp Incorporated

Ian Lamp
ilamp@lampinc.net
460 N Grove Ave
Elgin, IL 60120
www.lampinc.net
847-741-7220

V3 Companies

Scott Brejcha
Sbrejcha@v3co.com
7325 Janes Ave.
Woodridge, IL 60517
www.v3co.com
630-729-6334

CONSULTANTS**Anthony Roofing - Tecta America**

Corey Fratus
cfratus@tectaamerica.com
2555 White Oak Circle
Aurora, IL 60502
www.tectaamerica.com
630-515-5554

aQity Research & Insights, Inc.

Jeff Andreassen
j.andreassen@aqityresearch.com
1330-B Sherman Ave.
Evanston, IL 60201
www.aqityresearch.com
847-424-4171, ext 218

Forvis, LLP

Donna Ekl
donna ekl@forvis.com
1532 S. Surrey Lane
Arlington Heights, IL 60005
www.forvis.com
847-863-3316

Revenue Task Force

Jim Taylor
jimt@revenue taskforce.com
1900 E. Golf Rd., Ste 950
Schuamburg, IL 60173
www.revenue taskforce.com
403-1702

ENERGY MANAGEMENT**ComEd Energy Efficiency Program**

Daiva Gyls
dgylys@resource-innovations.com
2011 Swift Drive
Oak Brook, IL 60523-1580
www.ComEd.com/PublicSectorEE
630-480-8132

Seven Utility Management Consultants

Dale Snyder
dsnyder@sevenutility.com
7704 Oakridge Rd.
North Little Rock, AR 72116
www.sevenutility.com
501-835-3142

Trane

Jon Dunlap
jon.dunlap@trane.com
7100 South Madison St.
Willowbrook, IL 60527
www.trane.com
630-277-1894

ENTERTAINMENT**Record-A-Hit Entertainment**

Katie Morrill
kmorrill@recordahit.com
1380 Brummel Ave.
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007
www.recordahit.com
847-690-1100

EXERCISE EQUIPMENT**GovDeals.com**

Andrew Joosten
conferences@govdeals.com
9164 Eastchase Pkwy, Box 138
Montgomery, AL 36117
www.govdeals.com
708-714-2600

Matrix Fitness

Kevin Kingston
kevin.kingston@matrixfitness.com
1600 Landmark Drive
Cottage Grove, WI 53527
www.matrixfitness.com
773-919-7370

FINANCE**Baird Public Finance**

Dalena Welkomer
d welkomer@rwbaird.com
300 East Fifth Ave., Ste 200
Naperville, IL 60563
630-778-9857

BCU

Bruce Ponsaran
bruce.ponsaran@bcu.org
929 N Milwaukee Ave
Libertyville, IL 60048
http://bcu.org
847-204-4409

Speer Financial, Inc.

Aaron Gold
agold@speerfinancial.com
230 W Monroe, Ste 2630
Chicago, IL 60606
www.speerfinancial.com
312-780-2280

Stifel

Thomas Reedy
reedyt@stifel.com
One N. Wacker Dr., Suite 3400
Chicago, IL 60606
312-423-8245

Wintrust Government Funds

Tim O'Brien
 tobrien@wintrust.com
 231 S LaSalle St., 2nd Floor
 Chicago, IL 60604
 www.wintrust.com
 312-981-0765

FLOORING

Sport Court Midwest

Jon O'Boyle
 customerservice@courtofsport.com
 747 N Church Rd., Suite G10
 Elmhurst, IL 60126
 www.courtofsport.com
 630-350-8652

INSURANCE

Illinois Parks Association Risk Services (IPARKS)

Ryan Pnakovich
 rpnakovich@bfggroup.com
 315 S. Kalamazoo Mall
 Kalamazoo, MI 49007-4806
 www.iparks.org
 800-692-9522

Park District Risk Management Agency (PDRMA)

Brett Davis
 bdavis@pdrma.org
 2033 Burlington Ave.
 Lisle, IL 60532-1646
 www.pdrma.org
 630-769-0332

INVESTMENTS

PFM Asset Management

Michelle Binns
 binns@pfmam.com
 18 N Greenwood Ave.
 Park Ridge, IL 60068
 www.pfm.com
 312-523-2428

PMA Financial Network, LLC

Courtney Soesbe
 csoesbe@pmanetwork.com
 2135 City Gate Ln., 7th Fl
 Naperville, IL 60563
 www.pmanetwork.com
 630-657-6421

LAND PRESERVATION

Openlands

Gerald Adelmann
 jdigiiovanna@openlands.org
 25 E Washington St., Suite 1650
 Chicago, IL 60602
 www.openlands.org
 312-863-6250

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

Confluence

Craig Soncrant
 csoncrant@thinkconfluence.com
 307 N Michigan Ave. #601
 Chicago, IL 60601
 312-663-5494 x809

Hitchcock Design Group

Bill Inman
 binman@hitchcockdesigngroup.com
 22 E Chicago Ave., Suite 200 A
 PO Box 5126
 Naperville, IL 60540
 www.hitchcockdesigngroup.com
 630-961-1787

JSD Professional Services, Inc.

Lori Vierow
 lori.vierow@jsdinc.com
 1400 East Touhy Avenue, Suite 215
 Des Plaines, IL 60018-3339
 www.jsdinc.com/
 312-644-3379

LANDSCAPE SERVICES/SUPPLIES

Balanced Environments, Inc.

Nichole Kleber-Bustamante
 nbustamante@balancedenvironmentsinc.com
 17950 W. IL Rte. 173
 Old Mill Creek, IL 60083
 www.balancedenvironmentsinc.com
 847-395-7120

Beary Landscaping

Norm Kleber
 nkleber@bearylandscaping.com
 15 E. University Dr.
 Arlington Heights, IL 60004
 www.bearylandscaping.com
 847-693-9348

McGinty Bros., Inc. Lawn & Tree Care

Brian McGinty
 brian@mcgintybros.com
 3744 E Cuba Rd
 Long Grove, IL 60047
 www.mcgintybros.com
 847-438-5161

Turfwerks

Jeffrey Reicks
 jreicks@davisequip.com
 5225 NW Beaver Dr.
 Johnston, IA 50131
 515-776-0198

LIGHTING

Shineto Lighting USA LLC

Lucy Lee
 lucy@shine2sportslighting.com
 708 Armstrong Dr.
 Buffalo Grove, IL 60089
 www.shine2sportslighting.com
 847-899-1678

MAINTENANCE PRODUCTS

Buck Services, Inc.

Amanda Laughlin
 amanda@buckservices.com
 401 Industrial Dr.
 West Chicago, IL 60185
 www.buckservices.com
 302-876-8184

Midwest Mechanical

Chad Powell
 Chad.powell@midwestmech.com
 801 Parkview Blvd.
 Lombard, IL 60148
 847-561-3335

PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS

Cunningham Recreation

Michele Breakfield
 michele@cunninghamrec.com
 2020 Calamos Court, Ste 200
 Naperville, IL 60563
 www.cunninghamrec.com
 800-438-2780

Kompan

Tiffany Sperling
 tifspe@kompan.com
 24307 Apple Tree Ln.
 Plainfield, IL 60585
 www.kompan.com
 331-260-2821

National Fitness Campaign

Lindsay Valenti
lindsay@nfchq.com
25 Nadeau Road
Halfmoon, NY 12065
www.nationalfitnesscampaign.com
596-3944

NuToys Leisure Products

Sheilah Wasielewski
sheilahw@nutoys4fun.com
915 Hillgrove
LaGrange, IL 60525
www.nutoys4fun.com
708-579-9055

Team REIL Inc.

John Cederlund
john@getreil.com
17421 Marengo Rd.
Union, IL 60180
www.getreil.com
888-438-7345

SAFETY PROGRAMS**Illinois Public Risk Fund**

Robert Buhs
rbuhs@iprf.com
7851 W. 185th St., Suite 101
Tinley Park, IL 60477-6296
www.iprf.com
708-429-6300

SHELTERS**Norwalk Concrete Industries**

Dalton Vaughan
dvaughan@nciprecast.com
80 Commerce Dr.
Norwalk, OH 44857
www.nciprecast.com
800-733-3624

SITE FURNISHINGS**Anything Weather Communications, Inc.**

Gregg Potter
gregg@anythingweather.com
77806 Flora Rd., Suite B
Palm Desert, CA 92211
www.istrikealerts.com
760-459-2079

iZone Imaging

Stephnie Coufal
scoufal@izoneimaging.com
2526 Charter Oak Dr., Suite 100
Temple, TX 76502-4863
www.izoneimaging.com
254-314-8249

Larson Equipment Company

Dave Dillon
ddillon@larsoncompany.com
1000 E State Pkwy - Unit F
Schaumburg, IL 60173
www.larsoncompany.com
847-705-0460

Signarama Buffalo Grove

Yav Boziloff
sales@signsofchicago.com
350 Lexington Dr.
Buffalo Grove, IL 60089
www.signsofchicago.com
847-215-1535

SURFACING MATERIALS**ForeverLawn Chicago**

Justin Lettenberger
justin@chicago.foreverlawn.com
3438 Colony Bay Dr.
Rockford, IL 61109-2560
www.foreverlawnchicago.com
779-368-0251

TECHNOLOGY**Asset Control Solutions, Inc.**

Kim Falco
kfalco@acspro.us
2500 W. Higgins Rd., Suite 1135
Hoffman Estates, IL 60169
838-2600

Tiny Mobile Robots

Drew Carl
dc@tinymobilerobots.com
1634 Cobb International Blvd. NW
Kennesaw, GA 30152
888-811-8444

UKG

Mark Cline
mark.cline@ukg.com
4645 Boulevard Place
Indianapolis, IN 46208
317-910-2167

TELECOMMUNICATIONS**Constellation Telecom**

Bill Mayer
bill@constellationtelecom.com
505 S. Weber Rd.
Bolingbrook, IL 60490
www.constellationtelecom.com
630-673-5522

TRANSPORTATION**Monroe Truck Equipment**

Rosie Katzenberger
rkatzenberger@monroetruck.com
1051 W. 7th St.
Monroe, WI 53566
www.monroetruck.com
608-329-8112

WEB DEVELOPMENT**McDaniels Marketing**

Randall McDaniels
rmcdaniels@mcdmarketing.com
11 Olt Ave.
Pekin, IL 61554
www.mcdanielsmarketing.com
309-346-4230

**Please contact Alan Howard
at ahoward@ilparks.org for
new corporate memberships,
updates or changes to your
corporate member listing.**

AQUATICS

AQUA PURE ENTERPRISES, LLC.

Deborah Todnervner
1404 Joliet Rd. Ste A
Romeoville, IL 60446
apei@aquapure-il.com
630-771-1310 PH
aquapure-il.com

BURBACH AQUATICS

Roger Schamberger
5974 Highway 80 S.
Platteville, WI 53818
baae@centurytel.net
608-348-3262 PH
burbachaquatics.com

CHICAGOLAND POOL MANAGEMENT

Leslie Clark
1612 Ogden Ave
Lisle, IL 60532
kurtis.bailey@chicagoland-pmg.com
(630) 689-9999 PH
chicagoland-pmg.com

JEFF ELLIS AND ASSOCIATES, INC.

Joe Stefanyak
PO Box 2160
Windermere, FL 34786
joe.stefanyak@jellis.com
407-401-7120 PH
jellis.com

JUST IN TIME POOL & SPA

Michael Butkovichs
148 Eisenhower Lane N.
Lombard, IL 60148
justintimepool@yahoo.com
312-622-2223 PH

SPEAR CORPORATION

Brian Spear
12966 N County Road 50 W
Roachdale, IN 46172-9538
bspear@spearcorp.com
765-522-1126 PH
spearcorp.com

VORTEX AQUATIC STRUCTURES INTERNATIONAL

Scott Stefanc
11024 Bailey Road, Suite C
Cornelius, NC, 28031
sstefanc@vortex-intl.com
877-586-7839 PH
vortex-intl.com

BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION

BID EVOLUTION

Steve Kulovits
1905 Sequoia Dr.
Suite 201
Aurora, IL 60506
stevek@bidevolution.com
630-450-8360 PH
bidevolution.com

CONCRETE POLYFIX

Adam McNamara
150 Stevens Dr.
Iowa City, IA 52240
adam@concretepolyfix.com
309-761-6398 PH
concretepolyfix.com

FREDERICK QUINN CORP

Jack Hayes
103 S. Church St.
Addison, IL 60101
jhayes@fquinncorp.com
630-628-8500 PH
fquinncorp.com

F.H. PASCHEN

Caitlin Lahey
5515 N East River Rd
Chicago, IL 60142
clahey@fhpaschen.com
773-444-3474
fhpaschen.com

INTEGRAL CONSTRUCTION INC.

Christopher Osinski
320 Rocbaar Drive
Romeoville, IL 60446
cosinski@buildintegral.com

LAMP INCORPORATED

Ian Lamp
460 N. Grove Avenue
Elgin, IL 60120
ilamp@lampinc.net
847-741-7220 (305) PH
lampinc.net

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

APPLE CANYON LAKE PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION

Ashlee Miller
14A157 Canyon Club Dr
Apple River, IL 61001-9576
Ashlee.Miller@applecanyonlake.org
815-492-2238 PH
applecanyonlake.org

COOPERATIVE PURCHASING

SOURCEWELL

Jon Henke
202 12th Street NE
P.O. Box 219
Staples, MN 56479 Jon.henke@sourcewell-mn.gov 218-541-5102 PH
sourcewell-mn.gov

ENERGY MANAGEMENT

COMED

Amy Populorum
2011 Swift Dr
Oak Brook, IL 60523-1580
Amy.Populorum@ComEd.com
630-891-7430 PH
comed.com

ENTERTAINMENT & EVENT SERVICES

BASS/SCHULER ENTERTAINMENT

Mia Bass
4055 W Peterson Ave, Ste 206
Chicago, IL 60646-6183
info@bass-schuler.com
773-481-2600 PH
bass-schuler.com

GO APE!

Jacqueline Otto
1100 Ogden Ave.
Western Springs, IL 60558
jacqueline.otto@goape.com
224-762-8657
goape.com

LAKE GENEVA CRUISE LINE

Susan Schindler
812 Wrigley Drive, P.O. Box 68
Lake Geneva, WI 53147
susan@glcl.net
262-248-5642 PH
cruiselakegeneva.com

PYROTECNICO

Jonathan Gesse
P.O. Box 302
Kingsbury, IN 46345
Jgesse@pyrotecnico.com
219-393-5522 PH
pyrotecnico.com

THE FORGE ADVENTURE PARKS

Jeremie Bacon
340 River St.
Lemont, IL
60439-7227
info@theforgeparks.com
630-326-3301 PH
theforgeparks.com

FINANCE

5/3 FIFTH THIRD BANK

Sean Patrick Durkin
1151 State St.
Lemont, IL 60439-4200
Sean.Durkin@53.com
630-297-5987 PH
53.com

BMO HARRIS BANK

Robert Santore
111 W Monroe St 5E
Chicago, IL 60603
robert.santore@bmo.com
bmo.com

LAUTERBACH & AMEN, LLP

Ron Amen
668 N. River Road Naperville, IL 60563
ramen@lauterbachamen.com
630-393-1483 PH
lauterbachamen.com

PFM ASSET MANAGEMENT

Michelle Binns
18 N Greenwood Ave.
Park Ridge, IL 60068
binnsmp@pfmam.com
312-523-2428 PH
www.pfm.com

SPEER FINANCIAL

Aaron Gold
230 W. Monroe Street, Suite 2630
Chicago, IL 60606
agold@speerfinancial.com
312-780-2280 PH
speerfinancial.com

STIFEL

Tom Reedy
70 West Madison St. Suite 2400
Chicago, IL 60602
reedyt@stifel.com
312-423-8245 PH
stifel.com

WINTRUST FINANCIAL CORPORATION

Aimee Briles
9700 W. Higgins Road 4th Floor
Rosemont, IL 60018
abriles@wintrust.com
630-560-2120 PH
wintrust.com

EQUIPMENT

TURF RENOVATION MACHINERY, INC.

Roy J Klopping
19858 Eyota Rd
Apple Valley, CA 92308
RoyJKlopping@yahoo.com
562-696-5780
turfrenovationmahinery.com

LANDSCAPE SERVICES/SUPPLIES/DESIGN

GLI, Inc.

Bridget Clark
1410 Mills Rd
Joliet, IL 60433
bridget@georgeslandscaping.com
(815) 774-0350 PH

GREEN-UP

Bernard Schroeder
23940 Andrew Road
Plainfield, IL 60585
sandy@green-up.com
815-372-3000 PH
green-up.com

FOREVER GREEN TURF CARE/SHADES OF GREEN TURF SUPPLY

Scott Basnett
12531 Cedar Lake Rd
Crown Point, IN 46307
laura@forevergreenlc.com
(219) 365-6778PH
forevergreenlc.com

REINDERS

Andrew Semancic
W227N6225 Sussex Rd
Sussex, WI 53089
asemancik@reinders.com
800-782-3300
reinders.com

THE DAVEY TREE EXPERT COMPANY

Mandy McCauley
1375 E Woodfield Rd., Ste 204
Schaumburg, IL 60173-5424
mandy.mccauley@davey.com
630-422-1870 PH
davey.com

THE MULCH CENTER

Jim Seckelmann
21457 N. Milwaukee Avenue
Deerfield, IL 60015
jim@mulchcenter.com
847-459-7200 PH
mulchcenter.com

LIGHTING

MUSCO SPORTS LIGHTING

Nick Mauer
100 1st Ave W
Oskaloosa, IA 52577-3244
nick.mauer@musco.com
800-825-6030 PH
musco.com

SHINETOO LIGHTING USA, LLC

Lucy Lee
708 Armstrong Dr
Buffalo Grove, IL 60089
sales@shine2sportslighting.com
(224) 567-8070 PH
shine2sportslighting.com

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

EXCEL AERIAL IMAGES, LLC

Eric Lee Wilson, CPRP
1137 E. Woodrow Ave
Lombard, IL 60148
ericlee@excelaerialimagesllc.com
224-775-4623 PH
excelaerialimages.com

PCI – PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS INC.

Jackie Rachev
1 E Wacker Dr 24th Floor
Chicago, IL 60601
lets_talk@pcipr.com
312.558.1770
jrachev@pcipr.com

PARKS & PLAYGROUNDS

CUNNINGHAM RECREATION

Michele Breakfield
2020 Calamos Court, Suite 200
Naperville, IL 60563
michele@cunninghamrec.com
800-438-2780 PH
cunninghamrec.com

FIELDTURF USA, INC.

Jonathan Huard
175 N. Industrial Blvd NE
Calhoun, GA 30701
jonathan.huard@fieldturf.com
630-474-9817 PH
fieldturf.com

KOMPAN, Inc

Tiffanie Sperling
605 W Howard Ln Suite 101
Austin TX 78753
tifspe@kompan.com
(800) 426-9788 PH
http://www.kompan.us

NUTOYS LEISURE PRODUCTS

Sheilah Wasielewski
PO Box 7075
Westchester, IL 60154
play@nutoys4fun.com
(800) 526-6197 PH
<https://www.nutoys4fun.com>

PLAY DESIGN SCAPES

Gina Wilch
352 Cedar Ln
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007
gina@playdesignscapes.com
224-324-4597
playdesignscapes.com

PLAY ILLINOIS

Mike Maloney
310 N Grant St
Westmont, IL 60559
Mike@playil.com
844-222-9990
info@playil.com

PLAY & PARK STRUCTURES

Patrick Puebla
3602 - 37th Ave., #4
Moline, IL 61265
ppuebla@playandpark.com
573-631-1968 PH
playandpark.com

PLANNING & DESIGN

BACON FARMER AND WORKMAN ENGINEERING & TESTING INC.

Mark Thompson
500 S 17th St
Paducah, KY 42003-2819
mthompson@bfwengineers.com
(270) 443-1995
<https://bfwengineers.com/>

CONFLUENCE

Craig Soncrant
307 N. Michigan Ave., #601
Chicago, IL 60601
csoncrant@thinkconfluence.com
312-663-5494 PH
thinkconfluence.com

DEWBERRY ARCHITECTS INC.

Jeffrey Keppler
132 N York St., Suite 2c
Elmhurst, IL 60126-3079
jkeppler@dewberry.com
847-841-0587 PH
dewberry.com

DLA ARCHITECTS, LTD.

Lou Noto
2 Pierce Pl., Ste 1300
Itasca, IL 60143-3155
l.noto@dla-ltd.com
847-742-4063 PH
dla-ltd.com

ENGINEERING RESOURCE ASSOCIATES

Kenneth N. Anderson Jr.
3s701 West Avenue Suite 150
Warrenville, IL 60555-3264
kanderson@eracountants.com
630-393-3060
eracountants.com

FEHR GRAHAM

Pat Kelsey
230 Woodlawn Ave
Aurora, IL 60506-5194
pkelsey@fehrgraham.com
630-423-0482 PH
fehrgraham.com

FGM ARCHITECTS

John Dzarnowski
1211 W. 22nd Street, Suite 705
Oakbrook, IL 60523
johnd@fgmarchitects.com
630-574-8300 PH
fgmarchitects.com

GEWALT HAMILTON ASSOCIATES

Michael Shrake
625 Forest Edge Drive
Vernon Hills, IL 60061
mshrake@gha-engineers.com
847-478-9700 PH
gha-engineers.com

HITCHCOCK DESIGN GROUP

Bill Inman
225 W. Jefferson Ave
Naperville, IL 60540
binman@hitchcockdesigngroup.com
630-961-1787 PH
hitchcockdesigngroup.com

JSD PROFESSIONAL SERVICES, INC.

Lori Vierow
1400 E Touhy Ave Ste 215
Des Plaines, IL 60018-3339
lori.vierow@jsdinc.com
630-362-6681 PH
jsdinc.com

PLANNING RESOURCES INC.

Darrell Garrison
913 Parkview Blvd
Lombard, IL 60148-3267
dgarrison@planres.com
630-668-3788 PH
planres.com

SMITHGROUP, LLC

Gregg Calpino
35 E. Wacker Drive, Suite 900
Chicago, IL 60601
gregg.calpino@smithgroup.com
(312) 596-9833 PH
smithgroup.com/

WIGHT & COMPANY

Robert Ijams
2500 N. Frontage Road
Darien, IL 60561
rijams@wightco.com
630-739-6644 PH
wightco.com

WILLIAMS ARCHITECTS

Karen T. Lellios
500 Park Blvd.
Suite 800
Itasca, IL 60143
ktlellios@williams-architects.com
630-221-1212 PH
williams-architects.com

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

ANCEL GLINK DIAMOND BUSH DICIANNI & KRAFTEFER P.C.

Robert Bush
140 S. Dearborn Street 6th Floor
Chicago, IL 60603
rbush@ancelglink.com
312-604-9105 PH
ancelglink.com

BERRYDUNN

Dannielle Wilson 100 Middle St
4th Floor East Tower Portland, ME
04101
DWilson@BerryDunn.com
207-842-8121 PH
berrydunn.com

HR SOURCE

Christopher Schneider
3025 Highland Parkway Suite 225
Downers Grove, IL 60515
cschneider@hrsource.org
630-963-7600 x232
Hrsource.org

ILLINOIS PUBLIC RISK FUND

Robert Buhs
7851 W. 185th Street Suite 101
Tinley Park, IL 60477
rbuhs@iprf.com
708-429-6300 PH
iprf.com

MTJ SPORTS

Mats Jonmarker
10 Edgewood Drive
Kewanee IL 61443
mats@mtjsports.com
(800) 789-1319
<http://www.mtjsports.com>

PDRMA

Brett Davis
2033 Burlington Avenue
Lisle, IL 60532 bdavis@pdrma.org 630-769-0332 PH
pdrma.org

SIGNAGE

CRAIG MILLER BENCHMARK IMAGING AND DISPLAY

Craig Miller
221 Lively Blvd
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007
craig@benchmarkimaging.com
847-290-0002 x 207
Benchmarkimaging.com

IZONE IMAGING

Brad Huckabay 2526 Charter Oak Dr
Suite 100
Temple, TX 76502
bhuckabay@izoneimaging.com
888-464-9663 PH
izoneimaging.com

SIGNARAMA

Donald Meeker 532 N State Rd.
Briarcliff Manor, NY 10510
don@terrabilt.com
914-341-1500 PH
terrabilt.wolfenwicked.com

TERRABILT INC.

Yav Boziloff
350 Lexington Dr.
Buffalo Grove, IL 60089
don@terrabilt.com
(847) 215-1535 PH
signsofchicago.com

SUPPLIES

CHALLENGER TEAMWEAR

Alan Foy
8263 Flint
Lenexa, KS 66214
afoy@challengerteamwear.com
954-646-0211
challengerteamwear.com

CINTAS

Eric Johnson
5005 N Lowell Ave
Chicago IL 60630
johnsone@cintas.com
312-813-3333
<http://www.cintas.com>

FEDERAL SUPPLY USA

Chad Read
1171 S Northpoint Blvd
Waukegan, IL 60085
cread@federalssupply.com
847-623-1310
federalssupply.com

TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS

AMILIA

Mike Ellis
1751 Rue Richardson, #3 105
Montreal, Quebec H3 Montreal QC H3K
1G6
Marketing@amilia.com
1-877-343-0004
Amilia.com

DOUBLESLOT

Sean Chang
sean@doublespot.com
(626) 877-6650
doublespot.ai

CIVICREC

Nick Glasgow
302 S 4th St, Ste 500
Manhattan, KS 66502-6410
Nicholas.glasgow@civicplus.com
785-370-7328 PH
civicplus.com

KAIZEN LABS

John Puma
453 S Spring St. Ste 400 PMB Los
Angeles, CA 90013
partners@kaizenlabs.co
(408) 623-7000
kaizenlabs.co

KUVR

Sanjeev Arora
2700 Patriot Blvd. Suite 250
Glenview, IL 60026
saneev@kuvrr.com
774 4 Safety PH
<http://www.kuvrr.com>

MYREC.COM RECREATION SOFTWARE

Colleen Kinkade PO Box 16997
Salt Lake City, UT 84116
info@myrec.com
802-465-9732
myrec.com

OUTDOORLINK INC.

David Ramirez
3058 Leeman Ferry Rd SW
Huntsville, AL 35801
dave@outdoorlink.com
(256) 885-9768
Outdoorlink.com

PRODUCTIVE PARKS LLC

Steve Dittmore 674 Rochelle Terrace
Lombard, IL 60148
Steve@productiveparks.com
630-765-4252
productiveparks.com

RAM COMMUNICATIONS INC.

Rob McCoy
2720 S River Rd., Ste 152
Des Plaines, IL 60018-4111
info@ramcomminc.com
847-358-0917 PH
ramcomminc.com

SYSTEMS CABLING SOLUTIONS INC.

Michael Rashow
8523 N Ottawa Ave
Niles IL 60053
michael.rashow@scschi.com
773-395-48052 PH
SCSCHI.COM

TYLER TECHNOLOGIES, INC.

Katie Caton
5101 Tennyson Pkwy
Plano, TX 75024-3525
katie.caton@tylertech.com
207-518-4745 PH
tylertech.com

UKG SOLUTIONS

Mark Cline
101 W Washington St # 900
Indianapolis IN 46204
mark.cline@ukg.com
317-910-2167 PH
tylertech.com

VERMONT SYSTEMS, INC.

David Wirtz
12 Market Place
Essex Junction, VT 05452
davew@vermontsystems.com
802-276-5447 PH
vermontsystems.com

WEB DEVELOPMENT

A5 BRANDING & DIGITAL

John Harris
1 North La Salle Street, 47th Floor
Chicago, IL 60602
jharris@a5inc.com
708-227-5313 PH
a5inc.com

IAPD Energy Partner

YOUR ADVOCATE FOR REAL TIME COMPETITIVE OFFERS FROM LEADING SUPPLIERS

VII
S E V E N

Utility Management Consultants, Ltd.

IAPD

Illinois Association of Park Districts

FREE NO OBLIGATION
Executive Analysis for Your Facilities



Contact: Dale Snyder
National Accounts Manager
(501) 835-3142
7704 Oakridge Road
North Little Rock, AR 72116
Email: dsnyder@sevenutility.com
ILparks.org/energy

"Seven Utility Management Consultants has greatly benefited our park district during these tough economic times. Our park district has realized substantial natural gas and electricity savings because of the services that Seven provides. Thank you for making this opportunity available to IAPD member agencies."

*-Oakbrook Terrace
Park District*



Simplify.

Constellation Telecom delivers an economical telecom experience to your park district. Office phones, connectivity, networking, UCaaS, SIP trunks, contact center, POTS lines, point-to-point circuits. All from one reliable source. One attentive point of contact. AND SPECIAL RATES THAT HAVE BEEN OBTAINED FOR IAPD MEMBERS. That's business telecom, simplified.



constellation
TELECOM

(630) 581-7337 / (630) 673-5522 (mobile)
bill @constellationtelecom.com