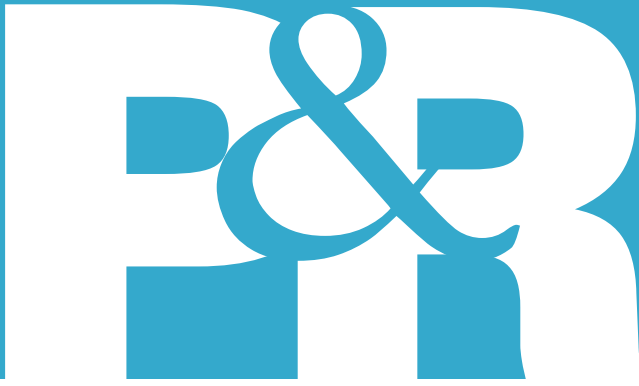


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PARKS AND RECREATION

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



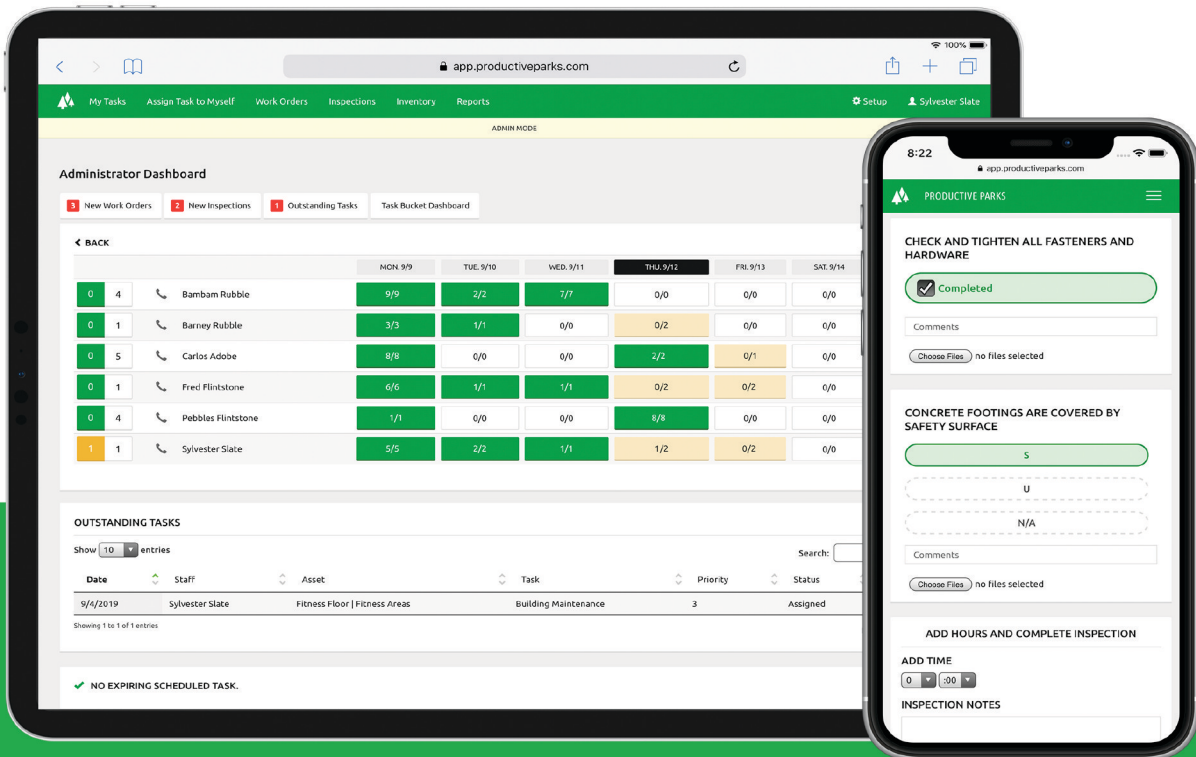
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FROM THE EDITOR

I've had a lot of "firsts" over the past six years of my life.

In that time, I got my first job, got engaged, got married, got my first dog, purchased my first car, had my first child and bought my first house.

And right now, I'm happy to be sharing another first with all of you: my first issue as editor of Illinois Parks & Recreation Magazine.

You can read a little more about me in People and Places on page 23, but I'm a Southern transplant who moved to Illinois from Georgia in 2013 to attend graduate school at Northwestern. After graduation, I worked in journalism for a time before beginning work in communications. I joined IAPD as publications director in September of this year.

I've lived in Springfield for nearly three years now with my family (the aforementioned husband, son, dog and a cat who's been with me longer than any of them). In that time, we've taken ample advantage of the natural beauty in the area and the park district. Our son would happily spend every summer weekend at one of the park district's public pools, and the annual Jack-o-Lantern festival is one of our favorite fall traditions. We spend time at the local lake and in local forests, taking our son hiking when we can.

I often marvel at modern technology when we're on these adventures, because I have a beautiful collection of photos from them, all taken from a phone that fits in my pocket. I'm able to share them instantly with family who live hundreds of miles away and are always eager to see pictures of our son. We also often hop on our phones or computers to look for upcoming events, facility hours and directions. Far from taking away from our outdoor adventures, technology enhances them.

Modern park and recreation agencies are embracing the use of technology to attract people to their facilities and programs. *Want to Visit the Parks? There's an App for That* on page 16 detailing the innovative use of mobile and web apps by three park districts in Illinois. The widespread use of technology also comes with concerns about the security and privacy of data. *Introducing Cybersecurity to Web Development Operations* on page 20 shares best practices for park and recreation agencies to keep their websites secure.

With technology becoming ever more present in our lives, I encourage you to use it to expand your knowledge of the world around you. Find a class and learn a new skill. Scope out a new bike trail. Buy tickets to a concert or play. And take some great photos while you enjoy some firsts of your own.



— Liz Mitchell, Editor



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*—Oakbrook Terrace
Park District*



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

Thankful to Be Among the Best of the Best

With the holidays rapidly approaching, and the drafting of our annual report to the IAPD membership in the works, I have had the opportunity to reflect on the past year at IAPD. In doing so, I was struck by a feeling of tremendous gratitude. As the CEO of the finest park and recreation association in the nation, I am privileged to come in contact with the most dedicated citizen volunteers in any industry, community or state.

It is truly inspirational. You and your fellow board members are simply the best at what you have committed yourself to as a park district, forest preserve or conservation district board member. Service to your local community not only raises your neighbors' quality of life, but it collectively makes Illinois the envy of the nation for parks, recreation and conservation.

This was most recently demonstrated on two very visible occasions. The first was during the presentation of the National Gold Medal Awards for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management. This year, the winner from Illinois was the Glencoe Park District, and the number of finalists from Illinois included the Chicago Park District, Waukegan Park District, Glenview Park District, Lombard Park District, Rolling Meadows Park District and the Vernon Hills Park District.

Since this program began 53 years ago, Illinois park districts, forest preserves and recreation agencies have been recognized with the prestigious National Gold Medal Award more often than any other state in the nation.

- Out of the 270 awards presented since 1966, 25 percent of the winners have been Illinois park agencies.
- **Illinois park districts, forest preserve districts and city recreation departments have won the NRPA Gold Medal Award 67 times!** To put this into perspective with other states throughout the nation, the next highest-winning state system is Colorado, which has won this national award only 27 times.

Illinois' impressive gold medal recognition can only happen when good governance works in unison with outstanding executive leadership.

Illinois also has simply the very best executive directors in the nation. In fact, the IAPD Executive Director Search service has placed more than 131 outstanding new executives at park districts across Illinois since the service's inception.

A life that touches others goes on forever



The other demonstration of excellence in parks and recreation was clearly visible at IAPD's most recent Best of the Best Awards Gala where we celebrated game-changing relationships with businesses, the media, intergovernmental cooperation, best green practices and outstanding examples of arts in the parks.

BOARD CORNER - FILLING BOARD VACANCIES

Many times, questions come to IAPD on the issue of how and when a board should fill a vacancy. While the legal requirements are straightforward, the process is often a case of first impression. Where potential new board members come from and how we best select them is not quite as clear for many agencies. My recommendation is that the choice of a new board member be taken from a number of candidates after an interview process. Besides selecting the agency director, finding a good fit to the governance style of your board is the most important decision you can make. Consider the following during your interview process.

Once you have identified potential board members, you should interview them to explore their interests and qualifications. Some possible areas to discuss with a potential board member include:

- involvement in local, civic and trade groups or clubs;
- effectiveness in those groups;
- views about partisan politics in the agency's operation;
- special interests;
- attitudes toward other board members, especially those with different points of view; and
- overall attitude toward the agency and its personnel.

Come up with a list of questions addressing these areas to ask all potential board members. Here are a few samples to get you started:

- Why do you want to serve on the board?
- On what organizations have you served?
- What were your major accomplishments at these organizations?
(Ask for references from these organizations and follow up.)

Determine from these background checks how the individual works with others to resolve issues or differing opinions.

- What is your overall impression of the agency and its board and staff?
- How will political ties impact your board service?
- What issues do you want to see addressed by the board?
- How do you see the role of the board member as it relates to the role of the director and staff?
- How much time and energy can you contribute?
- What skills would you like to acquire from board service?
- What kinds of people do you like to work with?
- What social aspects about board service appeal to you?
- What skills can you bring to the board?
- How can this agency make best use of those skills?
- Would you be prepared to help in fundraising (identifying and cultivating prospects)?

An interview with a potential board member should go both ways; the person you interview may have questions for you as well. This is a good sign that he or she is considering the responsibility seriously and has done his or her homework.

You should not assume that new board members instinctively know what they're expected to do. A corporate executive's business acumen is not automatically applicable to a governmental entity. Be prepared to supply the prospective board member with answers to these questions:

- How much time does it take to serve on the board?
- How much reading, researching and speaking will I be required to do?
- Will I be expected to incur any personal expenses and, if so, are they tax deductible?
- Will I be asked to provide a list of friends or business associates for contributions?
- Will I personally be involved in fundraising drives?
- Am I expected to lobby for the agency?

When the time comes to fill a board vacancy, a well thought out plan and approach pays great benefits.

My best wishes to you and your family for a very Happy Thanksgiving!

2020 CALENDAR OF EVENTS AND MEETINGS

January 23-25, 2020
**2020 IAPD Soaring to New
Heights Conference**
Hyatt Regency Chicago
Chicago, IL

Saturday, January 25, 2020
Annual Business Meeting
Hyatt Regency, Chicago
Chicago, IL

Tuesday, April 28, 2020
Parks Day at the Capitol
Illinois State Capitol

April 28-29, 2020
Legislative Conference
Crowne Plaza Hotel
Springfield, IL

Friday, October 16, 2020
**2020 Best of the Best
Awards Gala**
Wheeling Park District
Chevy Chase Country Club
Wheeling, IL

Thursday, November 5, 2020
Legal Symposium
McDonald's U/Hyatt Lodge
Oak Brook, IL

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By Debbie Trueblood, CAE
IPRA Executive Director

Balancing E-Sports and Nature

The theme of this issue is “Balancing Screen Time with the Benefits of Technology and Nature”. This has me thinking about all the discussion lately about e-sport, which was a recurring focus at NRPA. Like many of you, I was at the National Recreation and Parks Conference in Baltimore. As usual, Illinois had a great showing there. We typically send more than 10% of all conference attendees from Illinois, including professionals and commissioners. Thank you to everyone who attended the IPRA social at conference- we had about 175 people there.

It seemed to me, one of the trends people were talking about in several sessions was the rise of “e-sports”, a term being used to cover quite a wide variety of competitive video games, with Fortnite being the most prevalent. While video games are not typically seen as a way to advance health or outdoor experiences, they are becoming a huge part of how young people today recreate. Several speakers spoke about how e-sports are more inclusive for a wider variety of physical abilities than traditional sports and that e-sports are allowing people with disabilities to be competitive in a mixed-ability setting. What amazed me about this topic was that several park and recreation agencies across the country are now moving towards having “E-sports Coordinators” or similar titles on their teams who are coordinating e-sports programming and e-sports tournaments. The City of Las Vegas Parks and Recreation Department is building an “e-rec” center to the tune of several million dollars. While this surprised me, the statistics support investing in this form of recreation. Neelay Bhatt, in his presentation on trends, shared statistics that the global champion of Fortnite received over \$3 million for winning his tournament at just 16 years old, which was more than the winners received at Wimbledon, the Indy 500, or the Golf Masters. Neelay also made reference to stadium ticket sales where e-sports tournaments were bringing in higher ticket revenues than traditional sports. This has left me with much to think

about as we weigh all the priorities in our field including inclusion, health, equity and conversation. I wonder where this new trend will take us, and I wonder what can be done to encourage recreation that is both inclusive and simultaneously health and conversation focused.

The big issue is, can we balance screen time- for things like recognizing e-sports as an important trend in recreation- with nature? In parks and recreation, we talk about how people protect what they love, and that if kids today don't have opportunities to appreciate the outdoors, they won't protect nature when they get older. So, we want to get kids outside too.

We know we are
addicted to
entertainment.
Let's get addicted
to nature too.



Also at NRPA, speaker Neelay Bhatt noted, “Children in America get less time outdoors than those who are incarcerated.” Surely, we as a state and we as a country can do better than that. I don't think e-sports are the only barrier to improvements here.

Think about all the things you can do at your agency and in your home, to spend more time outside. For programming, there are a wide variety of programs already outside, but what about adding some outdoor time to some traditionally indoor programs? Can you offer a senior recreation program typically held inside outside? What about a preschool visit to your outdoor nature program? What about your after-

school gym having some outdoor supervised time in your parks? What about turning a cooking class into a picnic type class held outside in your park shelters? For your agency, can you host a staff meeting outside? Can you create a walking/steps challenge with your colleagues? At home, what can you do to get outside? For me, I recently installed a fire pit in my backyard and I'm doing more and more of my reading sitting outside by the fire. Anything you can do to get outside is a positive change, especially for children.

For many of us, we remember our childhoods as kids running around outside, going to the local park (unchaperoned!) and coming home when the streetlights came on. And why not play outside? We didn't have air conditioning in the house when I was growing up, and it was literally cooler outside than it was in the house. We had TV, but it wasn't so easy to record everything and watch it at our leisure, if we missed it, we missed it. And we were used to it being that way. We didn't have a computer in the house until I was about ten and we didn't have a video game system in the house until I was older (and it was Atari). My point, as I age myself, is that when many of us were growing up the default for how we spent our time was playing outside. We didn't have the tempting call of the blue screen on our many devices calling to us. For kids today, they are digital natives. The blue screen has always been there for them. It is addictive. It lights up, it makes noise, it is so addictive that it is often hard to put down.

So, if we want our young people today to get outside more, we can't approach playing outside like we used to. We must be intentional. We must create opportunities. We must focus on creating new habits. Because we're swimming upstream on this issue.

While e-sports may be the new wave of recreation- and we should get on board for the inclusive nature of it and serve our young community members in the way they want to be served- we also need to intentionally focus on getting our communities- of all ages- outside more. We can't just offer it up as one option. We need to "sneak it in" to programs more. We need to ensure it is an option that is prioritized- the way we prioritize sitting down to watch a show we missed on our DVR (or streaming service) as soon as we can make time for it. We know we are addicted to entertainment. Let's get addicted to nature too.

Upcoming Events

December 5, 2019 CPRP Exam Prep Series C – Programming

9:30 AM - 12:30 PM

This is the third of four in a series of classes designed to prepare individuals for the National Recreation and Park Association's Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP) exam. Taught by Nikki Ginger of the Chicago Park District, they will provide attendees with an intensive review of parks and recreation in the content areas of Programming, Human Resources, Finance, and Operations.

December 19, 2019 CPRP Exam Prep Series C – Operations

9:30 AM - 12:30 PM

This is the last of four in a series of classes designed to prepare individuals for the National Recreation and Park Association's Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP) exam. Taught by Nikki Ginger of the Chicago Park District, they will provide attendees with an intensive review of parks and recreation in the content areas of Programming, Human Resources, Finance, and Operations.

December 11 & 19, 2019 Webinar: Branding as a Business Tool

12/11 10:15 AM - 11:15 AM

12/19 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

This month's webinar, Branding as a Business Tool, is presented by Dirk Richwine, and he will help you understand how and why to build a solid brand promise and how it can be used to meet goals and objectives.

January 23-25, 2020 IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference 2020

As the premier state conference for parks and recreation, forest preserves, and conservation agencies in Illinois, the IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference brings together more than 4,200 professionals and elected officials for three days of exciting and quality educational programming, networking, and professional development.

For details and registration, please visit the IPRA event calendar at ILipra.org

IT'S RENEWAL TIME!

IPRA memberships expire on
December 31, 2019. Log in to
ilipra.org/renew
and renew today!





Jason Anselment
Legal/Legislative Counsel

Statutory Requirements for Posting to Your Agency's Website

The impact of technology on park and recreation agencies reaches beyond its use in programming and facilities. In recent years, a district's legal obligations have also been affected by new developments.

One example is the movement toward website postings as a means of providing legally required public notifications. In some instances, these obligations are mandatory for all districts with websites, while others depend upon whether the website is maintained by the district's full-time staff. Sometimes website postings are optional but can be used to save taxpayer dollars in lieu of newspaper publications or copying documents in response to a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request.

Below is a brief summary of current statutory requirements. Legal obligations such as these are always changing, so as with any question involving legal advice, it is important to consult with your local counsel.

Requirements for all districts with a website

1. FOIA (5 ILCS 140/4)

A public body that maintains a website must post a brief description of itself and information related to FOIA, which includes:¹

- a short summary of its purpose
- a block diagram giving its functional subdivisions
- the total amount of its operating budget
- the number and location of all its separate offices
- the approximate number of full and part-time employees
- the identification and membership of any board, commission, committee or council which operates in an advisory capacity relative to the operation of the public body, or which exercises control over its policies or procedures, or to which the public body is required to report and be answerable for its operations
- a brief description of the methods whereby the public may request information and public records
- a directory designating the FOIA officer or officers
- the address where requests for public records should be directed
- any fees allowable under FOIA

2. Local Records Act (50 ILCS 205/20)

Districts with websites must also post a mechanism for members of the public to electronically communicate with their elected officials such as 1) a uniform single email address, or 2) the individual email addresses for those elected officials. A hyperlink to this information must be easily accessible from the homepage. For example, posting a hyperlink to "contact board members" which then directs the public to the email address or addresses that the public can use to contact board members would satisfy this requirement.

3. Total Compensation Information (5 ILCS 120/7.3)

Districts participating in the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF) with websites must also post certain employee compensation information to their websites. At least six days before an IMRF employer approves an employee's total compensation package that is equal to or in excess of \$150,000 per year, the employer must post on its website the total compensation package for that employee. If the employer does not maintain a website, it must post a physical copy of this information at its principal office. If an employer maintains a website, it may choose to post a physical copy of this information at its principal office in lieu of posting the information directly on the website, but only if it posts directions on its website on how to access the information. These rules also apply for employees having a total compensation package that exceeds \$75,000 per year, except in these cases the posting deadlines apply within six business days after the IMRF employer approves a budget.

4. New IMRF Posting Requirement (40 ILCS 5/7-135.5)

A brand-new rule that was approved by the General Assembly and signed by the governor earlier this year will add a new website posting requirement. Beginning January 1, 2021, districts that participate in the IMRF and have a website must post a hyperlink to the IMRF website that contains the following information:

- (1) copies of all resolutions adopted by a municipality on or after January 1, 1995, to participate in the IMRF if a resolution was required;
- (2) an annual report listing each municipality and the date it first became an IMRF participant;

- (3) all documents pertaining to each municipality's annual projected future IMRF contributions; and
- (4) information about the amount of each municipality's past required IMRF contributions for each year of participation on or after January 1, 1995 (and before, if available).

To be clear, the new rules will not require a district itself to post the information above, just a hyperlink to the IMRF's website, which contains this information. The IMRF has until July 1, 2020, to post the information to its website. Again, these rules do not require a district to establish or maintain a website, but if the district does maintain a website, it must post the hyperlink.

Requirements where the website is maintained by full-time staff of the public body

The Open Meetings Act (OMA) contains a number of specific website posting requirements for a district with a website that is maintained by the district's full-time staff. The requirements below are in addition to the physical postings that must be made at specific locations required under the OMA as well as any required notices to the news media.

1. Agenda (5 ILCS 120/2.02)

A public body that has a website that its full-time staff maintains must post the agendas for the meetings of its governing body on that website. Each agenda must remain posted at least until the meeting is concluded.

2. Meeting Notices and Annual Meeting Schedule (5 ILCS 120/2.02(b))

A public body that has a website that its full-time staff maintains must also post all meeting notices for its governing body on its website. The notice of the annual schedule of meetings must remain on the website until a new public notice of the schedule of regular meetings is approved, while the website notice for each meeting of the governing body must remain posted until the meeting is concluded.

Note that while these OMA website postings are only required if a public body has a website that is maintained by the full-time staff of a public body, there is a benefit to posting these items for any district with a website. The OMA requires a public body to ensure that at least one copy of any notice and agenda for a meeting is continuously available for public review during the entire 48-hour period preceding the meeting. Posting the notice and agenda on the public body's website satisfies this continuous posting requirement.

3. Meeting Minutes (5 ILCS 120/2.06)

A public body with a website maintained by its full-time staff must also post the minutes of its open meetings on its website within 10 days after the public body approves them. These minutes must remain posted for at least 60 days after their initial posting.

4. Truth in Taxation (35 ILCS 200/18-75)

In addition to these OMA requirements, the Truth in Taxation Law requires the notices that must be published in the newspaper to also be posted on the district's website if the website is maintained by its full-time staff.

Save taxpayer dollars with optional website postings

1. Local Government Professional Services Selection Act (50 ILCS 510/4)

One statute allows a local government to post a website notice in lieu of a newspaper publication. Typically, when a project requiring architectural, engineering or land surveying services is proposed for a district, it shall, unless it has a satisfactory relationship for these services with one or more firms:

- (1) mail or e-mail a notice requesting a statement of interest in the specific project to all firms who have a current statement of qualifications and performance data on file with the political subdivision; or
- (2) place an advertisement in a secular English language daily newspaper of general circulation throughout such political subdivision, requesting a statement of interest in the specific project and further requesting statements of qualifications and performance data from those firms which do not have such a statement on file with the political subdivision. Such advertisement shall state the day, hour and place the statement of interest and the statements of qualifications and performance data shall be due.

However, this particular Act permits a district to satisfy this notice requirement by placing the advertisement on its website rather than in a newspaper.

2. Satisfying FOIA Requests (5 ILCS 140/8.5)

FOIA allows districts to save taxpayer dollars by posting information on the district's website even if the law does not require it. For example, a public body is not required to copy a public record that is published on its website. A public body must simply notify the requester that the public record is available online and direct the requester to the website where the record can be reasonably accessed. Unless the person requesting the public record is unable to reasonably access the record online after being directed to the website and re-submits his or her request for the record stating his or her inability to reasonably access the record online, the public body is excused from the copying requirements under FOIA.

Consequently, a district can save taxpayer dollars on FOIA requests by posting information to its website, particularly public records for which a district frequently receives FOIA requests, like the budget and appropriation ordinance, tax levy, audit report, annual financial report, statement of receipts and disbursements, conduct ordinances, bid notices or notices of referendum.

¹This article discusses website posting requirements, but in most cases, there are also physical posting and/or other statutory requirements. For example, FOIA requires a public body to prominently display this required information at each of its administrative or regional offices, make it available for inspection and copying, and mail it when requested

Legal calendar 2020

Prepared by Peter M. Murphy, IAPD President/CEO & Jason Anselment, IAPD Legal/Legislative Counsel

The following park district calendar includes key dates based on a fiscal year that begins on May 1 and ends on April 30. For those park districts that have adopted another date for the commencement of the fiscal year (70 ILCS 1205/4-4), this calendar must be adjusted for those duties that must be performed at times related to the fiscal year. The calendar is also established around regular park board meetings held on the third Thursday of each month. Selected election dates are based on the General Primary Election to be held on March 17, 2020, and the General Election to take place on November 3, 2020. For additional election dates, consult the Legal 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 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 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 to 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 requirements that all newly hired employees must be reported to the Illinois Department of Employment Security. (820 ILCS 405/1801.1)
- Review the requirement that while participating in a public works project, each contractor and subcontractor must submit a certified payroll to the public body in charge of the project every month. Pursuant to Public Act 98-0328, the public body must maintain these records submitted on or after January 1, 2014, for at least five years, but can do so in paper or electronic format. (820 ILCS 130/5)
- For persons or entities required to report under the Lobbyist Registration Act, review reporting requirements for expenditures. (25 ILCS 170/6, 170/6.5)
- Beginning January 1, 2015, all employers must post a notice developed by the Illinois Department of Human Rights (IDHR) and include information concerning an employee's rights in any employee handbook. Samples of these required notices are available on the IDHR's website. (Public Act 98-1050)

EVERY SIX MONTHS

Unpublished written minutes of all closed meetings are to be reviewed not less than semiannually 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 2019

NOVEMBER 18

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

NOVEMBER 18

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

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

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

NOTE: If initial officers are to be elected at the election for creation of a new unit of government, candidates for such offices shall file nomination papers 113-106 days before such election (November 25 – December 2, 2019). (10 ILCS 5/10-6)

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

NOVEMBER 25

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

DECEMBER 2019

DECEMBER 16

Last day for filing of petitions (must contain original sheets signed by voters and circulators) for referenda for the submission of questions of public policy (local) for the General Primary Election. [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 23

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

DECEMBER 30

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 General Primary Election. (10 ILCS 5/28-2(c))

DECEMBER 30

Last day for county, municipal, school, township and park boards to place advisory referenda on the ballot by resolution for the General 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; 105 ILCS 5/9-1.5)

JANUARY 2020

JANUARY 9

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

JANUARY 16

Regular January board meeting.

JANUARY 17

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

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 2020

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 shall certify to the appropriate county clerk a list of names and addresses of those persons described in items (a), (b) and (c) of Section 4A-101.5 who are required to file statements of economic interest pursuant to the Illinois Governmental Ethics Act. In preparing the lists, each chief administrative officer or his or her designee shall set out the names in alphabetical order. (5 ILCS 420/4A-106.5)

FEBRUARY 20

Regular February board meeting.

MARCH 2020

MARCH 9

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

MARCH 17

General Primary Election

MARCH 19

Regular March board meeting

APRIL 2020

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 6

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 16

Regular April board meeting.

APRIL 28-29

Attend the IAPD Legislative Conference in Springfield. The Legislative Reception is held the evening of April 28 with the conference starting the next morning on April 29. April 28 is Parks Day at

the Capitol with park district, forest preserve, conservation district and special recreation displays lining the Capitol Rotunda.

MAY 2020

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

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

NOTE 3: Pursuant to 50 ILCS 310/2 and 310/3, these reports must be submitted to the Comptroller electronically unless the governmental unit provides the Comptroller's Office with sufficient

evidence that the reports cannot be filed electronically and the Comptroller waives the requirement.

MAY 1

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

MAY 1

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

MAY 8

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

MAY 21

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 2020

JUNE 4

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

JUNE 18

Regular June board meeting.

JUNE 19

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 21).

JULY 2020

JULY 6

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

JULY 6

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

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

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

NOTE: If initial officers are to be elected at the election for creation of a new unit of government, candidates for such offices shall file nomination papers 113-106 days before such election (July 13-20, 2020). (10 ILCS 5/10-6)

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

JULY 13

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

JULY 16

Regular July board meeting.

AUGUST 2020

AUGUST 3

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

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

AUGUST 10

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

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

AUGUST 17

Last day for local governing boards to adopt a resolution or ordinance to allow binding or advisory public questions to appear on the ballot for the General Election. (10 ILCS 5/28-2(c); 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; 105 ILCS 5/9-1.5)

AUGUST 20

Regular August board meeting.

AUGUST 27

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

SEPTEMBER 2020

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

SEPTEMBER 4

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

SEPTEMBER 17

Regular September board meeting.

OCTOBER 2020

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 15

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 15

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 26

Last day for the election authority to publish a notice of any question of public policy to be voted upon within its jurisdiction at the General Election. The election authority shall also post a copy of the notice at the principal office of the election authority. The local election official shall also post a copy of the notice at the principal office of the political

or governmental subdivision. If there is no principal office, the local election official shall post the notice at the building in which the governing body of the political or governmental subdivision held its first meeting of the calendar year in which the referenda is being held. (10 ILCS 5/12-5)

OCTOBER 27

The last day to file annual audit report (or financial report if district received revenue of less than \$850,000) with the Comptroller of the State of Illinois and county clerk (within 180 days of close of fiscal year) and make a copy open to public inspection. Pursuant to Public Act 98-1019, beginning with fiscal year 2016, those governmental units receiving revenue less than \$850,000 for any fiscal year must also provide copies of this annual financial report to each member of that governmental unit's governing board of elected officials and present it either in person or by a live phone or web connection during a public meeting and have the financial report approved by a 3/5 majority vote. Otherwise, that unit must cause an audit of the account to be made once every four years in addition to filing the annual financial report with the Comptroller. Any governmental unit receiving revenue of \$850,000 or more shall, in addition to complying with the audit requirements, file a financial report on forms required by the Comptroller. (50 ILCS 310/2; 310/3; 310/6)

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

OCTOBER 27-29

Attend the NRP Congress in Orlando, Florida

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)

OCTOBER 31

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

NOVEMBER 2020

NOVEMBER 3

General Election

NOVEMBER 5

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

NOVEMBER 9

The suggested date to publish notice of hearing (Truth in Taxation Law) if the district's proposed levy is greater than 105 percent of last year's extension or estimated extension. Must publish not more than 14 days, nor less than seven days prior to the date of the public hearing. Publication date assumes a hearing date of November 16-20, 2020. Pursuant to Public Act 99-367, the notice must also be posted on the taxing district's website if the taxing district has a website that is maintained by the full-time staff of the taxing district. (35 ILCS 200/18-70; 200/18-75)

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

NOVEMBER 19

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 19

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

NOVEMBER 24

Last day for the appropriate canvassing board to canvass the results of referenda submitted to the voters at the November 3, 2020 General Election. (10 ILCS 5/22-17)

DECEMBER 2020

DECEMBER 1

The suggested date to verify that, for real estate acquired in 2020, 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 4

(If levy ordinance was enacted on November 19, 2020) 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. Pursuant to Public Act 99-367, the notice must also be posted on the taxing district's website if the taxing district has a website that is maintained by the full-time staff of the taxing district. (Notice must be given within 15 days of the date the levy ordinance was enacted.) (35 ILCS 200/18-85)

DECEMBER 17

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 18

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, 2021.) (35 ILCS 200/15-10)

DECEMBER 18

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 2020 taxes collected in 2021. The filing must actually take place prior to March 1, 2021. (30 ILCS 350/16)

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

DECEMBER 29

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. (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.



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While the natural beauty of our state's parks and natural spaces is timeless, the ways in which people enjoy them are always evolving. Rather than hinder the outdoor experience, technology has enhanced it throughout the years. Cameras started out as large, expensive pieces of equipment, and now they're a standard part of the smartphones that a majority of Americans own. Fitness technology encourages people to get outdoors and lets them track their exercise. Social media helps people share their experiences and recommendations with others.

Technology can also enable park districts, forest preserves and recreation agencies to better communicate with the residents they serve. Many are already using websites, but some are also using mobile and web-based applications in interesting ways. A few examples are highlighted on the following pages.

Exploring the arts through technology

By Kayla Boparai, Office Manager and Kara Dudek, AICP, Park Planner, Urbana Park District

Has a piece of art ever caught your eye as you walk, run or roll through a park? Did you wish that you could learn more about it or visit it again? Highlighting sculptures, murals and cultural pieces, the Urbana Park District Arts & Sculpture Tour allows the community to learn through virtual tours. Users can explore art from home on a computer or tablet or use the web application on a mobile device while wandering through parks.

In response to community enthusiasm for Meadowbrook Park's Wandell Sculpture Garden, the park district created a web application for learning about these sculptures and more. Prior to deciding on a web app, there was concern about the best way to deliver educational material when the collection of art changes. A pamphlet was suggested, but this option did not seem viable in the long term. Next, students from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign designed an initial app. However, changing semesters and classes kept the app from getting off the ground until 2018, when staff began employing the robust ArcGIS Online platform.

After researching different types of maps to best display the sculpture data, we selected a Story Map Tour. Using an ArcGIS Story Map Tour helps efficiently share images and information while geo-locating them (tying them to a specific spot on a map). A viewer can click sequentially through the art pieces, jump around to different parks, interact with the map or even locate their current spot using the "location" button integrated into the app.

Once the Story Map Tour is publicly shared, a web link is generated, and at that point it becomes a web map available to the community. A web app means the interactive map is available online, keeping viewers from having to download something to their mobile device. ArcGIS Online makes it easy for the mapmaker to share the web link through social media accounts and websites.

When the Arts & Sculpture Tour was originally shared on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and the Urbana Park District's website, there was a spike in usage, which is tracked through the analytics portion of ArcGIS Online.

While the list of art is ever evolving, 45 pieces are currently chronicled on the tour, and the community's love of art is a major motivation for the Urbana Park District to continue sharing artists' wonderful work.

Looking into implementing something similar? We recommend looking into a subscription to ArcGIS Online. The robust capabilities of the Story Maps and Story Tours make it easy to create a professional looking app. Gather any images and material you are looking to share before you create the map or tour, and you will be surprised how quickly it comes together. Get inspired by checking out our app here: <https://arcg.is/15WfG5>. Happy mapping!

Reaching a younger audience through a mobile app

By Shelby McDonald, Manager of Field House Operations and Aquatics, Waukegan Park District

As park district staff, we are always searching for new and better ways to reach residents and let them know about the wonderful programs and services the Waukegan Park District provides. With more and more people using smartphones to make plans, search for events and keep their schedules, we knew that expanding to the mobile world would be a good move. Specifically, we were looking to reach and engage a younger audience.

The Waukegan Park District launched our mobile app in spring 2019. It was custom designed to facilitate easy access to park district information, locations and events using a mobile phone, a device most people carry with them constantly. Because it is easy to find and download, information about all the exciting resources in the Waukegan Park District is only a click away. Simply search "Waukegan Park District" in the app store on your smartphone, and you'll be ready to download this great, free resource.

With more and more people using smartphones to make plans, search for events and keep their schedules, we knew that expanding to the mobile world would be a good move. Specifically, we were looking to reach and engage a younger audience.



The opt-in app provides easy access to the park district's website, events, news, field conditions and park information. The app is GIS enabled, which helps users identify amenities and get directions. Additionally, its interactive features enable patrons to check in at parks and facilities, accumulate points and win prizes. Providing mobile access to these services was especially important to us, since usage statistics show more than 50 percent of our population of 89,000 already use mobile phones to access the park district's information. We hoped that transferring that information to an app would encourage even more use, since apps are more mobile-friendly.

To facilitate transparency and receive feedback from the community, the app provides direct access to Waukegan Park District staff. Staff initially launched and promoted it to the park district's 7,000 Field House members to assist in communicating court rentals, fitness class updates and closures and then introduced it to the community at large.

The district is constantly adding and updating information based on feedback from staff and patrons. The app has been a wonderful success, with more than 700 community residents enrolled to date. We hope that community members continue to enjoy the app and that it can serve as a model for other park districts looking to adopt something similar.

An innovative approach to connecting with nature

By Lily Medina, Communications & Marketing Manager, West Chicago Park District, IL

Complex scenarios often force agencies to step out of their modus operandi and seek out innovative solutions. In 2018, the West Chicago Park District took a new approach to tree management by completing a tree inventory and report. This launched our initiative to become an accredited Level II Arboretum. The park district has over 400 acres of parks, woodlands, trails and gardens along with unmanaged areas that contain ecologically significant trees. Working with Urban Forestry Consultant and ISA Certified Arborist, Phil Graf, the park district was able to attain a comprehensive report of its tree population. Research efforts found 2,394 trees of 106 different species in managed areas alone.

The park district then conceived of a unique way to track and maintain its tree population while sharing information about it with park visitors and users.

Using an interactive, web-based application through ArcGIS, available on the park district's website, visitors can

explore the different parks and find out information about the trees around them, including species, height, diameter, crown spread and condition. Data accessed through this application also aids in the efficient management of the trees in order to create productive work plans. The application easily allows park staff to maintain a current tree inventory and effectively work on management and invasive species control. It also provides crucial information to seek grant funding for tree plantings and creates the opportunity to create a tree risk management policy for evaluating trees for potential risk provide, as well as educational courses that relate to the landscape around the community.

"A vast urban forest provides the surrounding community with many benefits, both monetarily quantifiable and intangible," Graf said. "With that comes a great responsibility to manage the tree population in a way that maximizes these benefits while reducing risk to park users."

The new interactive application allows people to connect with nature and learn about their surrounding environment in innovative ways. The park district is working constantly with other organizations to spread the vision of the new arboretum's efforts to preserve natural resources and looks forward to providing courses that will engage residents in nature.

Using the data collected during the tree inventory, GIS maps and management strategies, the park district is moving forward in managing our tree population with greater efficiency and becoming a leader in the field of Urban Forestry.

And we are happy to report that our efforts are paying off. In August of 2019, the West Chicago Park District was awarded a Level II Accreditation by The ArbNet Arboretum Accreditation Program and The Morton Arboretum for achieving standards of professional practices deemed important for arboreta and botanic gardens. The ArbNet Arboretum Accreditation Program is the only global initiative to officially recognize arboreta at various levels of development, capacity and professionalism. The Morton Register of Arboreta is a database of the world's arboreta and gardens dedicated to woody plants.

"The West Chicago Park District has always been known for its amazing forests and wooded parks," said Michael Gasparini, superintendent of parks. "The Level II Arboretum accreditation awarded by ArbNet has given new life to an aging and ever-growing forest."

I N T R O D U C I N G

CYBERSECURITY

TO WEB DEVELOPMENT OPERATIONS

BY RYAN O'HALLORAN, CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER, ACCESS ONE

It might seem contradictory to say that technology, specifically web development, should be an integral part of any park district, forest preserve or recreation agency's business model, but it is absolutely true in 2019.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 86.7 percent of Illinois households have a computer, and 78.4 percent have a broadband Internet subscription. With the prevalence of smartphones, people are increasingly able to access the Internet from anywhere.

The future of communicating with residents who will utilize your parks and facilities lies in building and maintaining a compelling web presence. But websites come with safety concerns that paper forms and brochures do not. You need to be able to reassure users and visitors that any information they share on your website – when registering for classes or programs, for example – is secure. Similarly, you want to protect the investment you made in web development from cyberattacks.

It is no secret that cybercrime is rampant and that malicious attacks will continue to cause organizational loss events that negatively impact business revenues and reputations.

Cybersecurity spending has increased drastically on both preventative and responsive technology controls, and organizations are struggling to find the additional time and money necessary to make cybersecurity, risk analysis and regulatory compliance a part of their broader business culture.

As such, the responsibility for security is frequently spread around staff. While IT security is not an unfamiliar concept to infrastructure system engineers, for example, those tasked with web development might not be as familiar with best practices.

To further complicate matters, information security departments and web developers often have competing needs and interests. Web and software development involves constant modifications and tests. Because things move so quickly, any delay due to security concerns can render the latest update obsolete and push back a successful rollout of a website even further. It is equally challenging for information security departments to get used to the rapid pace and sequencing that a development team thrives in.

Essentially, those who work on cybersecurity and those who develop websites and software can sometimes feel like they're speaking different languages. So, how can your organization begin to tackle this seemingly insurmountable task of marrying cybersecurity and web development?



Fortunately, there is an industry recognized software security framework (SSF) that can be used as a benchmark during development. A software security framework (SSF) is a modeling blueprint for web development best practices, maturity gap identification and issue prioritization when remediating control deficiencies once they are discovered.

Some of the most common software security frameworks in the industry are the Building Security In Maturity Model (BSIMM) and the Software Assurance Maturity Model (SAMM), which is maintained by the Open Web Application Security Project (OWASP).

Both frameworks have similar goals in mind and each has its own strengths and weaknesses.

BSIMM seems to have the most data analytics gathered from commercial businesses that have adopted the framework. This is useful for gaining some transparency into what others are currently doing and comparing yourself and your practices to similar businesses or organizations. BSIMM also places an emphasis on establishing a collaborative community with conferences and networking opportunities.

SAMM, on the other hand, provides more specific and prescriptive instructions based on what is possible in an ideal software security scenario without placing much emphasis on contextual risk analysis. Both approaches are valid and, regardless of the framework chosen, you can rest easy knowing that you do not need to reinvent the wheel to ensure your website is secure.

Once you have the basics of your framework solidified, you'll likely have questions about security related to specific web developments you're working on. Fortunately, the Center for Internet Security clearly outlines a list of CIS Controls, a global standard of recognized best practices for securing IT systems from modern attack methods. The CIS Controls have 20 control categories that are broken out into individual subcategories for guidance. Control number 18 addresses Application Software Security and mentions some specific steps to take to protect yourself and your website:

- 18.1 Establish secure coding practices
- 18.2 Ensure that explicit error checking is performed for all in-house developed software
- 18.3 Verify that acquired software is still supported
- 18.4 Only use up-to-date third party components
- 18.5 Use only standardized and extensively reviewed encryption algorithms
- 18.6 Ensure software development personnel are trained in secure coding

- 18.7 Apply static and dynamic code analysis tools
- 18.8 Establish a process to accept and address reports of software vulnerabilities
- 18.9 Separate production and non-production systems
- 18.10 Deploy web application firewalls (WAF)
- 18.11 Use standard hardening configuration templates for databases

Another extremely useful tool for comprehensive threat profiling is the Open Web Application Security Project (OWASP) Top Ten vulnerabilities in application security. OWASP is an open source community that produces many useful tools that can help you understand developmental threats by summarizing them in a concise and practical manner. The following are the 10 most prominent concerns of which to be aware:

1. Injection
(execution of unintended code against the application)
2. Broken authentication
3. Sensitive data exposure
4. XML external entities
(XML language processing exploits)
5. Broken access control
6. Security misconfigurations
7. Cross-site scripting or XSS
(client-side browser code injection attack)
8. Insecure deserialization
9. Using components with known vulnerabilities
10. Insufficient logging and monitoring

Each of these 10 topics dive deeper into examples and preventative measures, but just starting with increased awareness of these vulnerabilities and how they differ from non-development specific threats is great for improving your web security.

I have included the references below for additional reading in your journey to develop more secure IT processes.

OWASP

https://www.owasp.org/index.php/Category:OWASP_Top_Ten_Project

BSIMM <https://www.bsimm.com>

SAMM <https://www.opensamm.org/>

CIS Controls <https://www.cisecurity.org/controls/>

Websites are a wonderful tool to promote your organization's services, facilities, events, programs and classes. They can also help you store and track valuable data from your users in order to improve their experience. Utilizing the tools above can give you a solid start to make sure that your website and the information it solicits are secure from cyberattacks.



Matt Odom Joins Warrenville Park District

Matt joined the Warrenville Park District in July 2019. He is responsible for the planning, coordination and supervision of recreation and education programs, staff and facilities. He also serves as

the park district safety coordinator. Matt has an undergraduate degree from Olivet Nazarene University and an M.S. in Sport Management from Northern Illinois University. Before coming to Warrenville, Matt spent seven years at the Fox Valley Park District, where he worked at numerous facilities and served in multiple roles, including recreation supervisor and program manager. Previously, Matt also worked for the Bolingbrook Park District and the Yorkville Parks and Recreation Department.



Liz Mitchell has joined the Illinois Association of Park Districts as Publications Director

Liz has nearly a decade of experience in writing, editing, and communications. Her

most recent position was senior writer with the Illinois Senate Democratic Caucus communications staff, where she handled written communications and media relations for high-ranking senators. Previously, she worked in public relations as a writer for Golin in Chicago and as a reporter and editor at several newspapers in Illinois and her home state of Georgia. Liz is a proud graduate of Northwestern University and Mercer University in Macon, Georgia. She lives in Springfield, Illinois with her husband and son.

WebXtra

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