
NILES PARK DISTRICT
Minutes of Decennial Committee on Local Government Efficiency Meeting
Tuesday, November 21, 2023
5:30 pm

Board Members present: Julie Genualdi, President
Dennis O'Donovan, Vice President
Scott O'Brien, Commissioner
Ronnie Strzelecki, Commissioner

Committee Members
present: Pat Byrne
Ray Czarnik
Steve Fischer
George Van Geem
Rich Wlodarski

Staff present: Tom Elenz, Executive Director
Heather Petrie, Executive Administrative Coordinator
Dan Shapiro, Attorney

1. Call to order

President Genualdi called the meeting to order at 5:32 pm on Tuesday, November 21, 2023.

2. Roll Call

Recording Secretary Petrie called the roll. Treasurer Hynes was absent, Joe LoVerde, and Scot Neukirch were absent.

3. Discussion of Materials Provided to Committee Members

On June 10, 2022, Governor Pritzger signed the Local Government Efficiency Act into law. This law requires all Illinois local governments that impose a property tax to form a committee by June 10, 2023, to study local government efficiencies and issue a report to the County Board that unit of government is situated in. Local units of government have been defined as park districts, library districts, forest preserve districts, conservation districts, and townships. The act does not apply to municipalities and counties. The Committee is required to meet at least 3 times and must meet in public in accordance with this act. The Committees' report must be filed by November 16, 2024.

The Committee was provided a preliminary report. IAPD has given the park district a template to follow.

The report begins with a general overview of the Niles Park District stating that the park district is a separate government entity, has its own board, its own revenue source, own tax levy and is separate from all other government bodies. The park district was incorporated in 1954 and follow codes implemented by the State of Illinois.

Currently, the tax levy is about 5% of the local tax bill. 32% of our revenue sources come from property taxes which means 68% comes from other revenue sources. During the past 10 years the levy has been raised about 20% which means a little over 2% a year for the past 10 years.

The Committee was forwarded the park district's policies and some ordinances that show the park district is an efficient government unit. These will be sent to the County along with the Personnel Policy Manual, the Board Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual, Safety Manual, Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, Zero Tolerance Report, Budget Reports and our Investment Policy.

The Park District is part of the MNASR Association that handles programming for residents with special needs, as well as inclusion for any special needs children to participate in Park District programming. The Park District is one of seven other park districts that belong to MNASR.

We do have some intergovernmental agreements (IGA) with other local governments. The Park District is also part of the State Joint Purchasing Program, where companies submit contracts for better pricing on various goods and services. There is one affiliate organization we work with which is Niles Baseball. We have a partnership with Pepsi as our sole beverage provider and in return we get \$10,000 a year for 5 years along with a \$4000 marketing incentive. We also have some cooperation agreements to use local school gym space in exchange for use of our soccer field.

The Park District uses volunteer coaches for basketball and soccer programming. We have 300 volunteer coaches who provided 4000 hours of service to the Park District. The Park District also employs a high number of young people from the community. We are also a part of a couple of joint purchasing programs that save tax dollars.

To show transparency to the community we have documents available on our website such as ordinances, agendas, and minutes. We also have the code of conduct ordinance available to the public, parking ordinances, and employment opportunities. Residents are welcome to attend our board meetings every month. Our appropriation ordinances are available for review by the public. The annual tax levy is approved in an open meeting. Staff is available by email or phone. We participate in the Public Arts Council with the Village of Niles. We've heard community input regarding the Golf Mill Park and Pioneer Park renovations.

The Park District has received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the last several years and Staff has attended the IPAR Conference annually.

The Park Districts offers the use of multiple facilities to the public. Over the last 20 years the Park District has done approximately 30 million dollars in enhancements and new buildings.

The Park District offers many different types of programs, camps, preschool, adult and youth sports, and more, all in house.

Among other services offered to the community is donating a memorial bench or tree to someone. The Teen Center is allowed to use various parks and facilities when programming allows.

There has been a suggestion that the Park District try to work with the Village on reducing the water and sewer charges by paying what the Village pays. We also are charged every year to have the pool inspected. We have tried to have that fee eliminated, but the County will not allow it.

Some of the FOIA requests made of the Park District are very time consuming. Staff is obligated to answer FOIA requests made by residents and nonresidents alike. Last year approximately \$500 in Staff time was spent on fulfilling FOIA requests. This is an area where the State could potentially create some guidelines around fulfilling these requests to make it less burdensome. The Committee suggested that when accounting for time and resources used to fulfill FOIA requests, the amount of time spent doing so may have more impact than the amount of money it costs to do so.

Last year the Park District spent \$20,000 conducting criminal background checks on potential employees and volunteers. The Park District is also required to pay prevailing wage. The Park District is part of the State joint purchasing agreement and also has an agreement with Grainger Industrial Supply where we get government pricing.

4. **Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

5. **Survey of Residents in Attendance**


There were no residents in attendance.

6. **Adjournment**

A motion was made by President Genualdi and seconded by Vice President O'Donovan to adjourn the meeting. Recording Secretary Petrie called the roll:

President Genualdi	Yes
Vice President O'Donovan	Yes
Commissioner O'Brien	Yes
Commissioner Strzelecki	Yes

The motion passed	4-0
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President Genualdi
Board of Commissioners
Date: November 21, 2023



Board Secretary

