

# FOSS PARK DISTRICT Board Policy Manual



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## **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

A park district is a municipal corporation created for the purpose providing park and recreational facilities and programs. A park district is separate and distinct from the city, county, or any other body politic. The District is governed by numerous statutes of the State of Illinois. However, the principle statutory authority is the Park District Code (70 ILCS 1205/1-1, et seq.), which is the codification of the general law relating to park districts in Illinois.

## **1.2 PURPOSE**

This policy manual is intended to describe existing policies which guide the administration and operation of the park district. The Board of Park Commissioners will review this policy manual and revise the policies contained herein to adapt to changing conditions.

## **1.3 LEGAL AUTHORITY FOR THIS MANUAL**

The legal authority for this policy manual is 70 ILCS 1205/8-1(d) of the Park District Code, which states as follows: “(d) To pass all necessary ordinances, rules and regulations for the proper management and conduct of the business of the board and district and to establish by ordinance all needful rules and regulations for the government and protection of parks, boulevards and driveways and other property under its jurisdiction, and to effect the objects for which such districts are formed.”

The statutes of the State of Illinois or any final court decision that is in conflict with the provisions of this policy manual shall supersede the provisions of this policy manual.

## **2.1 BOARD AND ADMINISTRATION**

### **Governance**

The governance of the District is vested in the Board of Park Commissioners. The members of the Board constitute the corporate authorities of the district.

### **Number**

The Board shall be comprised of five (5) Commissioners.

### **Term of Office**

Each term of office for a Commissioner shall be six (6) years. Terms are designated to expire on a staggered system. Commissioners shall serve until their successors are duly elected and qualified. Newly elected Commissioners are traditionally sworn in to office and seated at the May Meeting.

### **Inauguration**

Newly elected or re-elected Commissioners shall be inaugurated at the Board’s annual meeting. At that time, the seated Board shall meet, conduct any unfinished business and then adjourn. The Secretary of the District shall then inaugurate the newly elected Commissioners and the new Board shall then reconvene the meeting.

### **Oath of Office**

All elected and appointed Board members, before entering upon the duties of office, shall take and subscribe to the Oath of Office.

### **Qualifications**

Any person who is a qualified elector, and who has resided within the District for at least one year, is qualified to be a candidate for the Office of Commissioner.

### **Nomination**

A candidate for the Office of Commissioner must file a nominating petition in accordance with the laws of the State of Illinois.

### **Election**

Commissioners shall be elected biennially to take the place of those whose terms expire. Such elections shall take place at the election provided for by the general election law (10 ILCS 5/1-1).

### **Applying for Foss Park District Open Staff Position**

If a Board Member is interested in applying for an open staff position, the Board Member shall resign from the Board first through a resignation letter before submitting any application and/or being considered for an interview.

### **Vacancies in Office**

Whenever any member of the governing board of the District dies, resigns, becomes under legal disability (such that said Commissioner becomes unable to fulfill the duties of the office), ceases to be a legal voter in the District, is convicted of any infamous crime, refuses or neglects to take his or her oath of office, neglects to perform the duties of his or her office or attend meetings of the Board for the length of time as the Board fixes by ordinance, or for any other reason specified by law, that office may be declared vacant.

Once a resignation is received, the Board shall fill the vacancy as quickly as is practical. The Board shall determine how each particular vacancy shall be filled.

Vacancies shall be filled by nomination by the Board and shall be approved by a majority of the remaining members of the Board. Any person so appointed shall hold his or her office until the next regular election for this office, at which a member shall be elected to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term as provided by the laws of the State of Illinois.

### **Compensation**

In accordance with the Park District Code, the Board serves without compensation (70 ILCS 1205/4-1).

## **2.2 BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Board, as a whole, is the legal corporate authority of the District. As an individual, a Commissioner has no legal, *de facto* or apparent authority to determine policy, give directions to District personnel, or to act or speak for the Board unless specifically authorized to do so by official Board action. Commissioners shall represent all of the residents of the District and should avoid representing special interest groups. Commissioners should make nonpartisan decisions regarding District policies and operations based upon reports from committees and staff, facts and study. Policies of the District shall be implemented by the Board through the Executive Director. Any communication between a Commissioner and staff shall be through the Executive Director. The Board recognizes that it is not the function of individual Commissioners to direct staff or to interject themselves into the day-to-day operations of the District.

## **Primary Functions of the Board**

Although the Board is empowered to make all decisions affecting the operations of the District, it shall normally exercise its power by establishing policy and reviewing the implementation of policy by its officers and employees. In addition, the Board shall perform the following specific functions:

- Tax Levy:** Provide for the levy of taxes pursuant to the authority granted by state statutes. Such levies shall provide for the generation of sufficient revenue to pay the cost of the District's operation, subject to applicable legal limitations.
- Use of Funds:** Decide upon the use of funds generated by taxes, revenue-producing facilities and programs, grants and other sources after operational and maintenance costs are paid.
- Make Adjustments.** Enact periodic adjustments in the operational policies of said revenue-producing facilities.
- Hire an Executive Director:** Employ an Executive Director as its chief administrative officer.
- Policies/procedures, Rules and Regulations:** Adopt and periodically review all policies, procedures, rules and regulations affecting personnel and operations.
- Monitor Operational Procedures:** The Board shall regularly monitor whether operational procedures of the District as developed by staff, are effectively implementing the policies established by the Board, and make alterations or additions at regular Board meetings to improve how such procedures effectuate such policies. The individual Board members shall keep themselves informed of the activities and functions of the District by observation, comments from its citizenry and reports presented by the staff of the District. The Board may authorize a comprehensive needs assessment analysis and provide goals and purposes for maintaining statistics to assist in the development of meeting the recreational needs of the community. The Board shall act decisively in the best interest of the District as a whole.
- Philosophy:** Establish the operational philosophy of recreation programming for the District and set fees and charges from time to time.
- Development:** Develop a well-rounded and broadly-based park system which recognizes the diverse needs and interests of the community which the District serves.
- Participation in District Programs and Activities:** Board members are encouraged to participate in District programs and to utilize District facilities.
- Long Range Planning and Evaluation:** The board shall appraise and evaluate the district's parks, programs, services, facilities and personnel to establish long range goals and strategies for planning and delivery of recreation programming, land acquisition and development, and capital improvements and operations. The board shall strive to develop and implement a well-rounded broadly based park district, which recognizes diverse needs and interests of the district. Commissioners are encouraged to attend programs and visit facilities. If a commissioner chooses to participate in a program, the following outlines the fees, discounts and waivers.

## **Leadership**

- Select an Executive Director** to be the chief administrator and professional advisor for the District.
- Establish an effective working relationship** with the Executive Director and provide timely and effective feedback on District progress.
- Formulate, review and adopt effective policies** for the District.
- Develop succession planning** for future Board members and officers.
- Ensure ethical behavior** of Board members and the Executive Director, pursuant to applicable Illinois laws pertaining to ethics and the Park District's ethics ordinances.
- Provide leadership** in decisions affecting the District, including acquisitions, intergovernmental relationships, partnerships, etc.
- Serve on committees, commissions, or boards** representing the District as appointed pursuant to this Policy.

- Communicate direction and the District’s mission throughout the community.
- Develop a legislative advocacy plan that enables the District to benefit from local, state and federal initiatives.
- Cultivate strong relationships with legislators, community leaders and governing bodies of other agencies to further the District’s strategic mission and vision.

### **Community Relationships**

- Maintain visibility at community and District events.
- Work to build public trust and confidence.
- Network with strategic partners, legislators, and community leaders.
- Review District and community needs and ensure service delivery is aligned with those needs.
- Develop ways to ensure community focus.

### **Financial Strategies**

- Review and approve the annual budget in support of the District’s mission.
- Analyze financial reports and authorize expenditures that have been created through a sound fiscal program.
- Approve and issue bonds, referenda and grants that have been identified as appropriate means of increasing revenue.
- Review revenue growth for recreation and enterprise services.
- Order, cooperate, review and accept an annual audit of the District’s financial performance.

### **Processes and Systems**

- Support federal, state and local ordinances, laws and policies for the benefit of the District.
- Approve contracts, leases, annexations and agreements that will enhance and further the mission of the District.
- Review processes that measure and analyze organizational performance.
- Approve plans for parks and facilities and recreation areas with an emphasis on geographical, historical, economical or ecological relationships indigenous or significant to the community.
- Review and provide feedback from guests and internal support processes.
- Conduct a professional evaluation of the Executive Director’s performance on an annual basis.

### **Continuous Learning**

- Develop a culture that promotes positive relations among Board members and between Board and staff.
- Support employee innovation and participation.
- Develop open and ongoing communication with the Executive Director.
- Utilize professional development funds to educate and improve understanding of recreation and leadership practices.
- Execute a self-evaluation on at least a yearly basis.

### **Meeting Attendance**

Commissioners are expected to attend all meetings of the Board of Commissioners.

## **2.3 BOARD OFFICERS’ RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **President**

Preside at all meetings of the Board, except committee meetings where the appointed chair will preside. The President is considered to be a member of the full Board and therefore, able to vote on all matters. The President shall have the following responsibilities:

- Call special Board meetings in accordance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act.
- Establish an effective working relationship with the Executive Director.
- Actively communicate with the Executive Director about special issues and problems affecting the District and disseminate policies established by the Board to the Executive Director.
- Effectively communicate with the Board of Commissioners to ensure all members are kept abreast of important issues affecting the District.
- Work with the Executive Director to prepare Board meeting agendas.
- Schedule an annual Board Evaluation.
- Schedule an annual performance evaluation of the Executive Director.
- Serve on committees, commissions, or boards representing the District.
- Serve as spokesperson for the Board.
- Represent the Board at community and District events.
- Appoint committees as needed, subject to Board approval.
- Appoint Board representatives to outside organizations, subject to Board approval.
- Serve as the official District representative to the Illinois Association of Park Districts and any other official legislative committee that will enhance the goals of the District.
- Shall be elected by the Board and serve a term for two (2) years, or until a successor is elected.

### **Vice President**

In the absence of the President, the Vice-President assumes all the duties of the President. The Vice-President shall be elected by the Board and serve for two (2) year, or until a successor is elected.

### **Secretary**

- Compile and maintain a complete record of all meetings and proceedings of the Board.
- Serve as official custodian of Board minutes, records and legal documents.
- Work with District staff to ensure a comprehensive records management system is in place so that the Board is in compliance with all federal, state and local reporting laws and requirements, including Local Records Act.
- Administer oaths and affirmations as required.
- Sign all official documents of the Board as needed.
- Shall be appointed by the President with the approval of the Board.

### **Treasurer**

- Report to the Board all receipts and disbursements.
- Submit such financial statements and detailed information as may be required by the Board.
- Advise the Board on financial policies, practices and investments.
- Provide such bonds as the Board deems necessary in connection with the office of Treasurer.
- Shall be appointed by the President with the approval of the Board.

### **Executive Director**

- Responsible to and reports to the Board.
- Responsible for the day-to-day operations of the District and overseeing all employees of the District.
- Serve as the administrator for the Board on matters pertaining to all day-to-day Park District operations.
- Function as executive officer of all departments of the District in regards to parks and recreation services, human resources, facilities, land acquisition, planning and financial matters.
- Act as official line of communication between the employees of the District and the Board of Commissioners.

- Establish and maintain an effective working relationship with the Board and provide timely and effective feedback on policies set by the Board.
- Cultivate leadership skills of other employees and create an environment that supports and demonstrates organizational values.
- Serve on committees, commissions or boards representing the District.
- Perform such other duties as required by the Board.

### **Legal Counsel**

- Act as advisor to the Board and Executive Director in all District legal matters.
- Manage the prosecution and defense of all litigation in which the District is interested.
- Establish an effective working relationship with the Executive Director and Board of Commissioners.
- Review Board, Personnel and Administrative policies for compliance with current laws and statutes.
- As directed by the Executive Director, draft and/or review District ordinances prior to adoption by the Board.
- Participate in contract review and negotiations, as directed by the Executive Director or the Board.
- Draft and/or review intergovernmental agreements prior to Board approval.
- Serve as Ethics Advisor for the Park District.

### **Auditor**

- Audit the District's financial records in accordance with the laws of the State of Illinois using generally accepted auditing and accounting practices.
- Conduct an annual audit of the Park District's revenues and expenses and prepare and present an annual report to the Board of Commissioners.

## **2.4 BOARD COMMITTEES**

### **Committee of the Whole, Standing Committees and Appointments**

The Board will approve a regularly scheduled Committee of the Whole meeting. The Committee of the Whole consists of all Commissioners and shall conform to the Illinois Open Meeting Act.

At the Annual Meeting after his/her election as President, the President shall, with the approval of the Board of Park Commissioners, appoint two Board members to the following standing committees: Finance, Golf, Parks and Recreation. The Board shall establish, from time to time, a limited number of additional committees for specific purposes, as designated by the Board, and which have a specific date for concluding their duties. A committee is not authorized to take any action, but is responsible for submitting reports to the Board containing recommendations for action the Board shall take. The Committee possesses no authority to expend District funds.

Committee meetings shall conform to the Illinois Open Meeting Act. Each committee shall consist of two members of the Board, and the first named shall be chairperson. The chairperson or a member of a committee has no separate authority or power to direct the action of employees or to implement new policies by virtue of membership on a particular committee. All committees will make recommendations to the full Board as to its area of responsibility and the full Board shall implement any new policies. The President shall serve as an ex-officio member of each committee. Each member of a committee shall hold office for one year or until his/her successor is appointed. All Board members are encouraged, but not required, to attend all meetings of the standing committees. All vacancies shall be filled by the President and approved by the Board for the unexpired term.

### **Committee of the Whole**

The Committee of the Whole shall consist of all Commissioners. This committee is charged with the consideration of recommendations on all issues related to any Committee.

### **Administration and Finance Committee**

The Finance Committee shall consist of two Commissioners (with one of the Commissioners being appointed chair by the President). This committee is charged with the consideration of recommendations on all issues relating to finance issues. Committee involvement includes, but is not limited to:

- The Committee Chair shall review and approve all bills prior to Board approval.
- Review and participate in development of annual tax levy ordinance and budget and appropriations ordinance.
- Review revenues and expenditures to make sure that the Board's financial goals are met.
- Recommend changes to fiscal policies of the District to meet changing conditions.
- Review annual audit.
- Review of miscellaneous administrative issues impacting the overall District.
- Recommend goals for the Executive Director and staff to the Board relative to District financial operations.
- Provide monthly committee reports during the Regular Board Meeting.
- Support committee recommendations when presented to the Board.

### **Parks Committee**

The Parks Committee shall consist of two Commissioners (with one of the Commissioners being appointed chair by the President). This committee is charged with the consideration of recommendations on all issues relating to the parks and facilities of the District. Committee involvement includes, but is not limited to:

- Participate in developing revenue policies.
- Review pricing.
- Review program and membership statistics.
- Review of miscellaneous issues impacting the parks and facilities.
- Provide monthly committee reports during the Regular Board Meeting.
- Support committee recommendations when presented to the Board.

### **Golf Committee**

The Golf Committee shall consist of two Commissioners (with one of the Commissioners being appointed chair by the President). This committee is charged with the consideration of recommendations on all issues relating to driving range, golf administration, golf operations and golf maintenance for the District. Committee involvement includes, but is not limited to:

- Review pricing.
- Review round, daily play, and membership statistics.
- Review miscellaneous issues impacting the District's golf, clubhouse and pro shop operations.
- Provide monthly committee reports during the Regular Board Meeting.
- Support committee recommendations when presented to the Board.

### **Recreation Committee**

The Recreation Committee shall consist of two Commissioners (with one of the Commissioners being appointed chair by the President). This committee is charged with the consideration of recommendations on all issues relating to the recreation programs of the District. Committee involvement includes, but is not limited to:

- Participate in developing recreation opportunities for residents of the District.
- Review program and membership statistics and make recommendations based upon staff input as to recreation programs.
- Review of miscellaneous issues impacting recreation programs.
- Provide monthly committee reports during the Regular Meeting.
- Support committee recommendations when made to the Board.

## **3.1 BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETINGS**

### **Annual Meeting**

The Annual Meeting of the Board shall be held each year in May. This shall be the organizational meeting of the Board where new Commissioners are generally inaugurated. The President and Vice President shall be elected by the Board; the Secretary, Treasurer, and Attorney shall be appointed by the President subject to Board approval; and the standing committees of the Board shall be established. Other business may be transacted at this meeting.

### **Regular Meetings**

Regular meetings of the Board shall be held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. unless otherwise stipulated by the Board. If the day of any meeting falls on a legal holiday, the meeting shall be held when designated by the Board. Each year, the Board shall establish a calendar of workshops and regular meetings for the next year and shall give public notice of the same in accordance with Section 2.02 of the Open Meetings Act.

### **Special Meetings**

Special meetings of the Board may be called by the President whenever it shall be deemed necessary, or shall be called by the President at the request of any two Commissioners. Notice of any such special meetings shall be given as required by the Open Meetings Act.

### **Place of Meetings**

The meetings of the Board shall be held at the Foss Park District Community Center, 1730 Lewis Avenue, North Chicago, Illinois, unless otherwise determined by the Board.

### **Open Meetings**

All regular, annual, special and committee meetings of the Board shall be held in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

### **Closed Meeting**

The Board may hold a meeting closed to the public, or close a portion of the meeting to the public for any reason authorized by the Open Meetings Act. Any such closed meeting shall be held in accordance with the Open Meetings Act. No final action on any matter may be taken at a closed meeting.

### **Order of Business**

The agenda at regular and special meetings of the Board shall be established by the Board from time-to-time. Only reports and items requiring the attention of the Board at a designated meeting shall actually appear on the agenda.

## **Agenda**

The Executive Director, with suggestions from the Board President and Board members, shall be charged with responsibility for the preparation of the agenda and the subject matter thereof. Any Board member may request that a particular item of business be placed on the agenda before a Board meeting. Items shall be listed on the Agenda in order for the Board to act on them. The agenda shall be available and posted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

## **Public Participation at Board Meetings**

The agenda item “Citizen Comments” is included on all regular meeting agendas to provide an opportunity for citizens to address the Board on matters regarding the District. Once all citizens have had an opportunity to address the Board, the President should close the floor to further communication from citizens.

All discussions after the floor has been closed for citizen comments shall be between Board members and with staff as requested. Citizens should not be recognized after that time in order that the Board members may deliberate without additional comments or discussion with citizens.

There shall be a three-minute time limit per citizen. The amount of time may be increased at the discretion of the President in his or her reasonable discretion with the consent of the Board.

Additional discussion from citizens shall be left to the discretion of the President. However, the justification for permitting a second opportunity for citizens to address the Board at the same meeting should be based on the premise that new information will be presented to the Board.

The citizen comment part of a Board meeting shall not be used by citizens to make personal attacks upon Board Members, staff or District consultants. The President and Board reserve the right to stop a citizen who is disorderly from speaking at a meeting or to prohibit a citizen from speaking at future meetings due to repeated disorderly conduct.

## **Manner of Voting**

The President shall be empowered to call for questions pertaining to any and all properly presented and seconded motions. A voice vote may be used if deemed appropriate by the President. On all matters that require an ordinance, resolution, proposition creating any liability or calling for the expenditure or appropriation of money, and in all cases at the request of any Commissioner, a roll call vote shall be taken.

All roll call votes shall be recorded in the official minutes of the meeting. The act of a majority of Commissioners present at a meeting for which there is a quorum shall be the act of the Board. The President is a member of the Board and has the right to vote upon all questions.

## **Rules of Order**

*Robert’s Rules of Order* shall govern questions or procedure in all cases not herein provided.

## **Conduct at Meetings**

All Board meetings shall be conducted to foster a positive environment for attending to the business of the District. As such, all Commissioners shall act in a respectful manner to other Commissioners, staff and citizens. Yelling, outbursts, personal criticism of Commissioners and staff shall not be tolerated.

## **Motions, Resolutions, Ordinances and Records**

The Park District Code provides that the Board shall have power “to pass all necessary ordinances, rules and regulations for the proper management and conduct of the business of the Board and District and to establish by ordinance all needful rules and regulations for the government and protection of parks, greenways, open space, and other property under its jurisdiction and to effect the objects for which such districts are formed.”

The Board usually acts by way of a motion, resolution, or ordinance. Motions are an informal method of Board action made orally and noted in the minutes. A motion may be auxiliary to the more formal resolution or ordinance, as, for example, a motion that an ordinance be passed.

Resolutions and ordinances are submitted in writing, and there is no clear distinction between them. An ordinance usually enacts permanent regulations of a general character and generally imports a command or prohibition to all inhabitants of, or to certain classes, in the District.

Resolutions are actions that are temporary only, that grant a special privilege or express the opinion of the Board, such as expressing sympathy or requesting action by governmental units, etc. The Park District Code, in many instances, directs that an action must be carried out by ordinance, and in those cases, such matters can be acted upon only by ordinance.

An ordinance can be repealed or amended only by another ordinance, not by resolution. The distinguishing feature of the ordinance is that it must contain the words: "Be it ordained by..." An ordinance need not have a title or a number.

### **Official Minutes**

All final action taken by the Board shall be taken in an open meeting and recorded by the Secretary. The Secretary is charged with keeping an accurate and true record of all motions, resolutions and ordinances, as well as a summary of the discussion on any matter proposed, deliberated or decided and of any votes taken in an official minute book. All minutes will be considered "unofficial" until adopted by the Board at a subsequent meeting.

The Secretary or his or her designee shall be responsible for the taking and preparation of minutes of each meeting. Closed session minutes will be kept in a separate book and not made part of the official minute book of the District.

The Secretary shall be responsible for arranging the recording of closed sessions as required by the Open Meetings Act. The Secretary shall ensure that the verbatim recordings of all closed sessions of meetings of the Board are securely maintained.

The Board of Commissioners shall meet at least twice each year to review the minutes of all prior closed session meetings. This review will take place in closed session. The Board must determine whether the need for confidentiality still exists with regard to all or part of particular minutes, or whether all or part of the minutes no longer require confidential treatment and therefore should be made available for public inspection. The approval process shall be determined in closed session. The audio tape recordings of closed sessions shall be maintained for 18 months after the closed session and shall not be released to the public unless such release is required by court order or specifically authorized for release by a vote of the Board. Members of the Board may listen to the closed session recordings in the presence of the Secretary. Copies of closed session recordings or tapes will not be made or provided to anyone unless specifically authorized by a vote of the Board.

### **Disposal of Closed Session Tapes**

The Secretary is authorized to destroy the audio recordings of those closed sessions for which:

- The Board has approved the minutes of the closed sessions as to accurate content, regardless of whether the minutes have been released for public review;
- More than 18 months have elapsed since the date of the closed session;
- There is no court order requiring the preservation of such recording; and
- The Board has not passed a motion requiring the preservation of the verbatim recording of that meeting.

## **4.1 BOARD MEMBER ETHICS AND CONDUCT**

Board members are expected to be of high moral and ethical character and to work together as a team to serve the community. Each Board member is expected to act in the best interests of the District

and to be free of outside influence and self-interests. In accordance with this policy, Board members will educate themselves about, and comply with, all other federal, state and local laws, regulations, and ordinances applicable to the conduct of the District's elected officials. These include, but are not limited to, District Ordinances, the Ethics Ordinance, the Public Officers Prohibited Activities Act, and the Illinois Human Rights Act.

Accordingly, Board members must:

- On a yearly basis, file a Statement of Economic Interests with the County Clerk of Lake County.
- Always keep the best interests of the District in mind.
- Understand and respect the separation of Board responsibilities and functions from those of the Executive Director and staff.
- Be available and responsive to the residents of the District.
- Represent all the residents of the District and avoid partisanship based on special interests.
- Communicate with fellow Board members and the Executive Director.
- Understand and follow all provisions of the Illinois Open Meetings Act and comply with all training requirements under the Act.
- Be properly prepared for Board deliberation and Board meetings.
- Avoid public promises or statements regarding a vote or position on an issue prior to an official meeting.
- Publicly accept and endorse majority decisions of the Board.
- Be respectful of employees of the District and report employee's concerns or issues to the Executive Director or other members of the Board when appropriate.
- Make decisions regarding District policies and operations based upon reports, facts, and study, and not upon personal interest or bias.
- Respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature, including but not limited to closed session matters and matters related to employees of the District.
- Recognize that an individual Commissioner has no legal authority to determine policy, give directions to District personnel, or to act or speak for the Board unless specifically authorized to do so by official Board action.
- When the Board must decide upon an issue about which a Commissioner may have an unavoidable conflict of interest, that Commissioner must disclose the interest, and recuse him/herself from all discussion, deliberation and vote regarding the issue, as required by applicable state and federal law.
- Develop productive relationships with other elected officials at the federal, state, and local level.
- Participate in Board development opportunities and training sessions.

## **5.1 REMOTE ATTENDANCE POLICY**

### **Policy Statement**

1. It is the policy of the District that any member of the Board may attend and participate in any open or closed meeting of the Board from a remote location via telephone, video or internet connection in accordance with the ordinance authorizing the same and the Open Meetings Act provided:

1. A quorum of the Board of Commissioners is physically present for the meeting.

2. The member or members who desire to attend by video or audio conference have given the President at least two hours advance notice that the Commissioner is unable to physically attend the meeting due to a (a) personal illness; (b) employment purpose or the business of the Board of Commissioners; or (c) a family or other emergency.

3. Members should use all means necessary to personally attend all meetings and the Board of Commissioners may revoke the right to attend a meeting by video or audio conference if a member is

abusing the privilege to attend by video or audio conference.

4. When a member is attending by video or audio conference, the President shall, upon taking the roll, announce to the public that a member is attending by video or audio conference. The minutes shall reflect that a member or members were attending by video or audio conference. The video or audio equipment shall be of such quality that the members present and the public shall be able to hear the comments of the member participating by video or audio conference.

5. The member attending by video or audio conference shall have the same rights to participate in discussions and vote as if the member was physically present.

6. If the member is able to provide notice 48 hours in advance of the meeting, the agenda shall note that a member will be attending by video or audio conference.

## **6.1 NEW BOARD MEMBER ORIENTATION**

The Board recognizes its responsibility to assist newly elected or appointed Board members to understand the operation of the District, as well as the role and responsibilities of Board members. The Executive Director and Board President will endeavor to meet with new Board members regarding the operation and policies of the District.

Additionally, the Executive Director may set up a tour of parks and recreation facilities, and meetings with the leadership team of the District, in order for new Commissioners to become more familiar with the operations of each department.

New members are encourage to take IAPD orientation classes and attend conferences to quickly increase their knowledge of District and Board operations.

## **7.1 BOARD BUDGET**

The Board recognizes the need to properly educate, orient, and train Commissioners to the mission and goals of the District. The Board will allocate sufficient funds in the budget for these purposes which will be developed by staff and approved by the Board as part of the annual budget process.

## **7.2 BOARD DEVELOPMENT**

The Board recognizes the benefit derived from attendance at park and recreation conferences, leadership seminars and other educational opportunities that will enhance a Commissioner's ability to govern effectively. Therefore, Commissioners may attend national, state and local conferences, seminars or activities at Park District expense, provided sufficient funds have been budgeted and are available. The Board also recognizes the importance of productive evaluation so sufficient funds will be allocated for the Board to conduct at a minimum an annual Board self-evaluation.

## **7.3 ALLOWABLE EXPENSES**

Only those expenses necessary for training, development and other reasonable expenses incurred related to the exercise of official duties are allowed. Activities such as conferences, training sessions and educational seminars are examples of and considered allowable expenses.

Authorized travel or other expenses incurred by either the Commissioners or staff members which are related to and pre-approved by the District shall be reimbursed upon documentation of such expenses in accordance with this policy and IRS guidelines, policies, rules and regulations.

- In conjunction with the preparation of the budget and appropriation ordinance of the District for each fiscal year, the Board shall determine the aggregate amount of funds to be made available for Commissioners to attend meetings and conferences.

- Prior to each approved meeting or conference, the Board shall designate those Park Commissioners who will attend.

- The Board shall designate approved conferences and meetings which may include but are not limited to the following:

- A. Meetings sponsored by the National Recreation and Park Association which include park commissioners' educational sessions.

- B. Meetings sponsored by the Illinois Association of Park Districts which include park commissioner educational sessions; and

- C. Meetings sponsored by the Illinois Park and Recreation Association, which include park commissioner educational sessions.

- The District shall reimburse Commissioners for, or advance to Commissioners, the actual and necessary expenses incurred for travel to and attendance at approved meetings or conferences in accordance with IRS guidelines, policies, rules and regulations. An original receipt or equivalent evidence of an expense shall be submitted for each expense exceeding \$25. Such documentation shall clearly designate how it is related to a meeting or conference. If amounts are advanced for a meeting or conference, receipts or equivalent evidence of expenses shall be submitted to the District following the meeting or conference. Any sums which were advanced and not spent at a meeting or conference shall be returned to the District within ten (10) days after the event.

- If a Commissioner indicates his or her intention to attend an approved meeting or conference and subsequently notifies the District of his or her intention not to attend such event, or fails to attend such event, the Commissioner shall reimburse the District in full for all expenses incurred or monies advanced by the District on behalf of the Commissioner in connection with the event within ten (10) days of the scheduled event.

- No money for expenses shall be advanced to any Commissioner nor shall any Commissioner be reimbursed, for any expenses incurred on behalf of any person other than such Commissioner, unless

authorized in advance by the Board. No authorization shall be given for any such expense which is not related to the business and affairs of the District.

- Commissioners shall provide the Board with a report of educational sessions attended at approved meetings and conferences, which shall contain a brief description of subject matter and recommendations or ideas pertinent to the operations of the District, if any.
- Use of personal vehicles for District business shall be reimbursed at the then current IRS determined auto expense reimbursement rate.

## **7.4 CREDIT CARDS**

If a Commissioner is issued a credit card by the District, the credit card shall only be used for District business in accordance with this policy. Any time a credit card is used, receipts shall be submitted to the business manager of the District within ten (10) days. Any charge on a credit card which is not substantiated with a receipt shall be paid by the Commissioner who incurred the charge. Under no circumstances shall a Commissioner use a District credit card for any personal or other expense unrelated to the business of the District. Under no circumstance shall a Commissioner allow any other person to use a District credit card.

Commissioners shall safeguard any credit cards issued to them by the District against theft or unauthorized use and shall immediately report a lost or stolen credit card to the District's business manager so that the credit card can be cancelled. Similarly, a Commissioner shall immediately report any unauthorized use or charges or other fraud related to the credit card to the District's business manager so that the credit card can be cancelled. All credit cards shall remain in the Business Office and will be issued before travel for conferences.

## **7.5 TRAVEL POLICY**

### **A. Purpose.**

The Board of Commissioners of the Foss Park District will reimburse employee and officer travel, meal, and lodging expenses incurred in connection with pre-approved travel, meal, and lodging expenses incurred on behalf of the Park District. Employees and officers are expected to exercise the same care in incurring expenses for official business as a prudent person would in spending personal funds.

### **B. Definitions.**

"Entertainment" includes, but is not limited to, shows, amusements, theaters, circuses, sporting events, or any other place of public or private entertainment or amusement, unless ancillary to the purpose of the program or event.

"Travel" means any expenditure directly incident to official travel by employees and officers of the Park District or by wards or charges of the Park District involving reimbursement to travelers or direct payment to private agencies providing transportation or related services.

### **C. Authorized Types of Official Business.**

Travel, meal and lodging expenses shall be reimbursed for employees and officers of the Park District only for purposes of official business conducted on behalf of the Park District, which includes but is not limited to off-site or out-of-town meetings related to official

business and pre-approved seminars, conferences and other educational events related to the employee's or officer's official duties. If you are unsure whether an expense is reimbursable, please contact the Executive Director.

**D. Categories of Expenses.**

1. **Airfare** – Travelers are expected to obtain the lowest available airfare that reasonably meets business travel needs. Travelers are encouraged to book flights at least thirty (30) days in advance to avoid premium airfare pricing. Only coach or economy tickets will be paid or reimbursed. The traveler will pay for the difference between higher priced tickets and coach or economy tickets with his or her personal funds.
2. **Personal Automobiles** –Mileage reimbursement will be based on mileage from the work location office to the off-site location of the official business, not from the employee's or officer's residence. When attending a training event or other off-site official business directly from an employee's or officer's residence, no reimbursement will be made if the distance is less than the mileage of a normal commute to the workplace. If the distance is lower than the employee's or officer's normal commute, reimbursement will be paid based on the differential of the commute less the mileage of a normal commute to the workplace. An employee or officer will be reimbursed at the prevailing IRS mileage rate. The traveler will only be reimbursed up to the price of a coach airfare ticket if they drive to a location for which airfare would have been less expensive.
3. **Automobile Rentals** – Travelers will be reimbursed for the cost of renting an automobile including gasoline expense only as provided in this section. Travelers using rental cars to conduct official business are required to purchase insurance through the rental agency. Car rental insurance will cover the vehicle during personal use, e.g., using the vehicle after the conference has ended. Compact or mid– size cars are required for two or fewer employees or officers traveling together and a full– size vehicle may be used for three or more travelers. The traveler must refuel the vehicle before returning it to the rental company.
4. **Public Transportation** – In the case of local training or official business where an employee or officer chooses to use public transportation, reimbursement for use of public transportation shall be the cost of the public transportation plus any mileage in accordance with this policy.
5. **Other Transportation** – The traveler should utilize hotel shuttle service or other shuttle services, if available. If none are offered, the use of the most economic transportation is encouraged.
6. **Hotel/Motel Accommodations** – The traveler will be reimbursed for a standard single-room at locations convenient to the business activity. Hotel/motel accommodations are to be reserved in advance and secured at a moderate or

conference rate. Reimbursement for lodging shall be limited to the number of nights required to conduct the assigned Park District business. If a conference, for example, opens on a Sunday evening and closes Thursday noon, reimbursement for Sunday through Wednesday night would be allowed. In the event of a change in plans or a cancellation, the traveler must cancel the hotel/motel reservation so as not to incur cancellation charges. Cancellation charges will not be reimbursed by the Park District unless approved by a vote of the Board of Commissioners.

7. **Meals** Meal expenses and reimbursements are limited to the current U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) per diem rate for the location of travel at the time the expense is incurred. Receipts shall be submitted to substantiate all reimbursable expenses within 14 days after expenses are incurred. Per diem amounts shall be issued prior to travel.
8. **Vacation in Conjunction with Business Travel** – In cases where vacation time is added to a business trip, any cost variance in airfare, car rental, lodging and/or any other expenses must be clearly identified on the Travel, Meal, and Lodging Expense Report form and paid by the traveler.
9. **Accompanied Travel** – Family members may accompany the traveler when traveling on official Park District business. However, no expenses attributable to any family member will be reimbursable. All expenses will be calculated as if the traveler were traveling alone, using the minimum costs to the Park District for lodging, meals, and transportation.
10. **Parking** – Parking fees at a hotel/motel will be reimbursed only with a receipt.
11. **Entertainment Expenses** - No employee or officer of the Park District shall be reimbursed for any entertainment expense, unless ancillary to the purpose of the program, event or other official business.

**E. Approval of Expenses.**

1. **Expenses for Members of the Board of Commissioners.** Travel, meal, and lodging expenses incurred by any member of the Board of Commissioners must be approved by roll call vote at an open meeting of the Board of Commissioners. Travel, meal and lodging expenses which are included and approved in the annual budget and which are paid directly by the Park District or are advanced as a per diem allowance are not subject to this requirement. Documentation of expenses must be provided in accordance with the requirements of this policy.
2. **Other Expenses.** All other expenses that do not fall within paragraph E.1 are subject to the Executive Director's approval.
3. **Emergency Expenses.** Travel, meal and lodging expenses incurred by any member of the Board of Commissioners, official or employee due to an

emergency or other extraordinary circumstances in excess of the then-current per diem rate established by the GSA must be approved at an open meeting by a majority roll-call vote of the Board of Commissioners.

**F. Documentation of Expenses.**

Before an expense for travel, meals, or lodging may be approved under Section E of this Policy, the following minimum documentation must first be submitted, in writing, to the Executive Director on a Travel, Meal, and Lodging Expense form:

- (1) an estimate of the cost of travel, meals, or lodging if expenses have not been incurred or a receipt of the cost of the travel, meals, or lodging if the expenses have already been incurred;
- (2) the name of the individual who received or is requesting the travel, meal, or lodging expense;
- (3) the job title or office of the individual who received or is requesting the travel, meal, or lodging expense; and
- (4) the date or dates and nature of the official business for which the travel, meal, or lodging expense was or will be expended.

All documents and information submitted under this Section are public records subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act.

**G. Travel, Meal, and Lodging Expense Report Form.**

The Park District hereby adopts as its official standardized form for the submission of travel, meal, and lodging expenses the Travel, Meal, and Lodging Expense Report form attached hereto and incorporated herein as Attachment 1.

**H: Maximum Reimbursement.**

The maximum total amount the Park District will reimburse a traveler for a single trip is \$4000.00. The maximum amount may be increased because of emergency or other extraordinary circumstances when approved by the Board of Commissioners at a roll call vote at a meeting.

**FOSS PARK DISTRICT**

**TRAVEL, MEAL AND LODGING EXPENSE  
REIMBURSEMENT FORM**

**Name of Official or Employee:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Title/Position of Official or Employees:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name and Date of the Activity/Event:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Check Number (if applicable):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Credit Card Receipt Number (if applicable):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Description of the purpose of the expense:**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Reimbursement Expense (Estimated Costs or Actual Costs with receipts, if applicable):**

Mileage: \_\_\_\_\_

Meals: \_\_\_\_\_

Parking: \_\_\_\_\_

Hotel/Lodging: \_\_\_\_\_

Car rental: \_\_\_\_\_

Airfare: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Transportation (bus, train, taxi, shuttle, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

**Employee's/Officer's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Executive Director's Authorization** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ATTACH ALL RECEIPTS**

## **7.6 PROFESSIONAL AND CIVIC MEMBERSHIPS**

The Board shall subscribe to memberships for the District in the following organizations:

- National Recreation and Park Association
- Illinois Association of Park Districts.
- Other organizations which provide benefits to the District as approved by the Board

When the membership allows, the Board shall designate a representative of the District who shall, if applicable, be authorized to cast ballots for any action to be voted upon by the District as it relates to membership in these organizations. Each District representative will keep the Board fully informed of all activities and actions taken by said organizations.

## **8.1 REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION**

The Board recognizes and respects the delegation of authority and responsibility to the Executive Director for the day-to-day management and operation of the District. Therefore, Board members shall work directly with the Executive Director rather than individual staff members and shall not participate in the day-to-day operations of the District. Requests for information concerning District operations and programs shall be directed to the Executive Director. When a Board member receives a written request or concern from a resident, all Board members will receive a copy of the same information.

## **9.1 ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION**

### **Forms and Use of Electronic Communications**

The District provides and maintains electronic mail (e-mail), telephone voice mail, Internet access, fax machines, and computer hardware and software. Use of these forms of communication is limited to staff, the Board and authorized volunteers.

### **General Guidelines and Principles**

*Ownership* – All electronic communications, as well as the equipment and stored information transmitted, received, or archived, are, and remain at all times, the property of the District.

Accordingly, all messages and files created, sent, received, or stored within the system shall be related only to the business of the District and are, and shall remain, the property of the District and are likely public records for purposes of the Freedom of Information Act, as set forth herein.

*Privacy* – Commissioners shall not have any right of personal privacy in any matter stored in, created, received, or sent over the District’s email system. The District reserves the right to retrieve and review any message or file composed, sent or received. It should be noted that although a message or file is deleted or erased, it is still possible to recreate the message. Although email and voice mail may allow the use of passwords for security, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. It is possible for messages to be retrieved and viewed by someone other than the intended recipient. Furthermore, the District may remove or change passwords, as it deems fit.

*Public Records* – Commissioners should expect that all e- mail messages sent or received by Commissioners from, or at, any source pertaining to the business of the District are “public records” under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act. As such, it should be expected that all e-mail messages are available to the public to inspect and copy, subject to the exceptions contained in the law.

*Confidentiality* – The confidentiality of e-mail is not guaranteed and Commissioners should have no expectation of privacy relative to the content of any e-mails. Electronic messages may be monitored by service providers as authorized by District officials, and may be compromised by unauthorized or unintended distribution. Confidentiality may also be compromised because of inadequacy of current

technology to protect against unauthorized access. All e-mail messages should therefore be limited to non-confidential matters.

*Non-Public Prohibitions* – Commissioners are also prohibited from using e-mail to seek out personal or confidential information regarding Park District employees, contracts, finances, or other non-public matters.

*Network Use* – The safety and security of the Park District’s computer systems and resources must be considered at all times. Users may not share any passwords, nor obtain any other user’s password by any unauthorized means.

*Backup Guidelines* – For the protection of the Park District’s computer users, all data, documents, and e-mail messages will be stored on the Park District’s computer network.

*Violations* – Violations of this policy may result in corrective action. If necessary, the District may advise appropriate legal officials for any violations.

*Administration* – The Executive Director is responsible for administering this policy.

*E-mail Account Usage* – E-mail accounts provided by the District shall not be used for:

- Disseminating or printing copyrighted materials, including articles and software, in violation of copyright laws.

- Sending, receiving, printing or otherwise disseminating proprietary data, trade secrets or other

- Sending or soliciting sexually oriented or harassing statements, messages, images or language;

- Operating a business, taking advantage of business opportunities or soliciting money for personal gain;

- Sending or circulating chain letters, jokes, comics, or non-related computer graphics;

- Gambling or engaging in any other activity in violation of local state or federal law.

Confidential information of the District in violation of District policy of proprietary agreements;

*Copying of Records* – Upon receipt of a request for copies of e-mail messages, the Executive Director shall review the archive of stored messages to determine if any documents exist which are responsive to such request. If responsive documents are found, the Executive Director shall review the exceptions to the Freedom of Information Act, and shall consult with the District attorney, if necessary, to determine if any exceptions to disclosure apply to the requested records. Documents which are not exempt shall be disclosed as required by the Freedom of Information Act. If exempt documents are requested, the Executive Director shall notify the requesting party in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

*Destruction of Records* – The e-mail messages stored by the District shall be destroyed in accordance with the State Records Act.

*Private E-mail Accounts and Hardware* – Commissioners must be aware that e-mail message sent from their private e-mail accounts (e.g. g-mail or Yahoo) regarding District Business are likely also required to be produced under the Freedom of Information Act even if they are sent from private computers, tablets or smartphones which are owned by a Commissioner and not the District.

Similarly, SMS and MMS text messages on private devices are also likely to be subject to production under the Freedom of Information Act.

These items are not intended to be an exhaustive list.

### **E-mail Use and the Open Meetings Act**

The Open Meetings Act defines “meeting” as “any gathering whether in person or by video or audio conference, telephone call, electronic means (such as without limitation, electronic mail, electronic chat, and instant messaging), or other means of contemporaneous interactive communication, of a majority of a quorum of the members of a public body held for the purpose of discussing public business.” E-mail may be used to discuss the business of the District in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

The following are examples of permitted use of e-mail by Commissioners to discuss business of the District:

- E-mails between two Commissioners only with no other Commissioners copied;
- One email from a Commissioner to all other Commissioners provided it is not responded to;
- E-mails between any numbers of Commissioners not addressing the public business of the District.

The following are examples of impermissible use of e-mail:

- Instant messaging involving a discussion of public business by more than two Commissioners;
- Chat rooms where more than two Commissioners may view written exchanges on matters of public business;
- E-mails between two Commissioners which include e-mails pertaining to the same subject from a third Board member copied or attached;
- Any e-mail by a third Commissioner in response to any e-mail between two Commissioners;
- Any other e-mail or sequence of e-mails through which more than two Commissioners express opinions, make statements or examine the reasons for or against a matter now before the Board or a matter that is reasonably likely to come before the Board in the future.

## **10.1 AUTHORITY TO MODIFY POLICY - AMENDMENT**

This Policy may be amended from time to time by action of the Board of Commissioners in its sole discretion.