TRAINING & RESOURCES FOR CURRENT AND FUTURE BOARD MEMBERS

The Illinois Association of Park Districts has a number of resources that are available to you as a candidate and as an elected board member.

These resources include such important publications as The Park District Code, the Illinois Park District Law Handbook, and the Guide to the Open Meetings Act and FOIA.

In addition, the IAPD helps board members understand the financial procedures of Illinois park districts with such publications as the Illinois Park District Financial Procedures and the Guide to Public Sector Employment Laws.

We encourage you to visit our website at ILparks.org and take advantage of the plethora of member resources that are available to you as you build your understanding of the park district system in Illinois.

As a newly elected board member, you will be receiving the Illinois Parks and Recreation magazine which contains timely information on trends and governance issues.

The IAPD also has robust educational offerings for new and seasoned board members alike and you are encouraged to participate in these throughout the year, such as:

- The opportunity to track your board service and education by applying for IAPD Board Development Program.
- The IAPD offers the Board Self-Evaluation that allows a board to take a look at themselves to determine their level of effectiveness and efficiency of operation. This specialized training will be of great benefit to new board members as well as seasoned board members. It defines roles and responsibilities, describes duties for oversight and governance and assists in defining leadership within the agency.

To find out more about IAPD’s online resources or other IAPD educational services, contact:

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Visit the IAPD online at ILparks.org
SO YOU WANT TO SERVE ON THE PARK DISTRICT BOARD... WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

By Peter Murphy, President and CEO
Illinois Association of Park Districts

If you are appointed or elected to the park board, you will become a leader who has accepted a major civic responsibility. You should be willing to make a commitment to give freely of your time and talents to help strengthen and further the park, recreation and conservation mission of your community.

As a board member, you will take on the responsibility for helping to set goals, formulate policies and establish services that will meet the present and future needs of the citizens of your district. The success of your agency depends to a great extent on how well you understand your role and how effectively you address your responsibilities as a board member.

More than 2,100 citizens serve on Illinois park district, forest preserve and recreation boards. Effective board members are respected citizens, well known and active in community affairs and interested in the total recreational needs of their communities.

Serving without compensation, locally elected commissioners represent their fellow citizens and interpret their views. They have the primary responsibility of spending tax monies, fees and donations designated for park and recreation services. They spend, and spend wisely, millions of dollars every year.

The Illinois Association of Park Districts publishes books, provides training and assists board members in their desire to serve the public.

Effective Board Members:

• Have an attitude of cooperation, open-mindedness and objectivity.
• Are motivated only by a desire to serve the citizens and the agency.
• Work with the executive, not over or around him or her.
• Inspire the community’s confidence, respect and support.
• Spend time in board meetings on strategic planning, policies and procedures, not on operational details that are the executive’s responsibility.
• Make no disparaging remarks about the agency, other board members or their opinions.
• Keep high ethical standards.
• Display a talent for working well with others.
• Do not promise voting outcomes prior to learning the facts of any issue.
• Do not make decisions until all sides of an issue have been presented.
• Support board decisions even when a decision conflicts with personal views.