

*announcement of vacancy for*  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**



**PARK DISTRICT**  
of HIGHLAND PARK

*[www.pdhp.org](http://www.pdhp.org)*



## About

### THE COMMUNITY

The City of Highland Park is located 25 miles north of the Chicago Loop, along Lake Michigan. Metra train stations and Pace bus stops located throughout the city make Highland Park easily accessible. The city is also accessible to one of Chicago's major expressways, Interstate 94, with the Illinois Tollway just minutes away and O'Hare International Airport only 18 miles away.

The district serves approximately 30,000 residents within 13,000 households residing in the City of Highland Park and a small portion of the Village of Deerfield.

The community is highly educated (67% of residents have - post secondary degrees) with a median household income of \$119,126 and a median age of 45.4 years.

Celebrating its 150th anniversary in 2019, Highland Park is best known for its vibrant downtown shops and restaurants, beautiful parks and award-winning beaches, world renowned Ravinia Festival and a community filled with art, history and culture. Annually, since 1980, the USDA Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters have awarded Highland Park their highest national honor, Tree City USA. Highland Park's neighborhoods are filled with a unique mix of housing, ranging from historic colonials that date back to the mid-1800s, to award-winning contemporary homes and modern downtown condominiums.

### PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK

The Park District of Highland Park is one of the oldest districts in the state of Illinois. Established in 1909, it was shaped by a progressive group of people who believed in protecting open space and providing recreation for all – a belief that remains at the core of the district's mission.

Today, the park district owns and operates more than 700 acres of land in 44 park areas which include community parks, neighborhood parks, play lots, four Lake Michigan beaches, dog parks and passive parks. Park amenities include 23 ball diamonds, 14 soccer fields, 39 playgrounds and outdoor tennis courts, and 9 miles of walking and bike trails.

Programming locations include Centennial Ice Arena, Hidden Creek AquaPark, Heller Nature Center and Park Avenue Boat Launch & Clubhouse. Newly renovated facilities include the 18-hole Sunset Valley Golf Club, Deer Creek Racquet Club, Recreation Center of Highland Park, and Rosewood Beach & Interpretive Center. In 2018, the district opened its newly built Park Operations & Golf Operations Center.

Recreation programs include summer camps, ice skating, gymnastics, athletics, childhood enrichment, fitness, tennis, golf, performing and visual arts, and aquatics. All told, the park district offers approximately

3,000 distinct programs. Annual events include summer concerts, egg hunt, Fourth of July Festival, a Halloween event, Touch a Truck, Father Daughter Dance, Autumn Fest, and a holiday train ride as well as many others.

The park district works with several affiliates to provide a wide range of opportunities and additional services in baseball, hockey and martial arts. The district works closely with the newly formed Parks Foundation of Highland Park. The district also sponsors the Highland Park Players and Highland Park Strings by providing space and financial support for their community-wide productions.

The district is known for maintaining positive working relationships with other local governments that benefit the entire community. For example, its long-standing partnership with the school districts provides school facilities for park district use and in turn the park district maintains many school outdoor spaces.

The district is an Illinois Distinguished Accredited Agency and it is accredited at the highest level by the Park District Risk Management Association. It is a recipient of numerous state and national awards for its facilities and programs. The district is also a member of the Illinois Park & Recreation Association, Illinois Association of Park Districts, and the Northern Suburban Special Recreation Association.

### Our Mission

To enrich community life through healthy leisure pursuits and an appreciation of the natural world.

aqua park

golf course

2 community centers

39 playgrounds

nature center

indoor pool

700 acres park land

driving range & mini golf

44 parks

ice arena

9 miles of walking & bike trails



## Qualifications

### QUALIFICATIONS, SKILLS & PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

The Board of Commissioners is seeking to employ an Executive Director with the following qualifications, characteristics and traits:

- Five to seven years of administrative experience in the park and recreation field. Experience as a director preferred.
- A bachelor's degree in park and recreation administration or related field.
- A person of great integrity, honesty, self-confidence and charisma.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills and excellent time-management and priority-setting skills.
- Effective interpersonal skills. Must possess compassion and the ability to communicate effectively with all types of individuals.
- Knowledgeable of park and recreation issues, trends, personnel management, creative financing, marketing and public relations.
- Comprehensive planning skills and experience. Ability to assess community needs, research trends and innovative concepts as they apply to improvement of agency operations and long-range planning.
- Evidence of skills and experience in developing short-range and long-range goals to incorporate the agency's master plan.
- Ability to plan, establish and evaluate a vision for the agency.
- Proven track record of developing strong intergovernmental relationships and cooperative efforts.
- Demonstrated success in administration and budget management. Must have experience in the creation of a sound fiscal program including: capital projects, budgeting, forecasting, development of projects through the referendum process, and other alternative funding sources; e.g. foundations/federal/state grants and enterprise operations.
- Strong personnel management skills, including the ability to assign personnel and delegate responsibilities with assurance and accountability.
- A strong understanding of the mission of a dynamic park and recreation agency and the importance, as well as the role, of the independent board members in accomplishing that mission.
- Maintain and improve community services with a high level of customer satisfaction.



## Salary

### COMPENSATION

The starting salary range for this position is \$150,000 to \$170,000. Salary and benefits are commensurate with experience and will be negotiated with the Board of Commissioners.



### 2018 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

	Rate Tax	Extension
Corporate	.200085	\$4,882,603
Recreation	.219694	\$5,361,114
Special Recreation	.038591	\$ 941,722
Bonds & Interest	.062686	\$1,529,704

**Assessed Valuation:** \$ 2,440,264,291

**Operating Budget:** \$ 22,764,935

**Debt Service Budget:** \$ 1,529,704



### BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

*Elected/Appointed*      *Term Expires*

Brian Kaplan, <i>President</i>	2011	2021
Barnett Ruttenberg, <i>Vice President</i>	2013	2019
Cal Bernstein	2007	2019
Lori Flores Weisskopf	2011	2021
Terry Grossberg	2017	2023





## APPLICATION PROCEDURE

**The Board of Commissioners of the Park District of Highland Park invites applications for the position of Executive Director. The Board is interested in the selected Executive Director to begin employment at the district tentatively by**

**March 1, 2019.** *The Park District of Highland Park is an equal opportunity employer.*

**Applications should be marked Personal and Confidential.** All applicant packets must be received by December 7, 2018 and must contain the information below in order to meet the Board consideration. All documents (other than education credentials) must have a left margin of 1.5 inches. Each numbered item below needs to be on a separate page. Please do not bind or staple.

- 1) Formal letter of application indicating reasons you desire to be a candidate.
- 2) Current resume needs to include, but not be limited to, employment history, duties, number of employees supervised and budget amount managed.
- 3) Complete list of accomplishments/completed projects.
- 4) Provide at least 3 **CURRENT (DATED)** letters of recommendation. These written references ideally should include a balance of former employers, employees and board members.
- 5) You must also supply 3-6 **PROFESSIONAL** references with complete names, addresses and phone numbers. These references need to be different from those providing letters of recommendation and will be contacted by the Illinois Association of Park Districts upon receipt.
- 6) Typewritten responses to the following management questions. Please limit your responses to each question to one page.
  - a. Describe your management style.
  - b. State and discuss your philosophy of parks and recreation.
  - c. What issues do you consider to be critically important to the park and recreation field today?
  - d. If given the opportunity, how will you attempt to resolve these issues?
  - e. If you were chosen for the position, what steps would you take as the district's new leader in your first 120 days?
- 7) Salary history for the past 5 years.
- 8) Complete set of up-to-date credentials which include legal proof verifying educational degrees. Transcript or copy of degree is acceptable.
- 9) Written permission to contact past employers and written permission to have a criminal background check.



## ALL APPLICATIONS OR INQUIRIES SHOULD BE REFERRED TO:

### **Mail Applications to:**

Screening Committee  
Park District of Highland Park  
Illinois Association of Park Districts  
211 East Monroe Street  
Springfield, IL 62701-1186

### **Email applications to:**

cwichmann@ilparks.org

### **Questions:**

Call 217-523-4554 or email  
cwichmann@ilparks.org



## TENTATIVE SELECTION PROCESS

### **December 7, 2018:**

Deadline for Applications to be Received

### **January 9, 2019:**

Candidates Presented to the Board

### **January 21 - 25, 2019:**

Board begins Interview Process

### **March 1, 2019:**

Tentative Date of Employment