**Governance Committee Meeting**

**Wednesday, May 28, 2025**

**New Board Member Orientation**

* Discussed the changes made to the board member orientation based on feedback from Commissioners Jerry, Zoe, and Vicki.
* The President is now responsible for leading the orientation, with the Vice President and Executive Director supporting.
* The orientation aims to foster relationships between new board members and the Executive Director.
* Susan mentions the inclusion of HR training and performance evaluation in the orientation to ensure commissioners understand these processes.
* Commissioner Hill emphasized the importance of the governance overview section, suggesting it should be led by the President and Executive Director.
* The board is described as a governance and policy board, not an operations board.
* The need for a comprehensive tour for new board members is discussed, considering their level of experience and specific project interests.
* It was suggested to add IT and Golf to the list of Directors the new board members will be meeting with.
* Commissioner Rostad suggested to have this reviewed annually.
  + Bring to the board meeting for approval.

**Park Board Benefits**

* Discussed the benefits and privileges for current and past commissioners, including golf, shelter rentals, and family passes.
* The conversation included the specifics of what benefits are retained and what changes are proposed for current and future commissioners.
* The discussion touched on the importance of commissioners being ambassadors for the park district and not abusing their privileges.
* The need for clear definitions and guidelines for benefits is emphasized to avoid confusion and ensure fairness.
* Discussed the benefits for full-time staff, including golf cards, family passes, and rental privileges.
* The conversation included the need for clear guidelines and accountability for staff using these benefits.
* There was discussion regarding the age limit of children. This needs to be consistent throughout.
* It was discussed that as of right now, there will be no benefits for the FPSC.
  + Bring to the next Governance Meeting.

**Governance Annual Work Plan Monitoring**

* This was reviewed and discussed to make the change Commissioner Dawson suggested to change number 1 to say: The Board will not give direction to any employee other than the Executive Director unless directed by the Executive Director.
  + Bring to the board meeting on the consent agenda.

**SB 1280 Public Comment Period Policy**

* Susan introduced a draft public comment policy for board meetings, based on the new legislation.
* The policy aims to streamline the process for public comment and ensure compliance with the new law.
* The conversation includes the need for a formal procedure for handling public comments and ensuring transparency.
* The importance of clear communication and adherence to the policy is emphasized to maintain order and respect during meetings.
* It was suggested that the policy could be projected on the screen instead of being read at the meeting.
  + Bring to the board meeting on the consent agenda.

**Legislative Updates**

* Broc provides an update on the legislative session, including key bills and their impact on park districts.
* The conversation includes the new property tax reform law, which limits property tax increases to 3% plus new growth.
* The discussion touches on the potential challenges and opportunities presented by the new law, including the need for careful budgeting and public communication.
* The importance of staying informed and prepared for future legislative changes is emphasized.
* Discussed the updates to cooperative purchasing laws, which now include park districts.
* The conversation includes the benefits of cooperative purchasing for cost savings and efficiency.
* The discussion touches on the bond election limitation, which requires public votes for bond issues over 1% of taxable valuation.
* The importance of understanding and complying with these new laws is emphasized to ensure smooth operations and public trust.
* Discussed an update on the state park and rec budget and the impact of reduced grant funding.
* The conversation includes the challenges of securing funding for state programs and the need for alternative sources of revenue.
* The discussion touches on the importance of maintaining strong relationships with state legislators and advocating for park districts.
* The importance of adaptability and innovation in funding strategies is emphasized to ensure the continued success of state programs.
* Broc discussed the updates to NDPERS and the state fire and tornado fund, including changes in administration and premiums.
* The conversation includes the potential impact of these changes on park districts and the need for careful planning and budgeting.
* The discussion touches on the importance of staying informed and prepared for future changes in these funds.
* The importance of maintaining strong relationships with insurance providers and advocating for park districts is emphasized.

**Other:**

Susan reminded us of the board elections coming up.

NRPA Conference

* Commissioner Deutsch discussed the importance of commissioner participation in the NRPA Conference.

**Action Items**

* [ ] Confirm NRPA national conference attendance for commissioners and key staff.
* [ ] Incorporate feedback and finalize the new board member orientation document.
* [ ] Reach out to Jeff to review the public comment policy for compliance with recent legislation.