



Governance Committee Meeting
Wednesday, May 28, 2025; 8:15 a.m.
Fargo Parks Sports Center
Island Park Conference Room
6100 38th Street S, Fargo

AGENDA

1. New Board Member Orientation; Commissioner Hill, presenter
2. Park Board Benefits; Commissioner Hill, presenter
3. Governance Annual Work Plan Monitoring – C/ED - 3/Staff Accountability; Commissioner Hill, presenter
4. SB 2180 Public Comment Period Policy; Susan Faus, presenter
5. Legislative Update; Broc Lietz, presenter
6. Other

<p><i>Next Park Board Meeting: June 10, 2025; 5:30 p.m.</i> <i>Next Planning Committee Meeting: June 18, 2025; 8:30 a.m.</i> <i>Next Governance Committee Meeting: June 25, 2025; 8:15 a.m.</i></p>

Susan Faus, Executive Director
Park Commissioners – Zoe Absey * Vicki Dawson * Joe Deutsch * Aaron Hill * Jerry Rostad
Clerk -Jeff Gunkelman

Our Core Values: * Be Authentic * Be Bold * Be Collaborative



MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 28, 2025

TO: Fargo Park Board Committee Members

FROM: Susan Faus, Executive Director

RE: Agenda Item No. 1 – Review and Discuss Suggestions for the New Board Member Orientation Process

The Governance Committee members will review the suggestions for the new onboarding orientation process for new board members. This process will continue and be reviewed until it is completed.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me prior to the meeting.

Thank you.

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President leads

Vice President and Executive Director support

1. Pre-Election Preparation

- Board President reaches out to candidates with key dates and information regarding next steps, if elected.
 - CC: Vice President
 - Ideally completed the first week in June but must be completed prior to election day.

2. Election Day (2nd Tuesday in June)

- 2nd Tuesday in June, on even numbered years (2026, 2028, 2030, 2032)
- 2nd Wednesday (one day after the election)
 - Board President contacts newly elected commissioners to schedule an initial meeting with President and Executive Dir. (if multiple new commissioners are elected, multiple meetings may be necessary to avoid quorum).
 - CC: Exec. Dir., Exec. Asst., HR Dir., Board Vice President

3. Initial Meeting - preferably the week of the election or early the following week, as schedules allow:

- **Meeting with President and Exec. Dir. (1.5 hours)**
 - Receive contact information for key personnel
 - Briefly meet Dept. Dirs.
 - Overview of the Park District's Mission, Vision, Values
 - Overview of Strategic Plan/Park System Master Plan
 - Sign Code of Conduct
 - Roles & Responsibilities
 - Committee Structure and Preferences
 - Charitable Gaming Rules and Regulations
 - Office/Admin Tour
 - Schedule Full Orientation
- **Meeting with HR/IT/Exec. Asst. (.5 hours)**
 - HR paperwork (W2)
 - IT logins/passwords & devices
 - Clothing, name tag & business cards

Training to be completed prior to July Board Meeting:

- **Introductory Meetings (2 hours):**
 - With Department Directors
 - Finance
 - Recreation
 - Parks & Maintenance
 - Marketing/Community Engagement
 - Courts Plus
 - Valley Senior Services
 - Sports Center
 - Foundation
- **Governance Overview (1.5 hours):**
 - Role and responsibilities of commissioners
 - Legalities of public meetings and open records
 - Bylaws and policies
 - Meeting procedures and rules of order
 - Financial overview: budgets, revenue streams, and major expenses
 - Mill Levy 101
 - Park Bench Training
- **Break (if all in one day)**
- **Park/Facility/Project Tour/Personalized based on each new commissioner (3.5 hours): Open to ALL commissioners**
 - Sports Center
 - Shops
 - North, South, Old & Carpenter
 - Golf Courses
 - Edgewood, El Zagal, Prairiewood, Rose Creek & Osgood
 - Pepsi Field
 - Courts Plus
 - VSS
 - Yunker Farm
 - Island Park + Swimming Pool
 - Lindenwood Park + Campground
 - Orchard Glen

Park Board Onboarding

- Rheault Farm
- Arenas & Sports Fields
 - Cornerstone, Colosseum, Metro Rec Center, Tharaldson Little League + Attic, Michelson + Jack Williams, Starion Field + Tharaldson Fields, Brunsdale (pickleball + youth baseball) & North Softball Complex
- Facilities Operating on Park District Land
 - Scheels Arena & Red River Zoo
- Swimming Pools
 - Roger G. Gress, Madison, South & Davies
- New or completed projects + recently renovated/improved facilities

4. Follow-Up and Support

- **Mentorship Program:**
 - Pair new commissioners with experienced commissioners.
 - If multiple new Commissioners, President and Vice President meet with new Commissioners.
- **Human Resource Training**
 - HR will provide training on relevant HR Policies and performance review procedures to evaluate the Executive Director.



MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 28, 2025

TO: Fargo Park Board Committee Members

FROM: Susan Faus, Executive Director

RE: Agenda Item No. 2 – Review and Discuss Proposed Changes to Park Board benefits

The Governance Committee members will review and provide an update on the work completed by the group tasked with evaluating whether changes should be made to the Park Board benefits (gold card) for current and former Park Board Commissioners.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me prior to the meeting.

Thank you.

Susan Faus, Executive Director
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MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 28, 2025

TO: Fargo Park Board Committee Members

FROM: Susan Faus, Executive Director

RE: Agenda Item No. 3 – Review and Discuss Commissioner/Executive Director (C/ED-3) - Staff Accountability

C/ED-3

The Executive Director is responsible for all day-to-day operations of the Fargo Park District. All staff shall report directly or indirectly to the Executive Director.

1. The Board will never give direction to any employee other than the Executive Director unless directed by the Executive Director.
2. The Board will not formally or informally evaluate any staff member other than the Executive Director.
3. Except as required by law, the Board will not participate in decisions or actions involving the hiring, evaluating, disciplining, or dismissing of any employee unless requested by the Executive Director.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me prior to the meeting.

Thank you.

Susan Faus, Executive Director
Park Commissioners – Zoe Absey * Vicki Dawson * Joe Deutsch * Aaron Hill * Jerry Rostad
Clerk -Jeff Gunkelman

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FARGO PARK DISTRICT – 2025-26

April 23, 2025

RE: C/ED-3 STAFF ACCOUNTABILITY

FOCUS: Action

Responding Board members: Zoë Absey, Vicki Dawson, Joe Deutsch, **Aaron Hill**, Jerry Rostad

DIRECTIONS: Board members will provide an individual assessment of compliance with the policy. If marked “Inadequate Compliance,” the responding Board member will provide a short explanation of why the response was assessed using the “Explain your rating” section. Suggestions for possible policy changes must be included in the section of each policy.

C/ED - 3: Staff Accountability

The Executive Director is responsible for all day-to-day operations of the Fargo Park District. All staff shall report directly or indirectly to the Executive Director.

Substantial compliance	Inadequate Compliance
AH	

1. The Board will never give direction to any employee other than the Executive Director unless directed by the Executive Director.

AH	
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2. The Board will not formally or informally evaluate any staff member other than the Executive Director.

AH	
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3. Except as required by law, the Board will not participate in decisions or actions involving the hiring, evaluating, disciplining, or dismissing of any employee unless requested by the Executive Director.

(C/ED-3)

Please explain your rating:

Please use the area below to suggest possible policy changes for the Governance Committee to review. Proposed edits must be included below using strike throughs or word additions and be accompanied by a rationale for the change:

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C/ED - 3: Staff Accountability

The Executive Director is responsible for all day-to-day operations of the Fargo Park District. All staff shall report directly or indirectly to the Executive Director.

Substantial compliance	Inadequate Compliance
X	

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X	
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X	
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JAR	

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JAR	
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JAR	
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x	

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x	
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(C/ED-3)

Please explain your rating:

Policy is being followed appropriately. VD

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FARGO PARK DISTRICT – 2025-26

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X	
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x	
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(C/ED-3)

Please explain your rating:

Policy is being followed appropriately.

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1. The Board will ~~never~~ not give direction to any employee other than the Executive Director unless directed by the Executive Director.



MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 28, 2025

TO: Fargo Park Board Committee Members

FROM: Susan Faus, Executive Director

RE: Agenda Item No. 4 – SB 2180 Public Comment Period Policy

The Governance Committee members will review the suggestion for the Public Comment Period Policy. This process has been used during the Park Board meetings but was not in written policy format.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me prior to the meeting.

Thank you.

Susan Faus, Executive Director
Park Commissioners – Zoe Absey * Vicki Dawson * Joe Deutsch * Aaron Hill * Jerry Rostad
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Fargo Park District Public Comment Policy

The Fargo Park District welcomes public comments and values community input as part of our commitment to transparent and responsive local government. To ensure that our parks and programs serve everyone effectively, we encourage respectful and relevant dialogue in all forums where public comments are accepted.

1. Purpose

Public comments provide an opportunity for residents and stakeholders to share feedback, concerns, and suggestions related to Park District facilities, programs, services, and policies.

2. Appropriate Forums

Public comments are accepted during:

- Park District board meetings
- Community surveys or forums

3. Guidelines for Participation

To maintain a productive and respectful environment, participants must:

- **Be respectful and civil** – Avoid offensive, obscene, or abusive language.
- **Stay on topic** – Focus comments on park-related matters or agenda items.
- **Refrain from personal attacks** – Address policies or services, not individuals.
- **Protect privacy** – Do not share personal or sensitive information about others.
- **Avoid commercial promotion** – No advertisements or solicitations.

4. Time and Format (for Meetings)

- Each speaker is given up to 3 minutes to speak.
- Comments may be submitted in writing if preferred or if time is limited.
- Speakers who wish to address the Board need to contact the Fargo Park District office at (701) 499-6060 by noon on Monday before the Board meeting.
- Speakers need to sign in with name, address, phone and email address for the record.
- After the meeting is called to order, the consent agenda is approved, the Board President will recognize the audience for public comment.
- The Board President will read the guidelines for resident comments at the Park Board meeting.

5. Moderation and Removal

- Comments violating these guidelines may be removed or disregarded.
- Repeated violations may result in restricted access to public comment forums.

6. Public Record Notice

All comments submitted become part of the public record and may be subject to disclosure under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act or other applicable laws.

DRAFT

2025 ND Legislative Session Recap

Key Changes for Park Districts



Property Tax Cap Imposed ([HB 1176](#))

- Property tax levy increases limited to 3% annually for park districts
- Districts may opt out for four years at a time with voter approval
- \$1,600 max credit per year for primary residence

SAVE THE DATE – Monday, June 16 (Bismarck/Online)

- Planning is underway for joint education on calculating property tax caps
- NDRPA partnering with NDLC, NDACo, NDSBA, NDTOA

Expanded Cooperative Purchasing Authority ([HB 1198](#))

- Park districts can use other states' cooperative purchasing contracts
- No joint powers agreement required for Office of Management and Budget (OMB) contracts

Public Comment Now Required at All Meetings ([SB 2180](#))

- A public comment period required at all regular park board meetings
- Districts must adopt a formal policy for public input (e.g., time limits, topic relevance) by Aug. 1.

Bond Elections Limited to Primary/General ([HB 1482](#))

- Park district bond elections at primary or general elections only; 64-day notice requirement

Bid Threshold Increased ([HB 1369](#))

- Public improvement bid threshold raised from \$200,000 to \$250,000 (Sections 5 and 6 of the bill refer to public improvement construction)

Signature Threshold ([HB 1307](#))

Park boards are allowed to adopt the same signature threshold for nominating petitions for park board candidates when a city has exercised its authority to change the signature threshold for nominating petitions for city candidates (Section 5 of the bill)

Audits ([2251](#))

- Retention of progress payments for audits – from 25% to 5% – until the audit is accepted by the State Auditor
- If the State Auditor receives public records request related to political subdivision's submitted information, the request will be referred to the political subdivision, fulfilling the Auditor's responsibility

Transparency ([HB 1469](#))

- Disclosure of financial and personal interests mandated for park board candidates and members, with publication on the Secretary of State's website

Loss of Grant Funding ([HB 1019](#))

- State Parks budget doesn't include any state funded grants for local park districts

Retirement System Changes (NDPERS)

- Political subdivision employers allowed to join the NDPERS Defined Contribution Plan ([HB 1146](#))
- Political subdivision employers allowed to withdraw from the NDPERS Defined Contribution Plan ([HB 1602](#))
- Retirees can work as unclassified employees (e.g., appointed park board positions) without losing retirement status, though they won't earn new benefits ([SB 2227](#))

Insurance & Liability

- Administration Transfers:
 - [HB 1026](#) moves administration of the State Bonding Fund to OMB
 - [HB 1027](#) moves Fire and Tornado Fund administration to OMB and includes a study on removing political subdivisions from the fund
- Liability Caps: [HB 1142](#) ensures liability caps for political subdivisions remain at increased levels (\$500,000/person), removing previous sunset provisions

Other Notable Wins for Park Districts

Daylight Saving Time Remains

- [HB 1259](#) would have mandated that North Dakota observe standard time year-round and eliminate the practice of daylight-saving time. The bill was amended to mandate instead daylight-saving time year-round only after Congress makes the change federally and Minnesota, Montana and South Dakota.

Bonding Authority – Preserved

- [HB 1572](#) would have capped GO bonding authority at \$15 million, even if 1% of assessed value exceeded that

Construction Procurement – No Added Burden

- [HB 1028](#) would have added complex requirements for CMAR project selection (e.g., non-bidding architects/engineers on committees)

Weapons Bills Defeated or Heavily Amended

- [HB 1365](#) was defeated, and [HB 1588](#) was amended to include “publicly owned and operated buildings” among the public gatherings where weapons are prohibited