

**QUINCY PARK DISTRICT
1231 Bonansinga Drive
Quincy, Illinois**

**Agenda
September 13, 2023**

Decennial Committee on Local Government Efficiency- Board Room 6:00 P.M

PUBLIC INPUT: Each speaker may have up to 3 minutes for comments

Final Review of the Efficiencies and Increased Accountability of the Quincy Park District to Prepare the Report for the County Board of Adams County

PUBLIC INPUT: Survey of Residents in attendance for input on matters discussed in the meeting of the Quincy Park District Decennial Committee on Government Efficiency

ADJOURN: (VOICE VOTE)

EFFICIENCY REPORT FOR THE QUINCY PARK DISTRICT

**APPROVED BY THE QUINCY PARK DISTRICT'S
COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY
ON MAY 10, 2023**



I. Purpose

The Quincy Park District (“Park District”) formed its Committee on Local Government Efficiency on May 10, 2023, to study efficiencies and report recommendations regarding those efficiencies and increased accountability pursuant to 50 ILCS 70/1, *et seq.* (the “Committee”).

II. Committee Membership

The Committee consisted of the following individuals:

Jarid Jones, President

Mark C. Philpot, Vice President

Barb Holthaus, Commissioner

Alan Hickman, Commissioner

Patty McGlothlin, Commissioner

Trent Lyons, Commissioner

John Frankenhoff, Commissioner

Roger Leenerts, Resident

Nathan Koettters, Resident

Rome Frericks, Executive Director

III. Committee Meetings

The Committee met as follows:

Meeting Date	Meeting Time and Place
<u>July 12, 2023</u>	<u>6:00 p.m., 1231 Bonansinga Dr., Quincy</u>
<u>August 9, 2023</u>	<u>6:00 p.m., 1231 Bonansinga Dr., Quincy</u>
<u>September 13, 2023</u>	<u>6:00 p.m., 1231 Bonansinga Dr., Quincy</u>

Minutes of these meetings are available on the Park District's website or upon request at the Park District's administrative office.

IV. General Overview of Governing Statutes, Ordinances, Rules, Procedures, Powers, Jurisdiction

The Park District was established by a referendum initiated and approved by the voters of the Park District in 1941. All Illinois park districts, including the Park District, are governed by the Park District Code, 70 ILCS 1205/1 *et seq.*

Having a separate and distinct taxing body for parks, recreation, and conservation within the local community, which operates apart from general purpose governments, is extremely beneficial to the community for many reasons, as detailed further in this report.

- **Elected, non-partisan, non-compensated board.** The Quincy Park District is governed by a board of seven commissioners. Commissioners must reside within the boundaries of the park district and are elected at the Consolidated Election in odd-numbered years. Pursuant to state law, commissioners are non-partisan and serve without compensation.
- **Accessible and focused representation.** Having a dedicated board to oversee these essential facilities, programs, and services provides the community with increased access to their elected representatives and allows those elected representatives to remain focused solely on those facilities, programs, and services. This is contrasted with general purpose governments where elected representatives are responsible for broad oversight on a wide range of issues. This special purpose benefit is particularly advantageous when it comes to budget and finance oversight.
- **Increased transparency.** Having a dedicated unit of local government to provide park and recreation services also improves the relationship between the park district and its residents because of the transparency and openness related to the board and park district operations. Having detailed agenda and action items allows taxpayers to be better informed about the inner workings of their local government. When individual units of government are responsible for providing specified services like park districts, transparency is increased because action items and budget procedures are more detailed. Additionally, these items and budgetary decisions are subject to more scrutiny by locally elected officials than is the case with larger, multi-purpose governments with a multitude of departments.
- **Protection of revenues.** Because the Quincy Park District is a separate unit of local government, the revenues it generates can only be used for park district purposes. This assurance is contrasted with general purpose governments like cities, villages, and counties that provide a multitude of services such as fire, police, public works, economic development, etc., where revenues that are generated specifically for parks and recreation can be expended on these other services with limited, if any, input from voters.

- **Protection of assets.** Public parks and other real property owned by the park district is held in trust for the residents of the park district, and, subject to very limited exceptions, can only be sold or transferred if residents approve of the sale or transfer by a referendum. This is contrasted with general purpose units of government, which have authority to sell or dispose of property by a vote of the governing board.
- **Providing the Community More with Less.** The Quincy Park District does more with much fewer funding options. Unlike other units of local government that receive direct state funding, and income, sales, use, hotel/motel, motor fuel and other numerous taxes, the Quincy Park District's only tax revenues come from a modest portion of a resident's overall property tax bill. In fact, despite its limited funding options, the Quincy Park District share is only 7.98% of the local tax bill. Additionally, only 68% of the revenue earned by the District, is generated through property taxes.

As part of good governance and implementing best practices in the management of day-to-day operations, the Quincy Park District has also adopted the following ordinances, rules, policies, and procedures:

- **Exhibit A - Operations and Procedures Manual**
- **Exhibit B - Board Policy Manual**
- **Exhibit A - Operations Manual**
- **Exhibit C - Public Park Use Ordinances**
- **Exhibit D - Personnel Code**
- **Exhibit E - Safety Policy Manual**
- **Exhibit F - Crisis Management & Emergency Action Plan**
- **Exhibit G – 2022 SOARS Strategic Planning**
- **Exhibit H - Annual Comprehensive Financial Report**
- **Exhibit I - Identity Protection Act**
- **Exhibit J – Fund Reserve Policy**

V. List of Shared Services and Partnerships

The Quincy Park District works diligently to provide the best possible programs, services, and facilities to our community at the least possible cost. One of the many ways the Quincy Park District achieves this goal is by partnering with school districts, other units of local government within or near the community, the State, non-profit organizations, and for-profit corporations. Below is a comprehensive list of the current partnerships, sponsors, foundations, corporate volunteers, and other relationships that assist the Quincy Park District's mission of delivering the best possible services at the least possible cost to our community.

1. Intergovernmental agreements with other units of local government

- **City of Quincy** – Mowing of Bonansinga Drive areas for the City of Quincy for working relations and good will.
- **Army Corp of Engineers** – Mowing of area below the dam for the Army Corp of Engineers for working relations and good will.
- **Illinois Veteran's Home** – Planting grass, food plots, etc. in the Deer Park of the Illinois Veteran's Home for working relations and good will.
- **Quincy Area Convention & Visitors Bureau** – The Quincy Park District partners with QACVB to promote kayaking on the bay/river.

2. Intergovernmental agreements with the State of Illinois

- State of Illinois Joint Purchasing Program
- Illinois Department of Central Management Services – Federal Surplus Property Program

3. Joint Purchasing Programs

The Quincy Park District participates in joint purchasing cooperatives pursuant to the Governmental Joint Purchasing Act (30 ILCS 525/0.01 *et seq.*) thereby saving taxpayer dollars through economies of scale.

4. Partnerships or agreements with athletic or similar affiliate organizations that operate sports or other leagues

- QTown Tournaments hosts baseball and softball tournaments on the District's turf fields that would be unable to construct and maintain their own sports fields. <https://qtowntournaments.com/facilities-2>

5. Partnerships or other interrelationships with non-profits (A complete list can be found at <https://www.quincyparkdistrict.com/information/volunteers>).

Supporting your community in the making.

Our volunteers, affiliates, and sponsors have kickstarted many community-driven initiatives and have been a game-changer throughout our parks, programs, and facilities development. Through the help of our volunteers, we have opened a variety of activities and modalities and increased physical activity, recreation, and wellness for all ages.

Wherever we turn, we can find a park or trail that needs you. Even if it is something small, do something for the privilege of supporting your community. Unselfish and noble actions are the most rewarding parts of our lives." Join your community campaign today by emailing us at info@quincyparkdistrict.com or calling 217-223-7703

We look forward to working with you in the future.

The Quincy Park District would like to thank our community for their efforts in making this another successful year.

Affiliates

- Friends of the Trails
- Friends of the Castle
- Friends of The Lorenzo Bull House
- Friends of the Log Cabins
- Mississippi Valley Hunters and Fishermen's Association
- Trailblazers Nature Trails Group
- Quincy M.T. Bike Group
- Great River Ski Club
- Quincy Art Center
- Quincy Running Club
- Quincy Park Foundation
- Illinois Veteran's Home

Civic Organizations/Faculties/Gov. (Financial/Human capital)

- Quincy Kiwanis
- Rotary Club of Quincy
- Quincy Notre Dame
- Quincy University
- Quincy Service League
- Quincy Trees for Tomorrow
- Quincy Children's Museum
- Living Lands and Waters
- Illinois Department of Natural Resources
- Boy Scouts Of America
- United Way Adams County
- The Crossing

Corporate Volunteer Initiatives

- ADM
- Ameren IL
- Stratas Foods
- Lowe's
- Home Depot
- Quincy Recycle
- Texas Road House
- Blessing Health Systems
- United Community Credit Union
- Madison-Davis Bicycles
- Quincy Medical Group

Sponsors/Foundations

- Blessing Health Systems
- Blue Cross Blue Shield
- Refreshment Service Pepsi
- Knapheide Manufacturing
- Keck Heating and Air
- Home Depot
- Lowe's
- Adams Fiber
- Bleigh Ready Mix
- First Banker Trust Company
- TI Trust
- Dicks Sporting Goods
- Klingner & Associates, P.C.
- Landmark
- Mercantile Bank
- Quincy Farm & Home Supply
- Adams County Health Department
- Northeast United Soccer Club
- Rinella
- CDC Technologies
- Danielle Fleer CPA
- Mays LLC Realtors
- Cason, Huff & Schlueter Insurance
- O'Donnell Cookson Life Celebration Home
- YMCA
- Madison-Davis Bicycles
- Full-Service Roofing
- Craig Industries
- Dale Koontz Builders, Inc.
- Gardner Foundation
- Community Foundation
- Quincy Medical Group Foundation
- The Moorman Foundation
- Virginia and Gerald Holzgrafe Foundation
- Tracy Family Foundation
- Stammerjohn Foundation

- **Quincy Park Foundation** - *The Quincy Park Foundation, Inc., is a non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization, governed by a volunteer Board of Trustees. The Trustees are committed to ensuring the prudent, responsible use of funds and tracts of land, in order to have the greatest possible impact on our community.*
<http://www.quincyparkfoundation.org>.
- **Friends of the Log Cabins** – *An 1800s Lincoln-era Log Cabin Village, located in Quinsippi Island Park, is accessed via All America Park, off Bonansinga Drive, on the banks of the Mississippi River. From "dawn to dusk" you can view the*

outsides of these 1800s historic structures (4 log cabins, a log corn crib, a stone smoke house and a log church), plus a rail fence and an herb garden.

<http://www.logcabinvillagequincyil.com>

- **Friends of the Bull House** - The newly formed Friends of the Lorenzo Bull House nonprofit and governing board was established in April 2020. This organization is raising funds and gathering members to assist in enhancing and restoring the property for continued community use.
<https://friendsofthelorezobullhouse.org>
- **Friends of the Castle** - Friends of the Castle, Inc. was established in 1978 as a nonprofit organization with the specific mission of saving the Villa Kathrine from demolition; restoring it to its original beauty; and preserving, maintaining, and operating it as a community asset. <http://www.thevillakathrine.org>.
- **Friends of the Trails** - Friends of the Trails is a group of concerned citizens who volunteer to encourage the development of multi-use, bike and walking trails within the Quincy community. Projects include fundraising, planning, promotion and implementation of planned trails through volunteer time and efforts.
<https://www.friendsofthetrails.org>
- **Mississippi Valley Hunters and Fishermen's Association (MVHFA)** – Established to foster an environment where youth are interested in the outdoors. We strive to encourage ethical and morally strong outdoorsmen to spread their passion to today's youth. While helping the youth we recognize our freedom is bought by those who serve. We attempt to pay back a small portion of their service by creating amazing hunting and fishing opportunities.
<https://www.mvhfa.com>
- **Quincy Bay Area Restoration & Enhancement Association (QBAREA)** - QBAREA, Inc is a 501 c3 non-profit organization designed to save the Quincy, IL bay from extinction. Their goal is to restore the natural conditions of the Quincy Bay through ecosystem restoration, habitat creation and sustainable sedimentation reduction activities. Hydraulic dredging of the Quincy Bay to historical depths, construction of a rock dike/weir structure at the Bay Island access channel, and creation of topographically diverse, above-flood elevations on Bay Island and northeast of Triangle Lake for reforestation. Together these projects will provide solutions to the existing problems, as well as restoring fish and wildlife habitat, while reducing future sediment accumulation rates.
<https://qbarea.org>
- **Quincy Art Center** – A non-profit organization that connects people to the power of art by creating opportunities to experience, make, and share art.
<https://www.quincyartcenter.org>
- **Quincy Ski Club** – A non-profit organization that promotes skiing by hosting ski shows in the summer and hosts skiing lessons in All America Park.

- **Blessing Health System** - Blessing Health System has not only provided financial support for education programs, sports, and facilities but also has provided support for the District with human capital. Their staff has partnered with the District to provide our community with weekly outdoor fitness station workout programs at Bob Mays Park and South Park. In 2020, they made a 10-year commitment to the new Blessing Health System turf baseball field at Moorman Park.
- **American National Red Cross** – Agreement to provide emergency shelter in the event of a disaster.

6. Partnerships with for profit organizations

- **Refreshment Services Pepsi** – Refreshment Services Pepsi made a 10-year commitment to the new Pepsi turf baseball field at Moorman Park. Refreshment Services Pepsi made a 3-year commitment to partner with the District to provide our community with to provide the outstanding experience at Westview.
- **Festival of Lights, Inc.** – The Quincy Park District has partnered with Festival of Lights, Inc. <https://festivaloflights.org> to provide our community with a Christmas lighting display.

7. Informal cooperation with other units of local government which save taxpayer dollars by eliminating redundancy

- Use of Moorman Lake and South Park Pond for Cold Water Rescue Training.
- Quincy Fire Department, Tri-Township Fire Department, and Adams County Sheriff Department, use of marina slips for boats.

VI. Other Examples of Efficient Operations

Use of volunteers. One way in which the Quincy Park District reduces the burden on taxpayers is through the use of volunteers. Last year, 500 individuals volunteered 4,000 hours of service to the Quincy Park District. Listing of volunteers can be found at <https://www.quincyparkdistrict.com/information/volunteers>.

Youth employment. The Quincy Park District is a major employer of youth in the community. Last year, the Quincy Park District employed 112 youth. Not only is this an efficient way to deliver services, but youth employment serves as a valuable training tool for the future workforce.

Quincy Park Foundation. Last year, the Foundation raised \$197,500 in private donations, which help alleviate the burden on taxpayers. The Foundation also supported the Quincy Park District by:

- Holding of land for future expansion of the Bill Klingner Trail.
- Promotion of Quincy Park District facilities and programs.

Collaboration with other park districts on best practices. Because park districts are not in competition with one another, they are more willing than the private sector to share best practices. These best practices help to avoid unnecessary costs and deliver services more effectively and efficiently.

Reliance on Non-Tax Revenue. Unlike most local governments that rely on a wide range of sales, use, and income taxes, the Quincy Park District is not permitted to assess these types of taxes. Additionally, although the Quincy Park District is an economic engine for the community and generates much revenue for the state and our community in the form of hotel/motel, sales, and motor fuel taxes, our Quincy Park District does not receive any of these revenues. Also, unlike Illinois cities, villages, counties, and school districts that received billions of dollars in direct financial assistance from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), our Quincy Park District did not receive any such direct federal aid. Our Quincy Park District also does not receive state funding under the Local Government Distributive Fund (LGDF) or General State Aid (GSA) that these same cities, villages, counties, and school districts receive through the State budget.

Instead, the Quincy Park District provides all of the programs, facilities, and services to the community with a very modest amount of property taxes and from **non-tax sources** such as memberships, program registrations, and other user fees as well as private donations and grants.

VII. Transparency to the Community

The following information about the Quincy Park District may be obtained by citizens in the location listed.

Document	Location(s) Available (website, administrative offices, county clerk, state website, etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Annual budget and appropriation ordinance https://www.quincyparkdistrict.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/2023-Budget-and-Appropriation-Ordinance.pdf	

- Agenda and minutes <https://www.quincyparkdistrict.com/park-board/minutes-agenda>
- Comptroller's annual finance report (AFR) <https://www.quincyparkdistrict.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/IL-Comptlr-FY2021-Annual-Financial-Rpt.pdf>
- Annual audit <https://www.quincyparkdistrict.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/2021-QPD-ACFR.pdf>
- Statement of Receipts and Disbursements <https://www.quincyparkdistrict.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/QPD-FY2021-Treasurers-Annual-Financial-Report.pdf>
- Public Park Use Ordinances https://www.quincyparkdistrict.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Park-District-Code-Ordinances_February2022.pdf
- ADA Compliance <https://www.quincyparkdistrict.com/contact-us/a-d-a-compliance>.

The Quincy Park District offers residents many opportunities to provide feedback. These include:

- The board of commissioners meets each month. Residents may provide public comment at every meeting.
- The Quincy Park District's annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance is available in tentative form at least 30 days prior to its adoption at an open meeting of the Quincy Park District board. Additionally, at least one public hearing is held prior to final action, and notice of the hearing is published in the newspaper at least one week prior to the hearing.
- The Quincy Park District's annual property tax levy is approved at an open meeting of the Quincy Park District board in accordance with the Open Meetings Act. The Quincy Park District follows all public notice and hearing requirements under the Truth in Taxation Law prior to the adoption of this annual tax levy.
- Residents may contact or request information from the Quincy Park District by phone at 217-223-7703 or email at info@quincyparkdistrict.com.
- Quincy Park District participates in the Riverfront Development Corporation <https://quincyriverfront.com> The Riverfront Development Corporation provides the community with a central focus to guide the decisions and investments in Quincy's riverfront.

- Quincy Park District participates in the Quincy Bay Area Restoration & Enhancement Association (QBERA) <https://qbarea.org> The QBERA represents the City of Quincy, Park District, Quincy Boat Club, GREDF, QACVB and the Mississippi Valley Hunter and Fisherman Association. QBERA was formed to address the loss of water depth and the reduction of open water habitat area for fishing, hunting and boating. Our goal is to restore the natural conditions of the Quincy Bay through ecosystem restoration, habitat creation and sustainable sedimentation reduction activities.
- City of Quincy Tree Commission. The Executive Director of the Quincy Park District sits on the Tree Commission as a voting member to study, investigate and develop and update as necessary and administer arboricultural specifications and regulations for the care, preservation, pruning, planting, replanting, removal or disposition of trees and shrubs along streets and in other public areas of the city. <https://www.quincyl.gov/city-government/city-council/boards-commissions/quincy-tree-commission>
- In 2017 the Quincy Park District conducted a community wide survey to assess the needs of the community. A summary of the survey can be found at [https://www.quincyparkdistrict.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Presentation to Quincy Park Board-FINAL.pdf](https://www.quincyparkdistrict.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Presentation%20to%20Quincy%20Park%20Board-FINAL.pdf).
- The Quincy Park District has held several public hearings over the past 5 years to seek public input into the District's development of parks, playgrounds, trails, bike park, etc.
- The Quincy Park District Board has held several meetings with the community regarding the future of operations at the Art Keller Marina.

VII. District Awards and Recognition

The District's achievements have been recognized in numerous ways.

- **GFOA – Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting**
The District has received this award for the past 11 years.
- **IPRA/IAPD Annual Conference** – Various staff attend the annual conference on various topics.
- **IAPD Legal Symposium** – Staff and legal counsel attend the annual IAPD Legal Symposium
- Annual staff and commissioner OMA/FOIA training.

VIII. Benefits and Services

The Quincy Park District serves the entire community from the youngest child to the oldest adult and all ages in between. It does so in a variety of ways. The District consists of approximately 1,012 acres of parkland.

1. Facilities

The Quincy Park District facilities include an administrative building with programming space and an indoor playground. Other facilities include an outdoor swimming pool with zero depth entry and waterslide, Lake Side Coffee shop, batting cage/miniature golf, paddleboat/kayaks, multipurpose courts that include pickleball courts, one tennis court and one basketball/Futsal (soccer) court, two sand volleyball courts and a concession stand, 250 slip marina with gas dock and public boat launching ramps, a skate park, three disk golf courses, irrigated 27-hole public golf course with clubhouse, pro shop and concessions, lighted baseball/softball fields/t-ball synthetic turf and dirt fields, lighted tennis courts, soccer/football fields, basketball courts, 23 picnic shelters, fishing lake, 15 playground sites, two outdoor fitness stations, archery range, trailer dumping station for RV's, bike park and walking/jogging paths and trails. The following is a listing of the District's parks and facilities provided to the community last year:

- All America Park
- Berrian Park
- Bob Mays Park
- Bill Klingner Trail
- Clat Adams Park
- Gardner Park
- Indian Mounds Pool
- Kesler Park
- Lincoln Park
 - Lorenzo Bull House
- Moorman Park
- Parker Heights Park
- Reservoir Park
- South Park
- Villa Kathrine Castle & Park
- Wavering Park
- Westview Golf Course (27 Hole Course)
- Deer Park (Illinois Veterans Home)
- Sunset Park
- Art Keller Marina
- Bob Bangert Park
- Boehl Memorial Park
- Boots Bush Park
- Edgewater Park
- Indian Mounds Park
- Johnson Park
- Leon Bailey Park
- Lorenzo Bull Park
- Madison Park
- Batting Cage
- Quinsippi Island Park
- Ben Bumbry/Riverview Park
- Sunset Park
- Washington Park
- Westview Park
- Aldo Blvd, Payson Ave., East Ave., Park Place.
- Native American Burial and Walking Time-line in Indian Mounds Park
- Parker Heights Park

2. Programs

The Quincy Park District offers a full range of activities and service. Recreation programs for youth and adults include baseball/softball, basketball, soccer, futsal, sand volleyball, pickleball, golf, fitness classes, fishing clinics, swimming lessons, tennis lessons, archery, lacrosse, day camps, special events, mommy/daddy date nights, outdoor education, and special population programs. Specific program registration participation numbers can be found in the Statistical Analysis section of the District's Executive Summary at <https://www.quincyparkdistrict.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/2023-Executive-Summary.pdf>.

3. Additional Services

The Quincy Park District provided the following additional services to the community.

- Heritage Tree planting program
- Memorial Benches

4. Other Benefits

While the Quincy Park District is a special purpose district, its impact to the community is multi-faceted and far reaching. For example, the Quincy Park District's parks, recreational programming, and other opportunities improve the community's overall physical and mental health and wellness, thereby reducing health care costs. Before and after school and summer programs offer safe, convenient, and affordable childcare options for working families during critical times when school is not in session. These opportunities also help reduce juvenile crime. The Quincy Park District's open space and trees help improve air and water quality and mitigate flooding. The Klingner Trail is being used as a recruiting tool for large employers in the area who are trying to attract employees for key positions, such as doctors, executives, etc.

IX. Recommendations for Increased Accountability and Efficiency

1. Intergovernmental Fees and Charges

One opportunity for efficiency would be the elimination of fees and charges assessed by other units of government. By way of example, below are amounts that other units of local government charge the Quincy Park District even though the Quincy Park District's taxpayers are also taxpayers of these other units of local government. Such fees and charges, and the bureaucracy that accompanies them, inhibit the park district's ability to deliver programs, facilities, and services at the least possible cost.

- City water and sewer charges of \$86,135 in 2022.
- State and local liquor licenses.

- Fire inspections.

Other units of local government should recognize that intergovernmental fees often lead to inefficiency in the expenditure of taxpayer dollars through extra bureaucracy and administrative costs. In many cases, the unit of government assessing the fee ultimately benefits from the project or event, meaning it can recoup its costs through the extra sales tax or other revenue that will be generated. Where such fees are absolutely necessary, general purpose units of government should offset the fee by crediting the park district for all benefits they will receive from a project, event, or property.

Governmental units should be discouraged or prohibited from charging more than their out-of-pocket costs associated with the activities covered by a fee that is assessed to another unit of local government with the same taxpayers. Put another way, one unit of local government should not profit by taxing another. Eliminating local permit fees is a way to reduce administrative costs without impacting overall public revenue. Local government best serves the people when it cooperates and works together. Some communities recognize this and do not charge fees to other units. All communities should be encouraged to follow that model to receive the best results for local taxpayers and to promote governmental efficiency.

2. Inefficiency of Other Governments

The Quincy Park District is also negatively impacted by the inefficiency of the state and other units of local government. The most significant item being the final settlement for segments of the trail that have been completed for many years.

3. Unfunded Mandates

Unfunded state mandates are another cost driver. While the Quincy Park District recognizes that there are benefits to some of these mandates, modifications could help alleviate some of the burden to the park district.

- a) Non-resident FOIA Requests.** Last year, the Quincy Park district spent \$250 in staff time and legal fees to fulfill FOIA requests. Often the individuals/businesses submitting the FOIA requests are from outside of the park district boundaries, and they appear to be serving a specific agenda, rather than assuring better local government.

Under current law, resident taxpayers end up footing the bill for these non-resident or commercial requests. In order to help alleviate the burden for these non-resident requests the law could be amended to: (1) add a requirement that non-residents identify/explain the purpose of the request for information; (2) add a time limit on how far back a non-resident can request information; (3) staff time and costs could be included in the amount that is reimbursable for non-resident and commercial requests; (4) move back the deadline for non-resident requests 10 business days so that the park district does not have to delay services to its residents in order to comply with a non-resident request.

Sunshine laws are supposed to protect taxpayers by allowing them to shed light on any issue that is not exempt from FOIA. However, local government can be burdened by having to drop everything to rearrange priorities to meet FOIA deadlines, particularly if it has limited resources. Since local residents ultimately bear the expense of complying with FOIA, treating resident and non-resident requests differently would be justified.

b) Criminal Background Checks. All park districts are statutorily required to conduct criminal background checks on all employees pursuant to Section 8-23 of the Park District Code. The background checks are completed through the Background Investigation Bureau, LLC (BIB). Last year, the park district spent \$4,711 for criminal background checks. The Quincy Park District does not recommend eliminating this mandate because it is necessary to ensure the safety and well-being of children and other park district patrons. However, the State should explore ways in which it could improve the current system and make it less costly for park districts to comply with the law.

The mandate also raises the fundamental question as to why one layer of government is forced to charge its taxpayers to comply with a State mandate when the State made the determination to impose the mandate. Put another way, if the State has determined that criminal background checks are necessary for public safety, the State should assist with compliance.

c) Prevailing Wage. One way to reduce burden on local government staff is to limit the prevailing wage requirement to larger capital contracts. This would free up tracking of the paperwork on small repairs and projects. One reason for creating a threshold requirement is the cost of the administrative burden relative to the cost of the actual project. For example, eliminating prevailing wage on smaller projects, e.g., those less than \$50,000, will result in more local bids and decrease the overall cost for these smaller public works projects.

d) Newspaper Publication. The newspaper is no longer the most effective way to provide notice. Websites are cheaper and reach more people. Permitting the park district to post the information on its website in lieu of newspaper publications would reduce costs.

4. Opportunities for Increased Transparency

As illustrated above, the Quincy Park District is very transparent in its operations.

5. Opportunities for Savings such as Energy Efficiency Projects, Joint Purchasing

- Lawson Products purchasing
- Granger Industrial Supply (government pricing)
- State Joint Purchasing Agreement
- Ameren Lighting Grant

Dated: September 13, 2023

Signed: _____

Jarid Jones, Chairman/President

Appendix

Exhibit A - Operations and Procedures Manual

Exhibit B - Board Policy Manual

Exhibit C - Public Park Use Ordinances

Exhibit D - Personnel Code

Exhibit E - Safety Policy Manual

Exhibit F - Crisis Management & Emergency Action Plan

Exhibit G – 2022 SOARS Strategic Planning

Exhibit H - Annual Comprehensive Financial Report

Exhibit I - Identity Protection Act

Exhibit J – Fund Reserve Policy