

**Wildwood Park District**  
**Special Board Meeting – Board Strategic Planning Workshop**  
**33325 N. Sears Boulevard, Wildwood, IL 60030**  
**Wednesday, January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2026, 6:00pm**

**MINUTES**

**I. Call to Order - Pledge of Allegiance**

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited

**II. Roll Call: Commissioners Becky Jante, Matt Brueck, Anna Nelson, Dan Corrigan, Doug Dietzen  
Park District Staff Present: Brandon Magnini – Executive Director**

**III. Approval of Agenda – Special Board Meeting – Wednesday, January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

President Jante entertained a motion to approve the Agenda of the Special Board Meeting – Board Strategic Planning Workshop of the Wildwood Park District of Wednesday, January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2026, as presented. So Moved: Commissioner Nelson, Second: Commissioner Corrigan. All in favor, motion carried.

**IV. Matters from the Public**

No Matters from the Public

**V. New Business**

**A. 2026-2029 Strategic Plan – Board of Commissioners Workshop**

Director Magnini thanked the Commissioners for taking the time to gather and discuss the direction of the Wildwood Park District for the next 3-5 years. A series of pointed Strategic Planning interview questions were posed to the Commissioners for thoughtful reflection and response. The responses can be found summarized here:

**1. Vision & Mission Discussion**

**What the District does well**

- Strong administrative Staff: many employees live in and are invested in the community.
- Parks are clean and environmental stewardship is strong.

**Alignment with operations**

- Team largely feels daily operations reflect the mission.
- Mission statement may be too broad and might need refinement.

**Desired future vision**

- Increased focus on care programs and community-centered services.

**2. SWOT Summary**

## **Strengths**

- Engaged and invested staff.
- Strong community connection.
- Valuable assets such as land and proximity to Community Center and the surrounding towns/villages.

## **Weaknesses**

- Budget limitations.
- Insufficient amenities (e.g., Rule House Community Center shortcomings with size).
- Limited resources that impact service expansion.

## **Opportunities**

- New or enhanced revenue streams (events, leveraging greenspace which is included by not limited to space at Twin Lakes Park for programming/events/attractions).
- Partnerships and untapped program areas.
- Security improvements to possibly include lighting, cameras, etc.

## **Threats**

- High taxes affecting public sentiment.
- Weather-related impacts on outdoor programs.

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## **3. Programs & Facilities**

### **Successful programs/facilities**

- Camps, Swim Lessons, Core Adult Programming such as Yoga, and Special Events/Concerts continue to be strong indicators of our community's interest due to consistent registration and previous/current feedback through reviews, surveys, word of mouth, and marketing engagement. A desire to utilize a Core Program matrix/analysis to present why a Core Program is a Core Program was expressed for Staff to put together.

### **Programs Needing Restructuring**

- Preschool program may require reassessment given weaker registration over the last 2-3 years post-COVID and strong competition from area preschool programs that may offer enhanced services of full-day care. Remove focus on smaller niche programs that do not run or have a limited history of interest in order to maximize Staff time and resources to devote to execution of our key Strategic Priorities.

### **Facility needs / improvements**

- Garage doors (front and side) for Rule Security Shed and Maintenance Shop
- Upgraded pavilion power at both Willow and Sunset Park Pavilions
- Expanded security cameras
- Deck improvements at Rule House
- Parking enhancements at Rule Park
- Restoration and/or replacement of Sunset Park seawall and continued shoreline restoration at all affected parks.

### **New facility/program ideas**

- Security-related improvements.
- Expanded community-based programs.
- Look into year-round multi-use skating/rollerblading structure at a location such as Twin Lakes Park as an expansion of services for our community.
- Utilize open room space for additional rentals as available.

### **Demographic reach**

- Discussion suggests some groups may be underserved; further assessment needed.

## **4. Internal Communication & Collaboration**

- Communication between departments is generally strong.
- Staff feel they have adequate input in decision-making.
- Continued need for improved workflows with delegation of certain tasks to front-line Staff as applicable.

## **5. Staff Development & Culture**

- Desire for more support for staff growth and training.
- Staff morale generally very positive; non-existent “back talk” culture.
- Emphasis on maintaining strong internal culture
- Discussion point on enhancing Staff benefit opportunities to possibly include 25% off of Core Programming such as camps/swim for their children - pending further administrative review. Consider modeling off of similar sized Districts in our area.

## **6. Fiscal Responsibility**

### **Resource allocation**

- Overall general satisfaction with current resource allocation.

### **Revenue & cost-saving opportunities**

- Keeping more services in-house has been crucial for cost-savings and well-rounded/trained Staff. Continue to move down this path for repair of machines, vehicles, etc.
- Expanding Core Program funding and Staff resource attention.
- Continue seeking additional revenue streams (sponsorships/donations/fundraising and/or foundation/rentals).

## Demonstrating value to taxpayers

- Increase transparency:
  - Dashboard on website
  - Improve Contact-Us page → potentially convert to FAQ section
  - More frequent community surveys
  - Better ADA accessibility reporting
  - Clearer Board communication

## 7. Implementation & Accountability

### Obstacles to new initiatives

- Budget constraints
- Resistance to change (“That’s how we’ve always done it”)
- Community nostalgia

### Accountability roles

- Staff believe Commissioners should have a degree of accountability to Staff, especially those who are also District Residents.
- Implement more frequent targeted surveys and develop schedule of outreach.

### Tracking progress

- Desire for clearer metrics and reporting mechanisms. Utilize AI/CoPilot, Key Performance Indicators (KPI), utilize quick infographics for web dashboard on District improvements by editing current Capital Projects and Planning Page, etc.

The strategic planning session revealed strong internal dedication and community connection, along with broad agreement on the need for enhanced transparency, improved facilities, security upgrades, continued revenue diversification, and clearer strategic direction. Budget limitations and change-resistance remain consistent barriers, while opportunities exist in community partnerships, expanded programming, and modernized communication tools.

The Board also came to a general consensus that the following were representative of 5 Strategic Priorities the District should be guided by during the course of the Strategic Plan Execution:

- I. Maintain High Level of Stewardship of Parks, Open Space, Natural Areas, Facilities
- II. Keep Parks Safe and Secure
- III. Fiscal Sustainability and Strong Financial Stewardship
- IV. Prioritization of Core and Essential Programming focused on Community Events, High-Value Adult Programming, and essential Youth/Family Recreation Programs such as Camp and Swim
- V. Leverage Community and Government Partnerships for Resource Sharing and Cost-Savings

Director Magnini also shared the minutes from the 10/30/2025 Strategic Planning Focus Group Meeting. Many of the same sentiments were echoed by the Residents with support for our Special Events, strong Core Programs and stewardship of the parks with a request for additional focus to be put on maintaining the quality and health of Valley Lake and both lakes in general.

As a reference point, the summary of the 2022 Community Focus Groups results conducted by Rudow Consulting were reviewed to help inform the Board of semi-recent attitudes and feelings towards the District's operations and long-term direction.

Finally, Director Magnini shared with the Board a template for Board level and Department specific goal setting within the 3-5 year adoption period of the Strategic Plan for further discussion as the Strategic Planning Process continued into 2026.

**VI. Matters from the Public**  
No Matters from the Public

**VII. Adjournment**  
President Jante entertained a motion to adjourn the Special Board Meeting Board Strategic Planning Workshop of Wednesday, January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2026, at 8:09 PM. So Moved: Commissioner Nelson, Second: Commissioner Corrigan. All in favor, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:09pm.

The Wildwood Park District is subject to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Individuals with disabilities who plan to attend this meeting and who require certain accommodations in order to allow them to observe and/or participate in this meeting, or who have questions regarding the accessibility of the meeting or facilities, are asked to contact the Park District at 847.223.7275 or email Executive Director/ADA Compliance Officer Brandon Magnini at [bmagnini@wildwoodparkdistrict.com](mailto:bmagnini@wildwoodparkdistrict.com).

**The Board of Park Commissioners welcome public comments during all meetings.**

**Key rules governing participation**

All comments will be limited to three (3) minutes per person and no longer than 30 minutes for all comments.

Beck N. Jante  
President

[Signature]  
Secretary

2-17-26  
Date

2-17-2026  
Date