

MEMO

To: Jim Randall, Executive Director
From: Ed Reidy, Superintendent of Parks
Date: 1/23/17
Subject: IPRA Conference January 20 & 21, 2017

Thank you for the opportunity to attend State Conference. It is good for me on many levels, education, networking, and energizing me for the future. Following is a short recap of educational sessions I attended as well as volunteered for the Parks and Natural Resource Management committee.

Capital Projects – Approaches for Improving Delivery Efficiency and Success

Speakers: Jim Reuter, Executive Director Carol Stream Park District; Bob Ijams, Wight & Company; Shane Hamilton, Superintendent of Parks and Recreation Village of South Elgin.

Discussion of procedure and how different agencies have different systems was an icebreaker. A capital project repurposing an old warehouse to an indoor tennis court, fitness and recreation facility was discussed. The amounts of resources saved and scale of the project decreased by removing the building envelope but saving the slab & frame was impressive. Finally a million dollar ADA playground facility & park area that lost funding half way through construction (Gov Rauner froze OSLAD funds) but was able to continue through different hurdles was inspirational.

Urban Paradises – Putting Nature Back Into the City

Speakers: Joel Baldin, LA at Hitchcock Design Group; Andrew Howard, LA at Hitchcock Design Group

Past project reviews of the Morton Arboretum Children's Garden and Hawks Hollow Nature playground in regard to the importance of educating children about nature and play. Other project reviews including the Garfield Park Batonic Garden and Northerly Island for the Chicago Park District.

I volunteered as the session moderator.

3D Canopy Volume Analysis and the Urban Forest

Speakers: Phil Graf, owner Graf Tree Care Inc; Stephen Lane, arborist and ecologist Graf Tree Care Inc.

Presentation of the importance of mature trees and the need for municipalities (among others) to take better care of their trees, with the intention of these to reach maturity, in which they provide the most benefit (i.e. carbon sequestered, water filtration, cooling of the urban heat island...). Demonstration of how canopy volume is measured with new technologies and mathematical calculations. Discussion of

how 50 dbh (diameter at breast height) of a few mature trees is so much more beneficial to the environment than 50 dbh of many immature trees even though it is the same “traditional measurement” of a tree inventory.

I volunteered as the session moderator.

Green Until It Hurts – Case Study on Applied Sustainability

Speakers: Tom Rychlik, senior engineer at Gewalt Hamilton Associates; James Warnstedt, Superintendent of Parks Glenview Park District.

Presentation of the design and construction of Glenview Park District’s newest maintenance facility which earned LEED certification as well as an Illinois Association of Park Districts Best Green Practices award. A power point presentation with picture of the green roof, wind turbine, cistern, native plants...

I volunteered as the session moderator.

You Have A Comprehensive Plan. Now What?

Speakers: Barbra Heller, Heller and Heller Consulting; Steve Konters, principal Hitchcock Design Group; Lisa Shepard, Executive Director Glenco Park District; Mike Renner, Commissioner Cary Park District.

Presentation of the importance of having a Comprehensive Plan and how it can be used for more than the obvious “plan”. A district’s comprehensive plan should be tied to the budget, public transparency, and donations for projects as well as how to manage possible donations for projects that are not in the plan or in the best interest of the district. Existing plans from other districts were shown as examples.

I volunteered as the session moderator.

I also spent time in the exhibit hall touching base with contacts (old and new) from different vendors.

Finally, it was nice going out to dinner with Recreation Staff. It was an entertaining evening I enjoyed very much.

Thank you again for this opportunity.

MEMO

To: Jim Randall, Executive Director
From: John Keenan, Superintendent of Recreation
Date: 2/13/17
Subject: IPRA Conference January 20 & 21, 2017

I'd like to thank the Frankfort Square Park District Board, Jim Randall, and Audrey Marcquenski for giving me the opportunity to attend the 2017 Illinois Association of Park Districts/Illinois Park and Recreation Association Conference in Chicago. There are too few opportunities that allow us to get together with friends and colleagues in the recreation field. The conference provides us with that opportunity and gives us the chance to grow both personally and professionally by offering the workshops and educational sessions. There are so many different programs and ideas out there that we can bring back to the Frankfort Square Park District, and the conference gives us the chance to see and hear firsthand what's working in other communities and what isn't.

Etiquette in the Workplace

Speakers: Eileen Soisson, President, The Meeting Institute

This session focused on proper business etiquette and people skills training needed to be regarded as professional in the recreation industry. The session identified correct office protocol in today's fast changing times including greetings, introductions, telephone skills, Internet correspondence, and male/female business interactions. Employees and management must conduct themselves professionally and with proper etiquette so as to maintain effective working conditions. It sounds like common sense...but common sense is not always so common.

Transgender: Dealing with the Complex Issues Impacting Park Districts

Speakers: Keri-Lyn J. Krafthefer, Equity Partner and Robert T. McCabe, Attorney, Ancel Glink Diamond Bush DiCianni & Krafthefer

This session provided an overview of the legal issues facing park districts dealing with transgender issues. We learned how to prevent major issues for district programs and facilities with working knowledge and sensitivity to the subject. There were two attorneys present who provided answers in "plain language" dealing with the complex issues dealing with transgender.

Double-Goal Coach: Coaching for Winning and Life Lessons

This session introduced PCS's Double-Goal Coach model and provided an in-depth review of the three principles around which it is built; honor the game; redefining "winner"; and filling emotional tanks.

A good coach knows that winning is important, but teaching life lessons is MORE important. As a park district we need to create our own team culture where honoring the game is a core value.

There's a difference between the Scoreboard definition of winning and the mastery definition of winning. The scoreboard determines winning based on results, comparisons to other team, and says mistakes are not ok. But really a winner shows good effort, learns the game, and realizes that mistakes are ok, because that's how you learn and get better.

Filling the Emotional Tank...If the tank is empty the kids are less coachable. Ignoring, criticizing, and sarcasm all drain kids from wanting to listen to the coach. However, if a coach gives a child praise, expresses appreciation, and listens...those kids are much more coachable.

Thank you again for this opportunity!

John Keenan
Frankfort Square Park District
Superintendent of Recreation

MEMO

To: Jim Randall, Executive Director
From: Carter Patton, Athletic Supervisor
Date: 2/13/17
Subject: IPRA Conference January 20 & 21, 2017

Thank you very much for allowing me to represent the Frankfort Square Park District at the annual state conference in Chicago. Thank you to the board as well for sending me and letting me gather valuable professional knowledge. I had a great time networking with other professionals and attending sessions to broaden my horizons.

Fire It Up! The Power of Making Good Happen

Speakers: Lisa Paradis, Director, Brookline, MA

This session talked about engaging every single day with your employees, with your community and with your co-workers. It helped to restore the why we do what we do in parks and recreation. There are a lot of people that rely on what we do and we need to make sure we work hard every day to provide the community these services.

The Plight of the Middle Manager: The Art of Managing

Speakers: Jai Cole, Natural Resources Manager, N-NCPPC, Montgomery County Department of Recreation; Chris Matthews, Division Director, Mecklenberg County Park and Recreation

This session was valuable to me as a middle manager. The session discussed better practices for managing staff and making sure they have everything they need to be successful. The session then went into discussion about reporting to your supervisor. How you talk with them and give them the best possible information in the most efficient and effective way possible.

Aligning Strategic Plans with Employee Performance

Speakers: Rianne Idstein, HR Consultant, and Julie Strahl, Consultant, Sikich LLP; Juile Popp, Executive Director, Manhattan Park District

This session discussed the importance of aligning your organizations goals and visions with employee performance reviews. When the district has a strategic plan and a solid vision of where they want to be, it is a lot easier for staff to perform at their best. It is then easiest to evaluate their work because it should always be aligned with the plan of the organization.

Building Connections through Sport

Speakers: Andy Neilsen, Director of Coaching and Training, Urban Initiatives

This session focused on coaching youth sports and programs and how to build the proper “game.” We discussed how to get the best out of all the kids and how to not only coach to teach the sport but to coach to develop the children into successful young teens and then adults. We also talked about building the proper game and how to make sure that it always has boundaries and is structured enough for everyone to understand it.

I also spent time in the exhibit hall meeting people and learning about all the good things the vendors do. Finally, it was nice going out to dinner with the rest of the staff. Thank you so much for the opportunity, I had a great time at my first conference!

IAPD/IPRA Conference 2017 – Soaring to New Heights

I would like to thank the board for the opportunity to attend the annual IAPD/IPRA conference. It was such an excellent opportunity to meet new people, and I learned a tremendous amount of new information and new skills that will certainly be applied to my professional career in parks and recreation.

On Thursday, I attended two sessions – The Confidence Quadrant and Developing Emotional Intelligence.

The first session on Thursday morning was presented by Darren Fischer, a self-declared motivational speaker who has presented to corporations around the world. In this session, Darren covered four main quadrants of confidence, and how to achieve confidence that falls into the “best” quadrant. We discussed ourselves both on a personal and professional level, and talked about the skills that are required to be both flexible *and* confident in ourselves and our leadership. The goal was to achieve the skillset of a “confident enterpriser” – someone who focuses on successes and recognizes failure as an opportunity to grow. At the conclusion of the session, we identified someone from each quadrant either in our personal or professional lives and identified how to best deal with these people, how to move them closer to the “confident enterpriser” quadrant, and how to keep people there who have already achieved it.

The second session was the professional development symposium, and discussed the new idea of “emotional intelligence”, and how knowing and understanding the emotions of ourselves and others will allow for us to better communicate and lead a group. We took a self-evaluation test, and spent this session talking about changing our core beliefs as a person would then reflect in the actions of our everyday lives. It was interesting to hear him speak as he placed a lot of emphasis on growing up in a time where racism ran rampant, and how he as an adult had to find a way to overcome that hate. He spoke to us about applying our emotional intelligence to the workplace and how to use it to facilitate new relationships and understandings of people.

On Friday, I attended three sessions – Fire It Up!, Throw out the Brochure – Marketing on the Web, and Moving from Management to Transformational Leadership.

In *Fire It Up!*, the speaker placed a lot of emphasis on how important park districts are to people and communities, and the opportunity it provides us as leaders to make an impact. We began talking about what it is that makes people happy and how as a leader we have the opportunity to reframe situations and instill culture in our surroundings. We spoke about the difference between satisfaction and engagement, and how to take ourselves and our employees from just being *satisfied* to being *engaged* in doing their jobs – which starts at facilitating positivity and happiness in the workplace.

Attending *Throw out the Brochure* was an accident – I misinterpreted the topic. However, I took much more from the speakers than I anticipated in regards to social media and having a presence on some web interface. The points I took away are as follows:

- In today’s culture, more people interact with websites on a mobile browser (cell phones, tablets), than they do on a regular desktop website. This increases the importance of having a mobile compatible website – there are more people with phones across the world than there are people with electricity!

- Social media is a key player in interacting with your public. A park district should be using social media to interact, comment, converse, and acknowledge the public. Interaction is key to establishing relationships, especially among the younger generations, and is becoming more important to older generations as they learn to connect with each other.
- Nonprofits and educational establishments have a higher demand for social media interaction because there is no product being sold – consumers will follow your platforms to receive information, ask questions, and gather information.

Overall, the speaker was focusing mainly on park districts who do their website design in house. However, they spoke so often of social media and the importance of having a stable and secure relationship with the public.

During *Moving from Management to Transformational Leadership*, we talked about the five stages of leadership and what it takes to go from stage one (transactional leader) to stage five (transformational leader). During all of the stages, there are certain strengths and traits you gain or lose that take you from leading to satisfy yourself, to leading to satisfy a greater purpose. We discussed how a transformational leader embodies and communicates a vision to those he is leading, which results in achievement of that vision. Being a leader requires that the followers have a psychological buy in for the purpose of the vision, that then inspires them to contribute.

There are 7 key traits to a transformational leader:

- Is able to communicate and listen to others
- Instills trust, provides direction, and delegates responsibility to establish leadership
- Adjusts to circumstances and thinks creatively in terms of adaptability
- Builds relationships and facilitates success
- Works efficiently and competently
- Takes action to achieve results
- Cultivates talents and motivates others for success

This was the last day for the exhibit hall, and it was busy! There were a great deal of potential field trip locations set up, and I spoke with a lot of people I had only spoken to over the phone. I was impressed with the number of vendors for physical park equipment and technological products, but spent a lot of time talking to new locations or vendors that may be able to contribute to our special events and summer day camp programs.

Finally on Saturday, I attended two sessions – the keynote and FSLA.

The keynote speaker, Steve Gilliland, was a phenomenal speaker who emphasized the importance of “enjoying the ride”. He was wonderful at keeping the audience engaged. The biggest take away from this session was his question – “Is what you’re about to say or do going to improve the situation?” He then talked about life experiences in which he had to adapt or learn to live in the moment. We talked about assigning the right value to a situation, or not letting something minute bring you down and vice versa. It was a great start to the morning, and really brought about a positive energy in the room.

I attended the session on FSLA to gain a better understanding of how the new law would apply to me as an hourly employee, as well as how I was managing my employees. Overall, the topic of conversation was more focused on the employees like myself who work on the clock, but may have duties off the

clock and how to compensate for that. One area that may have applied was whether to pay an employee who is working an “on call” shift, but it seemed that as long as the employee could use the time waiting for their own personal benefit, they would be classified as “waiting to be engaged”, and did not require compensation. The opposite would be a shift that requires the time waiting “belong to and is controlled by the employer”.

Thank you again for the wonderful opportunity and I will carry what I have learned with me throughout my career.

Respectfully submitted,

Raegan Christy