

## 2019 IAPD/IPRA Conference

Thank you very much for the opportunity to attend the 2019 IAPD/IPRA Conference. With new responsibilities at the Frankfort Square Park District, I appreciate the opportunity to focus on educational sessions in these new areas.

I began with *Own Your Leadership Voice: Increase Your Effectiveness and Influence*, presented by Donna Brighton, Chief Idea Officer, Brighton Group. The room was filled with professionals of all ages and positions, from Recreation Supervisors to Executive Directors from all across Illinois. When asked what we wanted to get out of this session, all comments touched on the fact that individuals do not feel respected by supervisors, coworkers, and the public. These comments stunned me, especially because it was so widespread. While not the leadership class I was expecting, my critical takeaway was to ensure that we maintain the respectful environment that we enjoy at the FSPD.

Following this session, Nicolette and I had a meeting scheduled with Jarrod Scheunemann and Michael Mulvaney from Campfire Concepts, the team working with us on the Salary Equity and Health and Wellness Studies. Matt joined us, and we discussed our recent efforts to generate program and facility lists which will serve as the foundation for the health and wellness study. We enjoyed a great discussion on how to define wellness, as well as options for the upcoming community survey. An added bonus was having Nicolette and Matt join the conversation, ensuring they had a voice and reinforcing the fact that they are respected members of the FSPD team.

*Legal/Legislative, Part I*, led by Jason Anselment, Legal/Legislative Counsel, IAPD and Derke Price, Equity Partner, Ancel Glink, focused on new laws and recent court decisions. We started with highlights from the 37 House and Senate Bills recently passed in Springfield. Most exciting is Senate Bill 203, which repeals the annual prevailing wage determination and filing requirements. The legal section emphasized the importance of documentation in everything we do and recent decisions regarding FOIA.

*Legal/Legislative, Part II*, presented by Andrew Paine, Attorney, Tressler, LLP, served as a recap of important court decisions, PAC opinions, and recent legislation affecting park districts. Andrew focused on the Open Meetings and Freedom of Information Acts. After listening to the many challenges other agencies faced, this further emphasized the FSPD's solid practice of running FOIA requests and responses past legal counsel.

I was relieved that the FSPD was not mentioned in *You'll Never Believe Our Top Ten Crazy Employment Decisions*, led by Margaret Kostopulos, Partner, and Robert McCabe, Attorney, from Ancel Glink. We learned where others went wrong in terms of communication, documentation, poor decision making, and general common sense. Also, we discussed recommendations for employee handbook revisions. I appreciated John and Nicolette's attendance at this session, as they further their development with managing a large number of staff.

In addition to the educational sessions, I also enjoyed touring the exhibit hall and networking with other park and recreation professionals, as well as our professional contractors in attendance.

Respectfully Submitted,

Audrey Marcquenski

# MEMO

To: Jim Randall, Executive Director  
From: Ed Reidy, Superintendent of Parks  
Date: 2/18/19  
Subject: IPRA Conference Friday January 25 & Saturday January 26, 2019

Thank you, and the Board of Commissioners, for the opportunity to attend State Conference. Conference is a valuable experience 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.

## Comprehensive Master Planning

Speaker: Bill Inman, Hitchcock Design Group

The session covered the many steps involved in master planning. It questioned the justification or “need” for the resources to conduct the planning. One would need to define what is needed in order to accomplish the plan. Some important steps in the master plan would be: strategic plans, needs assessment, capital improvement plans, operations, services, maintenance, sustainability, ADA, budget... Finally an action plan with priorities, timeframes and budget link all the other steps. The session was very informative with a lot of information in a very short amount of time.

## Net-Zero Energy: within reach or out of this world

Speakers: Lois Vitt Sale, Wight & Co. and Jennifer Lopez, Plainfield Park District

The Plainfield Park District built a new recreation center as a “Net-Zero” building using the International Living Future Institute and Passive House Institute as sources of information & inspiration. Pictures of the building looked very impressive with the roof filled with solar panels. There was a lot of talk about segregated meter panels and the pros & cons of this approach. It was clear that a Net-Zero Building construction costs will be much more expensive than conventional, and the owner needs to be comfortable with that.

## Chloride Reduction Through Improved de-Icing Strategies

Speaker Jennifer Hammer, Land Conservation & Watershed Manager, The Conservation Foundation

I volunteered as the session’s room host.

The “Salt Smart” initiative was discussed with smart salt de-icing strategies. The true cost of salt (taking in all the environmental damage) was the focus. The Village of Frankfort was mentioned in the efforts some municipalities are taking to clean the water contaminated with chlorides. The overall message was more salt does not work better than salt applications that are planned with enough time to take effect when pavement and air temperatures cooperate.

## Gardening with a Purpose

Speakers: Joan Scovic, Palatine Park District, Holly Peterson, master gardener volunteer, Corey Zak, Palatine Park District

I volunteered as the session's moderator.

The Palatine Park District's Clayson House Museum and the work done at the site for the last few seasons was discussed in detail. It is a facility the park district and the community take a lot of pride in. Many volunteer hours were given to landscape the historic building with a Victorian period garden.

## Does Your District Have a Plan for Success?

Speakers: Christina Ferraro, Prospect Heights Park District, Tom Diehl, Green Play LLC.

I volunteered as the session's moderator.

The speakers focused on the Master Plan steps the Prospect Heights Park District took in their master planning process. They discussed the SWOT analysis, focus groups, survey, and a demographic trend study with findings and the visioning workshop.

Assistant Superintendent of Parks Bill O'Shea, and Park Lead Luke Deuser also attended Friday January 25th. They attended the educational session:

## Moving On Up, Career Advancement

The session stressed how quickly things change. As younger crews advance in the public sector public image must stay a top priority. They also staged mock interviews and how to manage younger people.

## They Spoke We Listened

This session's speaker was the Executive Director from Centralville Park District and the things he had to do to reach his community with new recreation programming ideas. With minimum fees his intention was to draw more people to the parks which he did through his hard work.

We all spent time in the exhibit hall touching base with contacts from different vendors looking at different equipment, and talking to suppliers.

Thank you again for this opportunity.

I'd like to thank the Frankfort Square Park District Board and Jim Randall, for giving me the opportunity to attend the 2019 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 first hand what's working in other communities and what isn't.

### **FRIDAY MORNING CONFERENCE SESSION**

#### **From the Front Line to the Bottom Line: Managing Your Front-Line Staff for Success**

Font-Line management is considered bar far the most complicated aspect of management within parks and recreation, but too often, the front-line operations are the last areas in which we invest our time, money, and effort. Today's challenges of tight budgets and difficulties finding part-time staff only compound the challenges us managers face. With that said it is more important now than ever to invest in the front lines. This interactive, brainstorming presentation challenged you to critically review our font-line operations to determine whether they are helping or hurting our bottom line. In the end as a group we were able to identify vital areas front-line staff need to hit to achieve success, including what needs to happen and why. The goal was to create bullet-proof measurements that will create consistency and lead to greater team success.

### **FRIDAY AFTERNOON CONFERENCE SESSIONS**

#### **You'll Never Believe Our Top Ten Crazy Employment Decisions**

This session talked about the eye opening employment issues that could affect our agency. It was a chance to just sit and listen and be glad they were not talking about the Frankfort Square Park District. We learned of some unusual decisions employer made and to keep up to date with recommendations for policy and handbook review and revisions so that FSPD is not included in their session talks in the future.

#### **Grow Your Monster Fans**

Monster fans are our best customers. They are the ones that write rave reviews on Facebook, recommend our services to their friends and family, and share all our content online. In this session we talked about how to grow, feed, and handle our own monster fans by focusing on how marketing, customer service, and recreation teams can work together to create an outstanding experience for our customers. We left this session being able to recognize the differences between regular customers and monster fans who become enthusiastic and brand advocates. And how to create the right habitat to grow monster fans through marketing.

Respectfully submitted,

John Keenan

Superintendent of Recreation  
Frankfort Square Park District

## Conference 2019 recap- Nicolette Jerik

Overall the sessions I chose to attend were very helpful and interesting. I did attend the socials and networked with other professionals as well. The most interesting session I went to I could relate to BAS, Escapades and Early Childhood Camp/Summer Camp. The session was called Making Downtime Fun Time At Camp. The speakers actually had all the supervisors interact and play these modified games in groups. In the beginning we broke down times where we have trouble thinking of new innovative games. Those times included drop off, pick up, lunch time, and rainy day activities. The speakers are going to email everyone that attended a list of these games and rules. This will be a great document to have on hand during site trips and to hand out to staff. The other sessions I attended were on staff training and maximizing your budgets. What I got out of these sessions were interactive exercises, tools to use for openers when training new staff, reinforcement tips and how to make it stick with staff once they leave. Audrey and I are working on our 2<sup>nd</sup> study with Camp Fire Concepts. This study we are focusing on Wellness and what it means to others. We had dinner with Jarod from Camp Fire Concepts and Mike from Illinois State University. The conversations we had at dinner were very helpful when it comes to defining wellness and our current wellness programs we have to offer. The goal after this study is to send out a survey to the community and see what their interests are for future projects. This survey will help the recreation department with creating new wellness programs based on feedback. Overall my time spent at conference was well worth it. It was great catching up with other professionals and broadening my knowledge on different topics within the field of recreation. Thank you to the board and Jim for letting me attend conference and getting the opportunity to bring back new ideas to use in a variety of programming.

# MEMO

To: Jim Randall, Executive Director  
From: Matt Tillman, Athletic Supervisor  
Date: 1/31/19  
Subject: IPRA Conference January 25 & 26, 2018

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to represent the Frankfort Square Park District at the annual state conference in Chicago. Also, I would like to thank the board of directors for allowing me to gain valuable knowledge and relationships.

Get Going! Start your own GO Wellness Movement and improve Your Residents Health!

Speakers: Jennifer Gilbert, Gurnee Park District & Sean Collins, Lake County Health Department

This session was focused on starting your own GO! Wellness movement. As the F.A.N manager, I thought this would give me some great ideas on improving our walking club. My goal for this next year is to help improve our residents' health by providing fun and exciting activities at F.A.N. One idea I took away from the session was involving the Health department in our events. They have statistics that can help us learn about our residents' health and can gear programs around the needs.

Giving your Best while Preparing for the Worst

Speakers: Kristie Vest, Special Events Supervisor, Oswegoland Park District

This session discussed preparing for chaos and crisis situations. It talked about what to have in your Emergency Action Plan. We went over different issues that have occurred during events. The major concern for most events that is unpredictable is the weather. An app that is free to use for future events is Remind APP. This APP can send out a text message alert to everyone involved in a specific event. This would be helpful in a crisis situation or a cancellation.

Becoming a Gym Ninja: Creative Programming Ideas to Generate and Increase Revenue

Speaker: Deirdre White, Facility Manager, Oak Lawn Park District

This session talked about different creative programs you can offer based around the show American Ninja Warrior. This session gave insight on how to build a mini ninja warrior in any space. This session caught my eye because we have a lot of space at north that is not utilized and we might have the opportunity to offer a program similar to the program in Oak Lawn. This program would increase revenue but also provide another fun and active program for our adolescences. The speaker talked a lot about how cheap the equipment is to make and how the equipment doesn't take up space. This program would be a program that could be offered for birthday parties.

## Keynote General Session: The Best Version of YOU

Speaker: Greg Schwem

The Keynote speaker had a great sense of humor and related his topics to Park districts. He spoke about topics such as team dynamic, special events, and keeping an open mind. One thing I learned from the speaker was to always keep an open minded. He talked about how Woodstock started from an idea from a band and has become the most famous festival. He talked about how you need to look at your team members strong skills and use those skills instead of focusing on the weaknesses. Overall, the speaker had a great presentation.

## What's Youth Development Got to Do with IT?

Speakers: Megan Owens, Western Illinois University

This sessions discussed the topics based around youth development in our recreation programs. The speaker gave tips on how to gear programs to help development participants physically, socially, and intellectually. One thing I learned that I will use in the future is focus more trainings on coaches teaching transferrable skills in our athletic programs. This session focused on positive development framework. It taught us skills that are of the twenty-first century.

Overall, I had a fantastic time at conference. I was able to meet with colleagues, network with other park districts, and make connections with vendors. I spent a lot of time in the exhibit hall looks for new and creative ideas to bring back to our organization. Lastly, it was nice going out to dinner with the staff and Jarrod from Campfire Concepts. I had a wonderful time at conference and I want to you again for the opportunity.