

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

MARCH 2025

ADMINISTRATION

S&P Global Ratings just completed a review and upgraded the Frankfort Square Park District's rating. The draft rationale from S&P Global was provided and once we receive the final copy, it will be posted to the FSPD website under the transparency tab that includes all S&P ratings dating back to 2009. Also, staff notified Baird Public Finance to post the notice to bondholders regarding the rating raise.

Renovations are underway at The Square! Work began in the front office area to remove walls between the former principal's and nurse's offices to connect them with an adjoining classroom, making one large room that will become one of the new dance studios.

Once the current project is complete, we can move the FSPD's dance program, known as the Braemar Dance Center (BDC), to The Square. Dance classes have always been a popular program beginning when the FSPD was formed in 1974. The Community Center, located on Braemar Lane, hence the BDC name, gave our dance program a home as it grew and developed tremendously over the years. Eventually, it outgrew the Community Center and in 2015, we were fortunate to be able to move the popular program to Mary Drew. The Square will give our dance program a permanent home for our dancers ranging in age from 3 through adult that over the past year, participated in 351 different dance classes.

Staff met for a pre-construction meeting for Hunter Prairie Park with the landscape architects and the contractor. All are excited to begin work pending favorable weather. Site set-up is scheduled for the week of March 24. The park will be under construction this spring and summer with a planned fall completion date meeting the OSLAD requirements.

The current fiscal year's capital improvement list was approved at the March 2024 Board Meeting and throughout the year as part of the public bid process. The extensive list of improvements focused District-wide from computer hardware to tree purchases, athletic field improvements, and numerous amenities and projects to enhance users' enjoyment of FSPD parks and facilities. These improvements were completed at all facilities that host FSPD programming and at 11 different parks.

Staff are working on the 2025 – 2026 budget and prioritized project list to begin the next fiscal year. The list is primarily focused on renovations at The Square, the Hunter Prairie Park OSLAD renovation, and the new practice area at the golf course. Also included on the recommended project list for your consideration are additional projects based upon resident requests and scheduled priorities.

Also on the agenda for Board consideration is an ordinance requesting disposal of equipment. This month a new phone system was installed at the golf course and the same is scheduled for the Community Center this spring. The old equipment, listed on Attachment A of the disposal ordinance would be recycled, pending Board approval.

The Park District received 24 college scholarship applications for this year's 2025 program, reflecting the highest number of submissions received over the past 13 years. The judging committee, consisting of two staff members and five Board Members, is reviewing each of the

applications based on a set criterion, where all identifying factors were removed to eliminate any chance of bias. Park staff will forward names of successful candidates to the Lincoln-Way East High School PPS office, and FSPD representatives will attend the May 7, 2025, Community Scholarship Night to present the awards.

March is the annual review of full-time personnel. Packets will be delivered for Board review in advance of the meeting. I will request an Executive Session at the conclusion of the regular meeting for discussion.

MAINTENANCE

With a taste of spring, we are now full speed ahead with the excitement and anticipation of getting outside to play on playgrounds and athletic fields District-wide. Our maintenance staff manages their scheduled tasks and numerous special requests while balancing turf protection and care before the growing season begins.

The mowing contractors will begin work in early April for the 2025 season.

RECREATION

Our active adults have been enjoying the Broadway Series at the Paramount Theatre in Aurora. Waitress was a big hit and over twenty are already registered for the Cats musical this summer. Also, staff are planning future trips to Door County, Wisconsin and Shipshewana, Indiana.

Work continues on the summer 2025 brochure. Jackie Keenan, who manages the FSPD's social media and special projects, is working with the programming staff and the brochure designer. She brings a fresh set of eyes and new layout ideas with the goal of increasing awareness of the District's various offerings such as indoor and outdoor rental opportunities and summer concerts.

FINANCE AND PLANNING

The latest draft of the proposed 2025 – 2026 budget includes the 2.9 % increase in the property tax line items based on the CPI. It does not account for new growth which will be detailed in the Will County Tax Rate Calculation expected at the end of this month and incorporated into the April draft of the Operating Budget.

The budget includes revenue carryforwards for the Hunter Prairie Park renovation, dance studio buildouts at The Square, and the practice area at the golf course. These projects span the current and next fiscal year and amounts will be adjusted as we close out the current fiscal year on April 30, 2025.

The Fund Balance Policy was established to provide financial stability, sufficient cash flow for operations, support long-term infrastructure plans, and assure that the Park District will be able to respond to emergencies with fiscal strength. Even with the current projects, all Policy goals are maintained, and the Park District continues its strong financial position.

Staff are preparing for the next audit which will review FSPD financials and all areas of its operation. The audit planning meeting will be scheduled in late March/early April.

SPECIAL RECREATION

The next LWSRA Board Meeting is scheduled for March 18.

GOLF COURSE

Spring cleanup and prep work continues in anticipation of reopening the golf course for the 2025 season on or about March 18. Also, updated pricing is in place following the direction given at the February 20 Board Meeting and amendments to the Use Tax Act (HB 4951). FSPD staff are ready to welcome golfers for another great season at Square Links!

The second year of a three-year plan to replace the course's 250 sprinkler heads is complete. This year's priority was those located on the tee boxes.

OFFICE

Front office staff have finalized the gardener list with all plots assigned at Brookside Bayou Park and Community Park. With the strong interest in community gardening opportunities, a third location will become available at Hunter Prairie Park in 2026, as part of the OSLAD grant redevelopment of this park site.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Staff met with the District's interim PDRMA representative, Tim Lenac, to begin this year's risk management review. Our goals for the upcoming year focus on facility management and staff safety training.

Full-time and front office staff completed the annual safety training that includes numerous topics ranging from manuals and emergency action plans to behavior management and fire extinguisher use. This training also serves as the foundation on which department and facility-specific training programs are built.

Respectfully submitted:

Audrey Marcquenski
Executive Director