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Matthew S. Eppers
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PRINCETON
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Efficiency Report
for the
Princeton Park District
Princeton Illinois

Prepared by the
Local Government Efficiency Committee
of the
Princeton Park District

in compliance with the
Decennial Committees on Local Government Efficiency Act
(Public Act 102-1088) (50 ILCS 70/1 ET seq.)

Submitted to the
Bureau County Board
December 11, 2023

Purpose of this Report

To comply with the mandate of the *Decennial Committees on Local Government Efficiency Act* (Public Act 102-1088), the Princeton Park District formed a Local Government Efficiency Report Committee on May 15, 2023 to study efficiencies and offer recommendations for efficiency and increased accountability. The following report presents the findings of this committee.

Membership of The Committee

Andrew Marti	Chair, Park Board Commissioner and Park Board President
Dennis Nink	Park Board Commissioner and Park Board Vice President
Abbie Cochran	Park Board Commissioner
Brandon Nyman	Park Board Commissioner
Les Youngren	Park Board Commissioner
Elizabeth Bonucci	Resident Member
Jessica Boggs	Resident Member
Robert Halberg	Resident Member
Tammy Lange	Executive Director, Princeton Park District
Nick Davis	Assistant Director & Recreation Superintendent, Princeton Park District

Meetings of the Committee

Meetings of the Local Government Efficiency Report were held on the following dates:

Monday, October 2, 2023

Monday, November 6, 2023

Monday, December 4, 2023

Minutes of the meetings of the Princeton Park District Efficiency Report Committee are available on the Princeton Park District web site (www.princetonparkdistrict.org).

The Mission of the Princeton Park District

The Princeton Park District is guided by its adopted mission statement as follows:

It is our mission to provide leisure and recreation services to our communities and to provide safe, inviting and family oriented activities for all residents.

Like all park districts in the State of Illinois, the Princeton Park District is governed by the Illinois *Park District Code, 70 ILCS 1205/1 et. seq.*

History of the Princeton Park District

The Princeton Park District was established in 1946 through a referendum overwhelmingly approved by the voters residing within the boundaries of the Park District. Results of the ballot were 324 in favor, 24 opposed.

Beginning in the fall of 1947, the Princeton Park District secured a 20 year lease for the Westside Ball Park from the City of Princeton. In the summer of 1950, the Princeton City Council passed an ordinance directing the sale of Westside Ball Park. On July 3, 1950, the Princeton Park District offered to pay \$10.00 by a certified check payable to the City of Princeton. This bid was accepted by the City Council; there were no other bids to be considered.

Facilities of the Princeton Park District

The Princeton Park District now maintains facilities including over 200 acres of open-space parks, the Alexander Park Swimming Pool, and the Bureau County Metro Center. These facilities include:

Westside Ball Park

Games have been played at Westside prior to the formation of the Princeton Park District. In 1947, Westside Park was leased from the City of Princeton to the Park District, and in 1950, the land was sold to the Park District for the nominal sum of \$10.

Westside Ball Park provides two baseball/softball fields with restrooms and concession stand. Westside Park is home for Princeton Youth Softball and Princeton Youth Baseball games, as well as the Princeton Church Fast Pitch Softball League, and occasional tournaments.

City County Park

The Princeton Park District shares ownership of City County Park with the City of Princeton and Bureau County; the Park District is in charge of the management and maintenance of the park.

This 65-acre green space is a popular multi-use destination. Nestled at the north edge of Princeton, this park includes open spaces, a playground, ball field, restrooms, and shelters suitable for a variety of functions.

Zearing Park

Zearing Park is a 72 acre park on the southeast corner of Princeton. Here you will find three baseball/softball fields, up to six soccer fields, picnic shelters with barbecue areas, a sand volleyball court, a playground, restrooms, and a concession stand. Zearing Park is also the site of a 3-acre fish-able pond, and a 1.3 mile walking path/fitness trail. The park's eastern border includes a stand of natural prairie grasses, and a soon-to-open fenced dog park.

Zearing Park was created through the 1969 gift by Mrs. Eunice Zearing of a half interest in a 32-acre tract of land on the southeast corner of Princeton. The Park District purchased the other half interest in the land from local resident Roscoe T. Johnson, and developed a master plan for the park. After development of the facilities, Zearing Park was formally opened in 1976.

In 2006, a group of citizens proposed the acquisition and development of an adjoining 40 acre parcel. The landowner, Bonucci Farms, made a charitable donation of a sizable portion of the tract's appraised value, and over half the purchase price was reimbursed to the Princeton Park District by an Illinois Open Space Land Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) grant. In 2008, a second OSLAD grant was received, allowing the development of the park's facilities, including soccer fields, a fishing pond, walking pathway, concession and bathroom building, and parking areas. The 15th and final payment for the Zearing Park Expansion will be made on January 1, 2024.

Alexander Park

Located near the southwestern edge of the City of Princeton, Alexander Park is twelve acres. It offers three pickleball and six tennis courts, basketball hoops, a multi-use sport court, a 9-hole disc golf course, horseshoe pits, a sand volleyball court, a shelter, barbecue and picnic areas, restrooms, and a playground. In winter months, an outdoor skating rink is set up on the tennis courts.

Included on the grounds of Alexander Park is the ***Alexander Park Swimming Pool***. This outdoor aquatic facility includes a shaded wading pool and a concession stand. Swimming pools have been located on the site since 1922; the current facility was opened in 1978.

Bureau County Metro Center (BCMC)

The Bureau County Metro Center—commonly referred to as “The Met” or BCMC—is a 50,000 square-foot, full-service recreation center. Fitness classes, youth and adult sport leagues, after-school youth programming, summer day camp, and swimming classes: all make use of the facilities of The Met. The Met is located within the grounds of Alexander Park.

Included in the facilities of the BCMC are a full size gymnasium; 25-yard indoor swimming pool with wading pool and observation balcony; a racquetball court; a weight room with both free weights and a full suite of fixed weight resistance machines; a cardio-vascular room with treadmills and exercise bikes; a stationary cycle 'spin' classroom; an elevated running/walking track above the gym; a dry sauna; a Jacuzzi; and locker rooms. A 40' x 80' multi-purpose room with adjacent kitchen provides a setting for conventions, expositions, meetings, or wedding receptions.

Creation and construction of the Bureau County Metro Center was enabled by a 1986 grant from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs under the Metropolitan Civic Center Support Act. This grant of \$2.69 Million (nearly \$7.3 Million in 2023 dollars) to the Bureau County Metropolitan, Exposition and Office Building Board was supported by local fundraising which secured more than \$1 Million additional from the Alfred H. Shoemaker Foundation, the Princeton Park District, and other community sources.

The Met is operated by the Princeton Park District as a membership facility, with Family, Single Parent-Family, Couple, Single Adult, Senior Citizen, and College Age memberships (for residents and non-residents of the Park District) available for annual, six month or monthly intervals. Day use passes are also available.

Joe Myer Woods

In addition, the Princeton Park District owns and oversees the 30 acre Joe Myer Woods Nature Preserve. This native timberland is located north of the city in rural Bureau County. Given to the Princeton Park District in 1955, Joe Myer Woods is a forest preserve, allowing future generations to enjoy a stand of native timber, which is kept as close to its natural state as is practical. Joe Myer Woods is listed on the State of Illinois Registry as a Nature Preserve.

Other Green Spaces in Princeton

A number of other parks within the city limits are held and maintained by the City of Princeton. These green spaces include Soldiers and Sailors Park, City Hall Park (also known as Veterans Park) and Rotary Park (formerly Darius Miller Park). Playgrounds and/or open space play areas are also available on the grounds of the four school buildings operated by Princeton Elementary Schools (District 115) in Princeton.

Benefits offered by the Princeton Park District

Over its 75-year history, the Princeton Park District has prided itself on providing an economical, efficient, and cost-effective offering of facilities and services, managed with a lean staff, and attuned to the needs of our community. We believe these attributes afford a number of benefits for the residents of Princeton. Among the benefits provided by the Princeton Park District are:

Independence

The Princeton Park District operates separately and apart from more general-purpose governmental bodies (such as municipal, township, and county bodies). Having a separate and distinct governmental taxing body created for the express purpose of establishing, operating, and maintaining parks and recreation facilities and related programs within the local community is advantageous for a number of reasons. This independence allows the park district and its board to maintain a focus that is beneficial to the parks and their programs, and to the community and its residents as detailed in this report. These reasons include:

Local Control

The Princeton Park District is governed by a five member elected Board of Commissioners. As specified in state law, commissioners are non-partisan and serve without compensation. Members of the Board of Commissioners are elected at large to staggered six-year terms in the Illinois Consolidated Elections held in odd-numbered years. Members of the Board are required to reside within the boundaries of the park district. As local residents, commissioners easily become familiar with issues and community concerns regarding parks and their programs.

The Board of Commissioners of the Princeton Park District is presently scheduled to meet at 5 pm. on the third Monday of every month in the Bureau County Metro Center. This meeting schedule can be adjusted (for future meetings) by board action. Meetings are open to the public, and conducted in accordance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act. The agenda for the monthly meetings is posted in the Metro Center, and is available online. Minutes of the past meetings from the most recent ten year period are available online from the Board of Directors Document Archive on the Princeton Park District website (www.princetonparkdistrict.org).

This online archive also houses documents including future meeting dates, board meeting agendas, annual budgets, and annual treasurers reports. The annual audit (performed by an accredited outside CPA firm) is available from the Park District Business Office in the Bureau County Metro Center.

Accessible and focused leadership

Having a dedicated board to oversee the facilities and programs of the Princeton Park Board provides the community increased access to their elected representatives and allows those elected representatives to remain focused solely on those facilities and programs. This is in contrast to the general purpose taxing bodies whose elected representatives are charged with broad oversight covering a wide range of responsibilities and issues.

Protection of Park Assets

Public parkland and other real property owned by the Princeton Park District is held in trust for the residents of the district. As such, (and subject to very limited exceptions) it can only be sold or transferred if residents approve the transaction by referendum. This is in contrast to the general-purpose units of government which have the authority to sell or dispose of property by a vote of their governing board.

Management of Revenues

As the Princeton Park District is a separate and independent 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 which provide a multitude of services such as fire, police, streets, sewers, and economic development, where revenues—even those generated specifically for parks and recreations—can be assigned, or expended, or diverted to on other services with limited, if any, input from voters.

Providing More with Less

A park district does more with much fewer funding options. Unlike other units of local government which receive direct state funding, as well as monies from income-, sales-, use-, hotel/motel-, motor fuel-, and other taxes, the Princeton Park District's only tax revenue comes from a modest portion of a property-owners overall property tax bill.

In Princeton, the Park District's share of the annual property-tax bill represents 9.88 percent (0.09876) of a property's overall tax assessment.

Involvement of Community Members

The Princeton Park District benefits from the involvement of numerous community volunteers. Volunteer involvement includes coaching of youth athletics, as well as assisting with community events.

Also included in volunteer opportunities are the fundraising efforts of the Princeton Park District Foundation.

Increased Transparency

Having a dedicated unit of local government to control, develop, and manage parks and recreation services improves the relationship between the park district and its residents because of the transparency and openness related to the operations of the park district. The publication of the agenda allows taxpayers to be better informed about the workings of their local government. When specific units of government are responsible for providing specified services (like the park district) transparency is increased because action items and budget expenditures are more detailed. Additionally, these items and budgetary decisions are subject to greater scrutiny by the locally elected board members than is the case with larger, multi-purposed governments with a multitude of departments and responsibilities.

Transparency to the Community

The Princeton Park District offers interested residents many opportunities to acquire information and provide feedback. These include:

- Public Participation Opportunities** There is an opportunity for public comment specified in the agenda at every meeting of the Princeton Park Board. Presently, board meetings are held once a month, on the third Monday at 5 pm at the Bureau County Metro Center. Notice of these meetings, along with the agenda, are posted in the Metro Center.
- Bid Openings** Competitive bids for such equipment and services as may be required (with costs above a state-specified level) are opened in public session. Notice of such bid openings is posted in the headquarters of the Princeton Park District (at the Bureau County Metro Center). After bids are opened, any action required, (i.e., the awarding of a contract) will be undertaken by the Board at a public meeting. The solicitation of bids for various purchases and projects are published in local media in accordance with state regulations.
- Budget & Appropriation Ordinance** The annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance is available in its proposed form at least 30 days prior to its adoption. Adoption takes place at an open meeting of the Park District Board. At least one public hearing is held prior to the final Board action. Notice of this hearing is published in the area's newspaper of record (*Bureau County Republican*) and posted in the Bureau County Metro Center at least one week prior to the hearing.
- Property Tax Levy** The Princeton Park District's annual property tax levy is approved at a open meeting of the Park District Board in accordance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act. The Park District follows all public notice and hearing requirements under the *Truth in Taxation Law* prior to the adoption of this annual tax levy.
- Annual Audit** The Board of the Princeton Park District employs a regional certified public accounting and consulting firm to provide an annual audit of financial statements and management practices. The audit is reviewed and accepted by the Board and is available to the public at the offices of the Princeton Park District at the Bureau County Metro Center.

Focus on Efficient Operations

In keeping with its mission and mandates, the Princeton Park District remains focused on efficiency in its operations. Examples of measures incorporating or improving park district efficiency include:

Dependence on Non-Tax Revenue

Unlike local government units that rely on a wide range of sales-, use- and income-taxes, the Princeton Park District is not permitted to assess these types of taxes.

Additionally, although the Princeton Park District is an economic engine for the community and generates revenue for the state and our community in the form of hotel/motel-, sales-, and motor fuel-taxes, the Park District receives none of these revenues.

Unlike Illinois cities, villages, counties, and school districts that receive direct financial assistance from the American Rescue Plan Act, the Princeton Park District does not receive any such direct federal aid. Our Park District also did not receive state funding under the Local Government Distributive Fund (LDGF) or General State Aid (GSA) that these same city-, village-, and county governments, and school districts receive through the State budget.

Instead, the Princeton Park District provides its facilities, programs, and services to the community with the support of a modest share of assessed property taxes, and from non-tax sources, such as memberships, program registrations, and user fees, as well as grants and private donations.

Offering Youth Employment

The Princeton Park District is a major employer of youth in the community, and is proud to be the “first employer” of many local youth. In 2022, the Park District employed a total of 30 young adults between the ages of 15 and 19, in positions including day camp counselors, swimming pool guards, park maintenance and mowing crew members, and building management supervisors. This represents 5,546 hours of employment.

The employed youth receive compensation, as well as training and practical experience in responsibility and human relations.

These jobs benefit the community by providing youth employment and by enabling the delivery of programming and services to other community members, ranging from youth to senior citizens.

In many ways, the operations of the Princeton Park District would not be possible without the employment of youth, who provide staffing for programs presented after-school and during the summer months. Thus this youth employment provides a significant benefit to the park district, for the local community, and for the employed youth themselves, as well as a boost in efficiency for the community and district.

Sharing best practices with other park districts

Because park districts are not in competition with one another, they are more willing (and able) to share best practices than organizations in the private sector. These best practices are shared through the Princeton Park District's affiliation with and participation in the Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD) and the Northern Illinois Association of Park Districts.

In addition, park district board members and management employees benefit from shared programming presented at the IAPD Annual Conference, the annual Legislative Conference, and annual Legal Symposium and Parks Day at the Illinois General Assembly. Board members also have participated in the IAPD's *New Commissioner 'Boot Camp.'*

In addition Princeton Park District personnel work informally through telephone calls and consultations with other park districts and authorities for the sharing of ideas, solutions, opportunities, and best practices.

Assuring efficiency through cooperation

Cooperation with Other Park Districts

To draw on the experiences and expertise of others park districts, and thus improve its services, the Princeton Park District joins with other Illinois park districts in a number of cooperative ventures. These include:

Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD)

The Princeton Park District maintains membership in this statewide association of park districts, forest preserves, and special recreation districts. The Princeton Park District participates in and benefits from IAPD events and programs including:

- Annual “Soaring To New Heights” Conference
- Parks Day at the Illinois General Assembly
- Regional Legislative Breakfasts
- Annual Legislative Conference
- Annual Legal Symposium
- New Commissioner “Boot Camp” Training Programs

Northwest Illinois Association for Parks and Recreation (NWIAPR)

NWIAPR is a regional council of parks and recreation departments and as such affords the Princeton Park District the opportunity to share common experiences and regional needs with other districts of similar size and problems.

Illinois Parks Association Risk Services (IPARKS)

IPARKS provides insurance coverage and shared risk management for members of the Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD). A joint self-insurance pool, IPARKS is owned, operated, and governed in collaboration with fellow members. In IPARKS, member agencies pool their resources to meet their risk management needs, thereby reducing overall risk at a much lower cost than if each individual district purchased private insurance. The Princeton Park District regularly receives acknowledgments and rebates from IPARKS for “exemplary” risk management.

In addition to these 'formal' organizations, representatives of the Princeton Park District, on an 'as needed' basis, regularly contact officials of other regional park districts for conversations, case histories, best practices, and advice on issues of the moment.

Cooperation with Other Governmental Entities

In the interest of improving efficiency for itself and other local participating governmental bodies, the Princeton Park District participates in common programs and activities with other governmental entities. Recent examples of this intergovernmental cooperation and efficiency include:

Partnering Governmental Entity	Activity
<u>Shared Abatement of Property Taxes to Allow Annexation</u>	The Princeton Park District joined with other local <u>taxing bodies in the shared abatement of property taxes</u> for residences in the Bailey Subdivision, smoothing the annexation of this parcel into the City of Princeton.
<u>Princeton Police Department</u>	Princeton Park District co-hosts (and provides the location for) the Princeton edition of <u>America's Night Out Against Crime</u> , an annual community-building event that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie.
<u>Princeton High School (District 500)</u> <u>Princeton Elementary (District 115)</u>	Princeton Park District provides the Princeton site for high school and junior high <u>interscholastic cross country meets</u> , involving up to 20 teams from across the region, as well as their visiting fans. Zearing Park also hosts <u>junior high softball games</u> . The Princeton Park District also provides the site(s) for numerous end of school-year events.
<u>Princeton Elementary (District 115) Transportation</u>	Princeton Park District utilizes <u>school transportation</u> (school buses) to deliver children to park district facilities (Bureau County Metro Center) for after-school programming.
<u>City of Princeton Surveillance Camera Network</u>	For improved security of its park spaces, the Princeton Park District operates a number of video surveillance cameras. These cameras feed into a <u>network operated by the Police Department</u> of the City of Princeton. Installation and maintenance of surveillance equipment is provided by the Electric Department of the City of Princeton.

Bureau County Clerk

Princeton Park District provides a polling place (at Bureau County Metro Center) for all elections.

Bureau County Highway Department

Princeton Park District submits paving project bid specifications for review to the county highway department, improving efficiency by benefiting from department expertise without requiring hiring an external consulting engineer.

Illinois Public Risk Fund (IPRF)

IPRF is an intergovernmental joint insurance pool providing for the defense and payments for benefits under the Illinois Workers' Compensation program. IPRF serves park districts and other governmental entities.

Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF)

IMRF is a "multi-employer public pension fund" that administers disability, retirement and death benefits for employees of local governments in Illinois, including the full-time employees of the Princeton Park District. IMRF is established in accordance with Article 7 of the Illinois Pension Code (40 ILCS 5/7), and governed by an independently elected and autonomous Board of Trustees.

Cooperation with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Community Groups

In addition, the Princeton Park District serves our community through its cooperation with various community groups and NGO's. Examples of this cooperation which improves efficiency include:

City of Princeton Tourism

Princeton Park District participates in these annual community celebrations by providing locations for activities and/or sponsoring selected events. These events include:

- *4th of July Events*
- *Homestead Festival*
- *Shadows of the Blue & Gray* (Civil War Reenactment)
- *Home for the Holidays* Drive-Through Light Show
- *"Santa House"* at City-County Park Shelter

Z Tour Bike Ride

Princeton Park District provides the starting and stopping place for this annual group of charity bike rides which benefit the Zearing Child Enrichment Center in Princeton.

Gateway Services

Gateway Services is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization in Princeton which provides a variety of services to adults with intellectual and/or development disabilities. The Princeton Park District participates by providing facilities and hosting group activities, and offers memberships to Gateway clients at reduced rates.

Princeton Youth Soccer League (PYSL) Princeton Youth Softball and Baseball League (PYSBL)

The Princeton Park District works with PYSL and PYSBL to offer opportunities for boys and girls to play organized team sports. Activities include practices, league contests and tournaments, all-star games, and academies/camps. The leagues are organized and managed by volunteers; the Princeton Park District owns, operates and maintains the grounds.

Festival 56 Theatre Productions

During the 2020 Pandemic, the professional theatre ensemble Festival 56 has made use of the grounds of the Princeton Park District's Bureau County Metro Center for the presentation of outdoor theatre productions.

Charitable (Fund-Raising) and Health Awareness Events

Parks operated by the Princeton Park District have hosted a number of (annual) fundraising/consciousness raising/health-promotion activities, including:

- Relay for Life *Cancer Walk*,
- *Living Works Suicide Walk*,
- *Drug Prevention*
- *Perfectly Flawed*
- *Kurt Garvin Memorial Soccer Tournament (Kurtfest)*

Community Health Initiatives

The Princeton Park District hosts and/or participates in a number of community health initiatives, including:

- Kids Running Clinic
- Community Health Fair
- Impact Life Blood Drive
- Lifeguard Training
 - (including training guards for other facilities)
- Red Cross First Aid and CPR Training
- Dementia-Friendly America
(Dementia-Friendly Princeton)

Chamber of Commerce

The Princeton Park District is a proud member of the Princeton Chamber of Commerce and is represented on the Chamber Ambassadors Club. As such, the Park District participates in Chamber events including 'Breakfast with Santa,' and "Home for the Holidays" Light Show.

Rotary Club

The Princeton Park District is a member of the Princeton Rotary Club, with participation in community-focused events such the *Annual Benefit Auction* and the annual *Rotary Shrimp and Brew Hullabaloo* to benefit the Princeton High School Scholarship Fund.

Bureau County Senior Center

The BCMC parking lot was used by the Senior Center to provide a site for recreational activities for seniors otherwise 'shut-in' due to the pandemic. In addition, the Princeton Park District participates in the Dementia-Friendly Princeton Program.

Arkuah Institute of Healing

Princeton Park District partnered with Arkuah Institute, a health and counseling service fostering wellness and mental health in rural communities, to offer a Water Yoga Class in the pool at the Bureau County Metro Center.

Shoemake Hall or Park Picnic Shelters as Event Venues

With Shoemake Hall in the Bureau County Metro Center, the Princeton Park District offers an attractive venue for events hosting up to 200 guests. Uses include wedding receptions, non-church funeral lunches and “celebrations of life,” birthday parties, and corporate meetings. Hall rentals can be combined with the use of the Metro Center Swimming Pool, Gymnasium and/or other facilities.

In addition, 'picnic shelters' in Zearing, Alexander, and City-County Parks can be reserved to accommodate smaller and outdoor events.

Emergency Preparedness

The Princeton Park District has agreements in place for the Bureau County Metro Center to serve as the designated emergency shelter for various local organizations including the American Red Cross, the Bureau County Fair Board, and the Village of Tiskilwa.

Recommendations for Increased Efficiency and Accountability

In order to maintain and improve its operations, the Princeton Park District has recommendations that can increase accountability and efficiency.

- ***Reduce Intergovernmental Charges and Fees***

Charging the park district at consumer rates for utilities (such as electricity and water for filling swimming pools and skating rinks) and for the fees for required permits such as liquor licenses, and the fees for required periodic inspections (such as boiler, fire extinguisher, fire alarm panel, and elevator inspections) merely transfer revenues from one taxing body to another. This increases accounting costs while adding no value. By eliminating these intergovernmental charges, operations can be streamlined and efficiency can be increased.

- ***Reduce Unfunded Mandates***

Unfunded mandates are requirements given by the Illinois General Assembly and as such, provide a burden to leanly-staffed, tightly-budgeted organizations such as the Princeton Park District. As an example, the generation of this 'efficiency' report, combined with the process of organizing the meetings, developing the agendas, and keeping the minutes, provides a encumbrance and expenditure that will not be recouped.

- ***Reduce Public Notice Advertising Expenses***

Local newspapers are no longer the most effective method to provide public notice. Websites reach more people at lower costs. Permitting the Princeton Park District to post information on its website in lieu of paid 'legal' advertising would reduce district expenses.

- ***Streamline and simplify grant applications processes***

While using an internet portal for submission of grant applications represents an improvement on older paper-based systems, it is still reasonable to ask for increased streamlining of the grant application/awarding process. The provision of somewhat longer deadlines (that is, the earlier announcements of upcoming deadlines/awards) will allow for the smaller districts (i.e., Princeton) to pursue grants when the district does not have specific "shovel ready" projects that await funding as might larger (read: Chicago suburban) districts. In addition, the leanly-staffed smaller districts like Princeton lack the personnel to prepare applications for 'spur of the moment' 'short-turnaround' grant opportunities.

In Conclusion

To summarize, the Princeton Park District is deeply conscious of the need, and works diligently to achieve governmental efficiency. As such, the Princeton Park District is leanly staffed, closely managed, and tightly budgeted. By working cooperatively with other governmental bodies and NGOs, and by availing itself of other shared resources and expertise, the Princeton Park District is maximizing its efficiency to assure optimum benefits for its residents as individuals and for its community as a whole.

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Respectfully Submitted



Andrew D. Marti

Chairman

Local Government Efficiency Report Committee

Princeton Park District

837 Park Avenue West

Princeton IL 61356

December 11, 2023

Report submitted to:

- Bureau County Board

CC (PDF)

- Jayce Eustice, Editor, Bureau County Republican / Shaw Media (eustice@shawmedia.com)
- Jason Anselment / IAPD (janselment@ilparks.org)
- State Representative Ryan Spain (Illinois House District 73) (repryanspain@gmail.com)
- State Senator Win Stoller (Illinois Senate District 37) (senatorstoller@gmail.com)
- Posted online on the Princeton Park District website (www.princetonparkdistrict.org)