

Local Government Efficiency Act Final Report, 3/11/24

Accounting Procedures – BRPD does not use a contractor such as ADP to process payroll thereby reducing the cost and allows the District to control the many different hourly rates for over 75 part-time and seasonal employees who perform many different job descriptions. The District's accounting department also acts as the Human Resource department in keeping abreast with all Federal, State and IDOL laws as well as processing all employment forms in accordance with the District's personnel manual. The District utilizes Unemployment Consultants contracted by the District's state insurance pool, Park District Risk Management Agency (PDRMA), on a reimbursable basis rather than paying a percentage of all salaries resulting in a substantial savings.

Office Staffing – The District employs 3 part-time office staff. One accounting assistant and two front office positions. Compared to other Districts where the front office staff is limited to registration only, BRPD utilizes these positions to enter all program descriptions and fees, invoices for Day Camp and the Before and After School program, invoices for cooperative programming, collects outstanding balances for aging accounts receivable and types all correspondence from the Director of Parks and Recreation. One office staff position also acts as the Board Recording Secretary. The Superintendent of Finance fills in providing assistance for heavy work days and/or as a substitute. The District contracts a self employed IT professional at a rate of \$105 per hour for the last 24 years when the current rate for this service is between \$145 and \$200 per hour.

Banking and Investments – The Superintendent of Finance maintains consistent relationships with local banks in the community with the ability to negotiate investment rates and in turn receives sponsorship donations for programs and events for both the District and the Foundation.

Full Time Staff – BRPD maintains an extremely small full time work force, presently at 6 individuals. This reduces fixed costs and allows the District to adjust part time staff obligations to the ebbs and flows of participant revenues. BRPD employs an alternate retirement benefit to IMRF which saves the District money. Each full time position assumes many different roles as the team functions together to avoid unnecessary staffing levels. Salaries are closely based on market comparables to insure appropriate compensation levels.

Tax Rate – BRPD has one of the lowest tax rates in the State of Illinois at .1588. Chicagoland park district average is more than double that. Yet, BRPD is consistently recognized as having one if not the very best community parks in the State, outstanding park system and indoor facility and excellent recreational programs for all ages. Such accomplishment gives testament to the many different roles assumed by full time staff.

Revenue Sources Land/Cash Developer Donations

In 1985, BRPD adopted the Village of Burr Ridge Land/Cash Developer Donation Ordinance. As a condition of final plat approval, a subdivider or developer is required to dedicate and donate usable park land for the residents of the development or make a cash contribution to the District in lieu of land based on a formula of acreage per

population and land market value. This ordinance has provided BRPD with over 2 million dollars in revenue for park development and improvements.

Burr Ridge Community Park Foundation

In 2008 the District formed the Burr Ridge Community Park Foundation as an alternative revenue source raising funds in support of park projects and services. The foundation is an independent, 501c3 organization with a 12 member board conducting an annual appeal drive and 2 to 3 fund raising events per year. To date the foundation has contributed over \$100,000 to BRPD as well as providing financial aid to families in need of funds to participate in park district programs.

Revenue Sources OSLAD and Outside Donation/Philanthropy

BRPD has and remains active in pursuing grant funding from the State of Illinois. To date, BRPD has been the recipient of nearly \$2 million in capital project funding from the IDNR Open Space Land and Acquisition Development grant and continues to pursue this grant source on current and future applicable projects.

BRPD has also been successful in obtaining private benevolence and philanthropy in funding park improvements such as benches, respite areas and park art.

Contractual Park Maintenance – BRPD utilizes private contractors for over 70% of outdoor facility maintenance. This arrangement saves money in several significant areas. Related human resource requirements for a full grounds crew are avoided. Any situation regarding unemployment is mitigated, which reduces BRPD workers compensation insurance. Fleet procurement and maintenance, indoor facility maintenance and other operational costs are avoided.

Director of Parks and Recreation

Under the current and historic organizational chart, the Director position is multi-faceted and is responsible for a number of job areas that allows BRPD to avoid having to hire additional personnel and/or contractors. The Director also serves as the District's Risk Manager. Superintendent of Parks duties are assumed by the Director. In the vast majority of BRPD construction and development projects, the Director serves as design lead, construction manager, procurement officer and site manager. This allows the District to avoid having to pay for these services in addition to the full time pay investment in this position.

Procurement of Services and Equipment

The District realizes savings in utility costs by participating in an Illinois Municipal Cooperative program for supplying gas and electric to all facilities and parks.

BRPD has taken advantage of the Illinois Cooperative Purchase Program and other such programs to purchase light trucks and vans. Prices are competitively bid with many governmental units participating with a high volume of vehicles ordered and are always significantly lower than consumer market pricing.

Relationships with Other Government Units

With a surprisingly low full time staffing lineup, BRPD has come to rely significantly on other units of government for in-kind services, project advice, sharing of resources, etc. Notable relationships that lead to the District saving expenses are as follows:

Village of Burr Ridge - Village of Burr Ridge is most helpful in lending assistance, manpower and equipment for projects and/or unforeseen safety issues that arise in numerous capacities.

Village of Willowbrook – BRPD has maintained a 30 year intergovernmental agreement with Village of Willowbrook regarding cooperative recreational programming services for our two communities linked by a common school district.

Local Schools – Separate agreements are maintained with Districts #62, 180, 181 and Hinsdale South District #86 regarding facility usage of school facilities not owned by BRPD, such as gymnasium, large multi-purpose rooms, etc. Consequently, BRPD has not been required to construct these facilities and has been able to utilize existing tax funded facilities, often times at no fee, thus saving significant costs in facility construction, operation and maintenance.

Other Public Recreation Providers – BRPD maintains cooperative relationships with other area service providers, such as the Village of Hinsdale, Pleasantdale Park District, Gateway Special Recreation Association and others. These relationships produce cooperative programming and marketing opportunities. BRPD has previously investigated the viability of consolidation of some of these governmental units, particularly Pleasantdale Park District which shares some of corporate Burr Ridge with BRPD. Due to existing tax rates, number of municipal corporate boundaries involved, levels of services and operations at both Districts and other issues, the BRPD Park Board determined that pursuit of consolidation was not in the best interests for the residents of the Park District. BRPD continues to monitor trends and taxing issues to remain flexible in the future should comparable demographics between the two communities change.

Accountability to the Public – BRPD exceeds legally required transparency and accountability requirements in its efforts to engage with the taxpayers. In addition to required minutes and agenda postings for Board meetings, BRPD will commonly reach out to groups or neighborhoods likely to be immediately impacted by an upcoming discussion issue in advance of the meeting to briefly explain the issue and invite their comments and attendance at the meeting. During public meetings, BRPD maintains very relaxed standards for public interaction such as not limiting minutes available to speak, allowing direct questioning of staff and Board and continuing discussion until all in attendance have been accommodated. Appropriate contact personnel are listed on the website, as is a contact for special inquiries, and response time to the general public member is extremely prompt.

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