

[Kathy Meade](#) shared a [link](#).

Admin · October 26 at 6:25pm

ARE YOU F-ING KIDDING ME!?!?!

This town doesn't even pay lifeguards a penny over minimum wage.

I just paid \$80+ for a basketball skills class for my son. 15 kids in the class. One instructor. No materials. My taxes already pay for the facility.

At what point is the Park District walking away from money because people are leaving the Park District because we can't afford it? Not everyone here lives in a million dollar home like many of the park board members do.



[Park District budget calls for increases in cost for pool passes and camps — but no tax hike](#)

The cost of outdoor pool passes, children's camps and a before- and after-school program program will be going up next year if proposals included in Park Ridge...

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[Ingrid Groening Czech](#) Kathy Meade, I think they need to raise non residency fees. The local taxpayers should not have to pay more!

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[Kathy MeadeGroup Admin](#) I think it's because it is \$40 for a family of 5 to enter without a pass right now. I an think of 100 other things I would rather do with my family for \$40 than sit in direct sun on the hot concrete because everyone saves the lounge chairs for their kids who never come back to sit in them.

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[Lejla Cehic](#) Ingrid, Now this I agree with wholeheartedly!!!!

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[Derek Cadmus](#) In every example I'm hearing from others (yet to witness first hand), virtually every surrounding suburb has better facilities than our own. What would attract a non-resident to use our Park District? If I'm reading these posts correctly, it would be an expensive downgrade to use our pool, library or preschool for the sake of convenience. As a resident, I actually find it inconvenient to use neighboring facilities.

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[Lejla Cehic](#) [Derek Cadmus](#) I've used pools in Des Plaines, Skokie, Morton Grove, Lincolnwood and Niles and in my opinion our outdoor facilities have the upper hand. I'm sure that many may not share my opinion but from my experience even our changing rooms/ showers are cleaner, and that's one of my pet peeves and the reason why I wouldn't step foot again into the Skokie facilities on Oakton.

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[Shelly Villalobos](#) They will go elsewhere as well and have. Such as Niles.

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[Dana Bozeday](#) Raise non residency fees??? How many non residents come here? I am in PR and part of Des Plaines Park District....the non-residency fees are insane. My 2 kids in soccer camp last summer 1 day per week was almost \$300. Raise it more non-residents won't come. I have not signed my kids up for some things because the cost is so high as a non resident. So making costs even higher will drive more people away and get you nothing

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[Ingrid Groening Czech](#) Dana, are you a Des Plaines or Park Ridge Park District resident?

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[Dana Bozeday](#) [Ingrid Groening Czech](#) Des Plaines [See Translation](#)

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[Derek Cadmus](#) Dana, perhaps you might be able to assist in why you would choose the PRPD over the DPPD for soccer camp. What is the draw to come here if fees are so "insane"?

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[Dana Bozeday](#) Because it's all closer. I live in PR. And my kids have friends here. But I definitely have avoided some things because the fee is so high. My point being, raising non-resident fees will drive non-residents away. It won't solve your issues

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Dana Bozeday And I do things in other park districts because of the high PR costs. Pools, we do soccer league in Glenview because even out of district there the cost is considerably lower.

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Lejla Cehic Dana Bozeday I think Ingrid meant to ask if you're a resident of DP or PR and Derek thought DP so he asked for your input on why you choose to come to PR... ???

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Derek Cadmus Yes that's how I read it 😊

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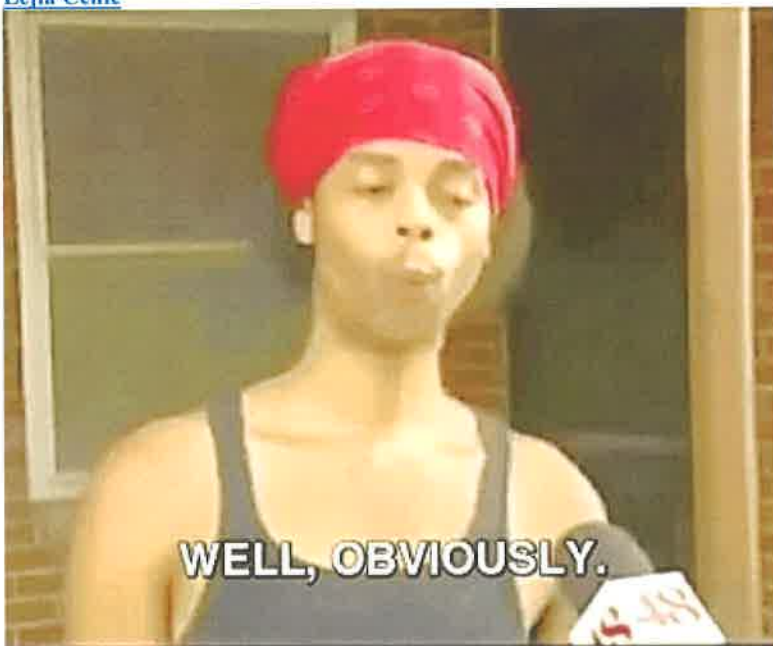
Dana Bozeday [Lejla Cehic](#) I live in Park Ridge. I am a Des Plaines Park District resident

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Lejla Cehic



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[Lejla Cehic](#) [Derek Cadmus](#) that's for you

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[Dana Bozeday](#) I see. I reread Derek's post above. I can't speak to other non residents but for me the prices to do things in PR are expensive. We pick and choose but definitely limit because of cost. I get the tax issue and why resident rates are less than non-resident but it's really more than other places. And the library is different. I pay taxes for the library. It's not the same as park district boundaries

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[Derek Cadmus](#) Ok, I'm lost. Dana how can you live in PR and be a DPPD resident? Isn't that like saying I live in Chicago but am a resident of St Louis? Do the Park Districts overlap?

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[Dana Bozeday](#) [Lejla Cehic](#) I haven't been to these pools but Glenview and Northbrook pools are much nicer and much better locker rooms

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[Lejla Cehic](#) [Dana Bozeday](#) definitely will check them out this winter to change things up a bit for the kids 😊 thanks for the heads up

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[Dana Bozeday](#) [Derek Cadmus](#) park district boundaries are not the same as town boundaries. The north corner of PR is different. Just like south end is Norwood township and less taxes

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[Derek Cadmus](#) No kidding.

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[Dana Bozeday](#) It was something I didn't realize when I moved in

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[Lejla Cehic](#)

GIPHY

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[Derek Cadmus](#) Yep, pretty much. Something to research fo sure

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[Dana Bozeday](#) It's just a little chunk of PR. But I also don't get to vote for park district commissioners and referendums etc. it's set up properly

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[Derek Cadmus](#) Is there a map of the layout?

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[Joanna Leybot](#) If non-resident fees are already drastically lower in other neighboring towns, I'm not sure what would draw non-residents particularly to PR at all. I would think that raising the price even more would deter even more people. I'm a PR resident and can't stomach paying resident fees. I doubt non-residents would be willing to dish out extra cash just to be in Park Ridge programs.

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[Kathy MeadeGroup Admin](#) Derek Cadmus , there is a section of Park Ridge that was unincorporated. Park Ridge annexed the area off of Potter about 10 years ago(?). They have park ridge addresses but can not use park ridge amenities. It's weird and stupid. The kids over there go to Franklin. It would be nice if they could do park ridge park district activities with their friends but they can't without paying the non-resident fees.

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[Derek Cadmus](#) That's messed up!

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[Jennifer Johnson](#) the last annexation of any area up there into Park Ridge happened more than 20 years ago, not 10. Small areas of Park Ridge on the far north end of the city do fall within either the Des Plaines Park District or Golf Maine Park District.

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[Kathy MeadeGroup Admin](#) [Jennifer Johnson](#) Thank you for correcting me. I don't have the archives of the Herald at my fingertips.

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Jennifer Johnson i don't either. I just like to post info I know is factual.

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Kathy MeadeGroup Admin Probably because you write for a publication. Not knowing your facts can get you fired. I'm just a simple Facebook poster. Also why I qualified with the word "about". Meaning it could be any time over or under the 10 year mark.

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Jennifer Johnson It would take me a year to correct all the non-factual stuff posted on this page that people unfortunately believe is accurate.

[Love](#)

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Kathy MeadeGroup Admin Some would say they could do the same with your articles.

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Jennifer Johnson Good comeback. Have a wonderful day!

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Dana Bozeday It's been well over 10 and 20. I could double check for you today if anyone wants to know. I have it somewhere at home since I live there 😊

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Ingrid Groening Czech Very good question Derek.

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Derek Cadmus I'm an East Coast transfer quickly learning there's enough nuances to make me scratch my head in almost every conversation. Fortunately there's enough seasoned residents to help fill in the blanks

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Ingrid Groening Czech Good luck Derek, been here 30 plus years and still trying to figure it out. Oh, and welcome to Park Ridge! 😊

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Kathy MeadeGroup Admin If Taft can do a week long soccer camp for \$60 for 5 days and 3-1/2 hours a day AND offer lunch and a t-shirt then why is a Park Ridge skills camp and hour and a half for 4 days and almost 3 times the price? Resurrection and Notre Dame High Schools run comparable camps for \$65 to \$69! I am paying taxes for a park district that I can not afford to use. At what point does the park district go to a ZERO dollar taxing body and full fees? Because if that's where they want to head this bs then let's hurry it up so I can get a break on my property taxes.

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Ingrid Groening Czech You tell them!

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Kathy MeadeGroup Admin I can tell them and tell them and tell them. I have spoken to three of the current sitting board members before the election where they assured me they would be the person who would bring fees down if they got my vote.

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Ingrid Groening Czech So sorry Kathy!

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Mary Wynn Ryan the other four probably out-voted your three.

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Cindy McDonald Grau Come to the next board meeting on November 3rd at Wohler's Hall in Prospect Park to let the commissioners know you want lower fees over higher taxes. Cause that's the choice we are making.

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Kathy MeadeGroup Admin Also, it is cheaper to hire an after school nanny for my 3 kids for \$15 an hour than put them in beyond the bell. Every single working mom I talked to was hugely disappointed but the quality and the cost of the Park Ridge camps. One single mom I know could hire a college kid to take her kids on activities while she was at work for less money. The college kid would earn more than working at the Park District and she would pay less to have someone do activities with her kids.

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Lejla Cehic That's exactly why I'm not returning to corp America. Between beyond the bell and daycare for 3 kids it's outrageously expensive to pay almost \$2000 in child care per month. I'm lucky i have the option to work for my husbands business and stay at home and NOT pay more than half of my take home pay to childcare. Unfortunately, there are many parents who don't have the choice and must pay these fees. It aches my heart seeing how few affordable options we have. 🙄

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[Melissa Arnos](#) Hey I have a side job for you if you're looking for one 😊 lol
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[Lejla Cehic](#) [Melissa Arnos](#) hahaha thanks I think I'll stick to the trucking industry for now ... we could haul your orders 😊
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[Melissa Arnos](#) [Lejla Cehic](#) love it!
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[Sarah Surisook](#) You only pay a nanny \$15 an hour for 3 kids?! Are you offering insurance or benefits? That seems really low to me.
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[Kathy MeadeGroup Admin](#) [Sarah Surisook](#) more like a college aged babysitter.
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[Sarah Surisook](#) [Kathy Meade](#) not a full nanny then. Also doesn't have the same guarantees of availability and reliability.
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[Kathy MeadeGroup Admin](#) [Sarah Surisook](#) never had a problem with guarantees of availability or reliability. Still almost twice as much than a college kid would make as a life guard watching hundreds of kids for \$8.25 an hour.
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[Kevin Collins](#) Isn't \$15 below the prevailing wage for a college educated babysitter?
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[Nick Draus](#)



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John Moran



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Kathy Meade*Group Admin*

TENOR

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Donna Krug I have lived in Park Ridge for 38 years And can't even get my grandchildren into any programs as they are considered non residents even though the are here 3 days a week!!!

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Kathy Meade*Group Admin* And you pay taxes!

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Donna Krug EXACTLY. It really ticks me off. As long as I can prove residency, I really feel I should be allowed a resis

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· [October 26 at 6:55pm](#)

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Donna Krug dent rate.

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Nina Geishecker I haven't been able to afford park district things for years and I pay my fricking taxes!!! I cannot stand our park district. It's a total joke

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· [October 26 at 6:49pm](#)

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Kathy MeadeGroup Admin I wouldn't mind it so much if they wanted to shif to Libertarian all-fee funding. Fine. Whatever. I'm sick of paying for something I can't use when I can walk into Niles and walk the track for free. My kids can swim at the Niles indoor pool for the same price as the indoor pool in Park Ridge when you subtract what I don't have to pay to sit in street clothes to watch them. They can play basketball in the indoor courts in Niles for \$4 vs. \$5 in PR and I don't have to pay \$8 to watch them.

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Donna Krug If Niles can do it, I just don't get why Park Ridge is so much higher.

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Kathy MeadeGroup Admin Heck, I voted for the referendum for Prospect Park. It was important to save it from developers. I figured that it would get a nice playground and be an open field for people to enjoy. Nope, it has a playground for toddlers, a splash pad that should be free and wasn't built with the right materials, an irrigation system!! and it makes me crazy. I voted for a park I can't use!!! And a bunch of other people can't use it either!

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Al Stern People pay for lots of things in a community that aren't built for them. That's how communities work. I agree with you that we get less value for what we pay for at the park district than other towns but in not on board with you on that one

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Derek Cadmus May I remind you how places like Niles has opened their doors to attract big business. Hard to stress the importance of these businesses which drive foot traffic, lessen the burden to tax payers, feed the economy and donate to places like local park districts. Small local businesses who already struggle to pay excessive rent or a prevailing wage may be less apt to donate in a way Home Depot, Target, Costco or a Walmart could.

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[Kathy MeadeGroup Admin Al Stern](#) likely because you can afford the park district programs. There are lots of things I pay for that I don't use--social services, the fire department, tree service, etc. Those things still benefit a community. A viable park district also benefits a community and should be available to the community because it is a community service that the community pays for collectively. That's what park districts are for. It's not a country club. Perhaps the park district can scale back instead of raising fees? If we can't afford it then we shouldn't have it. Isn't that free market? Or what the free market has turned out to be...

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[Kathy MeadeGroup Admin Derek Cadmus](#), yes. Niles has more tax revenue. Perhaps instead of striving to have a park district comparable to Niles we should have a park district more within our means In order to keep it affordable to our residents. Did they need to go as big as they did with prospect park? No. It was saved from developers as open land for the community. Did it need a splash pad right away when we couldn't afford it yet? No.

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[Al Stern](#) I'll ignore the fact that you are making assumptions about my financial situation without having any basis for that assumption and focus on the fact that that's what you are describing is exactly what the park district attempts to do. The costs the citizens of PR need to absorb for park district programs are going to always be higher than Niles. They have a huge commercial tax district. We don't. I can't blame the pd for not wanting to operate at a loss.

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[Derek Cadmus](#) "We don't". Al is this something we should just deal with instead of trying to keep up with the Joneses, or is this something we should strive toward to end the continuing circle of frustration. There must be a happy medium where the tax burden isn't exclusively resting upon the residents. Is the TIF project John speaks of too much to bear and hampering our abilities to move forward?

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[Al Stern](#) I'm all for expanding the tax base. We aren't ever going to be a big box town though. There are pros and cons to that.

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[Kathy MeadeGroup Admin](#) We are never going to be a big box community and we can not afford the type of park district a big box community has. We need to make the park district accessible to residents. If that means a smaller park district with less opulent facilities and fewer programs that people can afford to use then that's where we need to be.

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[Maureen Woods](#) I was always against the Prospect Park.

Not because I was never going to use it, but because it was never intended to be for the "community", it was always going to be a lovely green space to be enjoyed by a small majority of the "community". We could have used that money to improve our existing parks and programs.

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[Kathy MeadeGroup Admin](#) [Maureen Woods](#) I just wanted it saved from the developers as an open space.

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[Derek Cadmus](#) Kathy & Al, is there a direct route to get from where we are now to where we need to be? Is there a plan in place or is it a moving target which changes with each administration?

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[Ingrid Groening Czech](#) Park district needs to charge non residents substantially higher prices.

The cost should be more than 5 or 10 dollars.

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[Kent Mackowiak](#) [Ingrid](#) as others have said, charging higher rates for non-residents likely won't solve anything because our neighboring communities have nicer facilities and lower rates.

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[Al Stern](#) [Derek Cadmus](#), a direct route to where I want the park district costs to be? Not really. In my mind they are too high but not ridiculously so. It is always going to be more expensive than what Kathy is comparing it to. As it is, I still use it for the majority of programs that my kids participate in. We use Niles for the rest.

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[Ingrid Groening Czech](#) Thanks Kent, but if non residents have better and more reasonable fees why are non residents inclined in using our facilities?

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· [October 26 at 8:42pm](#)

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[Kent Mackowiak](#) Do you have any evidence to support that? What percentage of our revenue is coming from non-residents?

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· [October 26 at 8:46pm](#)

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[Derek Cadmus](#) If they are paying more, is there preferential treatment when it comes to enrollment?

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Donna Krug [Ingrid Groening Czech](#) I would venture to guess there are very few non residents using our park programs. The reason I am saying this is because I am a resident but, the Park District does not consider my grandchildren, who are here 3days a week, residents. That being said, registratootn for all programs go to residents first. Every program I have ever thought of putting my grandchildren in and paying the,non resident fee is full by the time classes are open to non residents.

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· [October 26 at 9:26pm](#)

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Ingrid Groening Czech So sorry to hear that Donna.

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John Moran Classic... [Al Stern](#): "I'll ignore the fact that you are making assumptions about my financial situation without having any basis for that assumption"

To borrow a word from the original post... Welcome the "F-ING" club!!!

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· [October 27 at 10:38am](#) · [Edited](#)

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Lejla Cehic [Kent Mackowiak](#) they don't all have nicer facilities that's the whole point! Plus they flock to PR right now because they're not happy with what they have so why not charge them more?! If we charge non residents more and decrease the resident rate then we should have more residents participating and utilizing our facilities thus keeping the revenue stream steady even if we loose some non residents.

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Derek Cadmus Can't we just build a wall?

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· [October 26 at 10:03pm](#)

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Kathy Meade[Group Admin](#) [Derek Cadmus](#), no. We will hire detectives to suss out all the non-residents then we will fine them and send them to collections if they don't pay.

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Derek Cadmus A financial wall is still a wall.

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Kathy Meade[Group Admin](#) This is the only town I know that spends money to make sure that people aren't stealing services.

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Derek Cadmus Come on Kathy, we could get the guy from the library board and unanimously put him on the Park District board. We'll have ice cream and tell all our suburban neighbors they smell of elderberries. It'll be fun!

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· [October 26 at 10:22pm](#)

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Derek Cadmus

TENOR

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Kent Mackowiak [Lejla Cehic](#) what evidence do you have to suggest that non-residents are flocking to our Park District facilities? From everything everyone is saying in the comments here that sounds like it is not the case.

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Lejla Cehic [Kent Mackowiak](#) I have no concrete evidence except meeting Edison park residents and their kids. I use the park district facilities for everything except gymnastics and spend 4 days per week there with my own kids. I'd hope that would count for something.

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Lejla Cehic But to clarify, I don't have statistics and I think someone above suggested that those would be a good idea to have so we can make more informed comments and suggestions. As someone who appreciates reports, I think this was a great idea!

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Robin Johnson Virgilio We used to go to Niles Park District. Their out of district rates were cheaper than Park Ridge. Plus, they offered opportunities that allowed kids to TRY a sport before paying premium club fees, i.e. soccer.

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· [October 27 at 5:03am](#)

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Barbara Gaffke Maureen Woods Prospect Park also makes the surrounding homes more desirable and valuable. Two parks close to each other and golf course offers more open space in this area, while density increases beyond this location. City planning.

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· [October 27 at 9:56am](#) · [Edited](#)

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Mary Wynn Ryan [Derek Cadmus](#) he was on the park board for years. don't go there, pleeze.

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· [October 27 at 10:13am](#)

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[Sarah Surisook](#) I guess since we came from the city, the PR park district seems reasonable. I guess I should explore driving further for cheaper services? If one loathes Niles (its the Walmart of towns to me, I avoid it) where should I look?

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[Ingrid Groening Czech](#) Yikes, Niles is a walmart kind of town? Is that a joke Sarah?

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· [October 27 at 4:13pm](#)

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[Sarah Surisook](#) [Ingrid Groening Czech](#) not a joke, an analogy. I can't stand the congestion and chaos that is Niles. It is stressful and unpleasant, like Walmart for me.

[Like](#)



1 · [October 27 at 4:17pm](#) · [Edited](#)

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[Derek Cadmus](#) Spot on analogy. My wife won't step foot in Walmart for the exact same reasons. The Costco in Niles was my "Walmart"was

[Like](#)



3 · [October 27 at 4:22pm](#) · [Edited](#)

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[Ingrid Groening Czech](#) Thanks Sarah. I understand. 😊

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· [October 27 at 4:19pm](#)

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[Sarah Surisook](#) [Ingrid Groening Czech](#) seriously though, anyone know anything less expensive not in Niles?

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· [October 27 at 6:34pm](#)

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[Ingrid Groening Czech](#) No, I don't. Sorry!

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[Chanelle Cataldo](#) I totally agree Kathy with everything your saying it is just simply becoming insanely expensive

[Like](#)



1 · [October 26 at 7:46pm](#)

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[Greg Trower](#) "A new full-time preschool director position is proposed for the Wildwood Nature Center, as is a new part-time marketing assistant, the park district said. More work hours are proposed for building attendants as well."

Serious inquiry - why do we need a marketing assistant?

[Like](#)



3 · [October 26 at 9:35pm](#)

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[Lejla Cehic](#) Why does the wildwood nature center need a pre school director different from the one used currently for the traditional pre school?

[Like](#)

· [October 26 at 10:01pm](#)

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[Karen S Hein](#) The Wildwood Nature Center is one of the hidden gems of Park Ridge! My son went to preschool there as well as many of their other programs, including Kindergarten Kaper, Nature camp.... They have great programs.

[Like](#)

5

· [October 26 at 10:26pm](#)

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[Lejla Cehic](#) [Karen S Hein](#) I know about their programs and agree with you but why hire a separate director?

[Like](#)

· [October 26 at 10:32pm](#)

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[Karen S Hein](#) [Lejla Cehic](#), The Park Ridge Park District and Wildwood Nature Center always had a separate preschool program and were run separately. Maybe they have to refill that position with someone who left, but I do not believe that it is a new position.

[Like](#)

3

· [October 26 at 10:47pm](#)

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[Lejla Cehic](#) [Karen S Hein](#) I wonder if this is a position that could be consolidated with the prpd pre school director ?

[Like](#)

· [October 26 at 11:19pm](#)

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[Karen S Hein](#) [Lejla Cehic](#), no

[Like](#)

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[Lejla Cehic](#) [Karen S Hein](#) again I think this is another question that can't be answered without all the facts including enrollment and revenue statistics so I'm sure it's not just a simple yes or no ...

[Like](#)

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[Cindy McDonald Grau](#) The position was formed to stop a revolving door of staff at Wildwood and to also be a teacher. Wildwood programming is growing every year.

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· [October 27 at 10:56am](#)

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[Ingrid Groening Czech](#) Why do we need an assistant in marketing? What does the marketing person do?

[Like](#)

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· [October 26 at 9:44pm](#)

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Cindy McDonald Grau Market programs- make the programming book, make signs, keep website updated, answer inquiries from the public, press releases, post on social media platforms, look for sponsorships, liaison with Friends of Parks, attend every board meeting, etc, etc

[Like](#)

4

· [October 27 at 10:59am](#)

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Ingrid Groening Czech Okay, so why do we need an assistant?

[Like](#)

· [October 27 at 3:40pm](#)

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Cindy McDonald Grau I don't know if you noticed the new FFC in town? We are competing at every level in town for customers - even a new indoor pool will be built in the next year.

We used to have a contractor that worked part time getting sponsorships but we took it in house. We are hiring an assistant so we can do more PR, reach out to form partnerships and to help Friends of the Parks launch a new membership campaign. Our Marketing Director is involved in many aspects of the business but has a good background in fundraising. We are hiring someone to take on more of the social media type marketing so that she can move into other areas that will give a good ROI. Good marketing should pay for itself.

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· [October 27 at 5:57pm](#)

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Ingrid Groening Czech Sorry, I don't know what FFC is. Since Oakton pool was taken out. There is nothing on this end of town. Why don't they put a splash pad there?

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· [October 27 at 7:31pm](#)

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Cindy McDonald Grau [Ingrid Groening Czech](#) - <https://www.google.com/search?q=ffc%20park%20ridge...>



[ffc park ridge - Google Search](#)

GOOGLE.COM

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· [October 27 at 7:52pm](#)

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Cindy McDonald Grau Oakton is going through a master planning process and the community will be solicited for feedback.

[Like](#)

· [October 27 at 7:53pm](#)

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Ingrid Groening Czech Thank you Cindy. I appreciate you giving feedback and so quickly.

[Like](#)

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· [October 27 at 8:32pm](#)

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2

· [October 27 at 10:21am](#) · [Edited](#)[Remove](#)**[Cindy McDonald Grau](#)** Larger splash pads require staffing and thus the fees.[Like](#)· [October 27 at 11:00am](#)[Remove](#)**[Stephanie Maginot Thillens](#)** I generally try to stay out of these discussions, but the manner in which Ms. Meade has apparently attempted to perpetuate the whisper campaign utilized against Mel during the last election cycle with her opening post is something about which I can no longer remain silent.

We don't live in a million dollar house, in fact it is nowhere close to being a million dollar house. I say this in all sincerity, you are welcome to come here and take a look for yourself, Ms. [Meade](#). It would far better serve the interests of this community if we all stopped throwing around baseless and untrue statements to try and bolster our arguments.

[Love](#)

.

10

· [October 27 at 9:18am](#) · [Edited](#)[Remove](#)**[Mel P. Thillens](#)** Shhhhh. . . Maybe all these rumors are driving up the value of our house. We could clear \$600,000.[Like](#)

.

3

· [October 27 at 9:16am](#) · [Edited](#)[Remove](#)**[Maureen Woods](#)** Did I miss something? How is this about you?[Like](#)

.

1

· [October 27 at 9:22am](#)[Remove](#)**[Stephanie Maginot Thillens](#)** In all seriousness, I offered to host an open house here during campaign season so that those who were under the misapprehension that we lived in a fancy McMansion could see first hand that it was untrue. I was told at the time it was unnecessary, especially since we already host what seems like half of the town for the Memorial Day Parade.

It looks like that may not have been such a bad idea after all.

[Like](#)

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2

· [October 27 at 9:23am](#)[Remove](#)**[Stephanie Maginot Thillens](#)** Maureen Woods

My husband is on the Park Board, and when he was running for the State Senate seat there were many mailers sent by his opposition's supporters claiming he was out of touch because we lived in a million dollar house. The last sentence of the post above references Park Board members who live in million dollar houses.

It's not that difficult to conclude that my family is at least one of those to whom Ms. Meade was referring in her original post.

[Like](#)

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4

· [October 27 at 11:48am](#) · [Edited](#)[Remove](#)

[Cindy McDonald Grau](#) [Maureen Woods](#) - read the last line of the post.

[Like](#)

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· [October 27 at 12:04pm](#)

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[Ingrid Groening Czech](#) What does it matter what kind of house anyone lives in, or how much money one makes? What matters is that Park Board and Park District needs to look into the concerns of its constituents as far as costs goes for their programs.

[Like](#)

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· [October 27 at 3:48pm](#)

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[Stephanie Maginot Thillens](#) I agree with you completely that it shouldn't matter at all. My point is simply that it's rather absurd to accuse someone of being out of touch because they live in a "million dollar house", when you are actually completely incorrect about them living in a million dollar house.

[Like](#)

2

· [October 27 at 4:06pm](#)

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[Ingrid Groening Czech](#) So sorry that you were treated un that manner Stephanie. Its really a shame when it comes to politics local or otherwise, people have to go for the jugular! 🙄

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· [October 27 at 4:16pm](#)

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[Cindy McDonald Grau](#) The lifeguards are proposed to be getting a significant raise this year Kathy.

[Like](#)

5

· [October 27 at 11:01am](#) · [Edited](#)

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[Cindy McDonald Grau](#) As well as Beyond the Bell.

[Like](#)

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· [October 27 at 11:01am](#)

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[Cindy McDonald Grau](#) Crickets on this announcement?

[Like](#)

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· [October 27 at 4:36pm](#)

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[Mel P. Thillens](#) [Cindy](#), it doesn't fit the narrative of the detractors.

[Like](#)

3

· [October 27 at 7:04pm](#)

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[Cindy McDonald Grau](#) [Mel P. Thillens](#) - ah well I tried.

[Like](#)

· [October 27 at 7:55pm](#)

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[Cindy McDonald Grau](#) The board receives numbers of participation on all of its programs every month. It also looks at other Park District rates when setting costs. We will probably never compare with Niles because of their tax base of businesses. Therefore our taxes and fees are most likely higher. Any money we make on programs are put back into our capital improvement funds and we prioritize every year what projects we can accomplish with those funds- from redoing tennis courts at Hinkley to reroofing the Activity Center and everything in between.

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· [October 27 at 12:10pm](#)

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[Derek Cadmus](#) everything in between = public bathrooms that cost more than my house

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· [October 27 at 12:19pm](#)

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[Cindy McDonald Grau](#) Yes it is expensive.

[Like](#)

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· [October 27 at 12:56pm](#) · [Edited](#)

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[Tom Sotos](#) This community was, is and probably always will consist of a very diverse financial make up. We have million dollar homes, 1/2 million dollar homes and 1/4 million dollar homes.

It would be so very nice if we could all stop identifying each other by what size Home we live in.

Just because someone lives in a million dollar home today, doesn't mean they didn't live in a 1/4 million dollar Home yesterday. Which means a person can live in a million dollar home and still feel and understand the needs of individuals who live in 1/4 million dollar homes.

Actually, I know someone in PR who could afford a 7 million dollar Home but lives in a 1/2 million dollar Home instead. What to say about him.

It is a unfair and useless argument to raise.

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· [October 27 at 12:27pm](#)

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[John Moran](#) I've made this argument multiple times [Tom Sotos](#), but in some people's eyes the best way to support bad arguments is to make it about the "haves" vs the "have nots". Even when the assumptions being made have no supporting evidence.

In the grand scheme of things... 99% of the people in PR are blessed to be considered the "haves" by the rest of the world.

[Like](#)

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· [October 27 at 12:35pm](#)

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[Tom Sotos](#) [John Moran](#) I grew up as a have not. My car in high school was a 1977 Lincoln Continental rusted out and most of the time only moving in reverse. I never felt out of place. It was nice.

[Like](#)

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· [October 27 at 12:37pm](#)

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John Moran In 2004(post college), I was driving a 1985 Mercury Grand Marquis with velour interior, a radio dial and push button presets that moved the dial. All to save money as I started my firm.

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· [October 27 at 12:39pm](#)

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John Moran I'm here to pick your daughter up for our date. What do you mean she is sick?



[Like](#)

5

· [October 27 at 12:42pm](#)

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Derek Cadmus Given the original post on increased cost of pool passes and camps, it kind of makes one wonder if the PRPD could've been more fiscally responsible when it comes to the outrageous costs associated with Prospect Park and the Hinkley restrooms. As usual there tend to be details I'm not privy to when it comes to making these kind of decisions, but these sort of unforeseen costs would cause someone's head to roll if this were in the corporate world vs municipal blank checks we seem to write. On the fence if this is/is not a haves vs have nots argument, but virtually certain there are some making these decisions who are very out of touch with community wants and needs.

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Cindy McDonald Grau [Derek Cadmus](#) - Prospect Park was a referendum and we did not go over costs.

[Like](#)

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· [October 27 at 12:58pm](#)

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John Moran [Cindy McDonald Grau](#) weren't there cuts to the original proposal that were made in order to stay under budget?

[Like](#)

· [October 27 at 1:00pm](#)

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Cindy McDonald Grau The bathroom went out to bid and was remodeled instead of being built from scratch. It's a 90 year old building we are remodeling. Short of port o pots I am not sure what else we could do. We also looked into pre-fab. It's easy to be an armchair quarterback but when you're in the position to make the decisions you take the data you have and make the best decision you can.

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[October 27 at 1:01pm](#)[Remove](#)

[Cindy McDonald Grau](#) [John Moran](#) - i was not on board then but I think paddle tennis was cut.

[Like](#)[October 27 at 1:04pm](#)[Remove](#)

[Derek Cadmus](#) Cindy is it your belief that these exorbitant costs are the new norm? Maybe I've turned into my dad thinking a can of soda still costs .50¢

[Like](#)[October 27 at 1:26pm](#)[Remove](#)

[Mel P. Thillens](#) Yes, we had to cut the Paddle Tennis from Prospect Park to keep it within the referendum numbers. The referendum passing resulted in a direct increase to the property tax (which was explained on the ballot) to cover the bond issue which paid for the purchase and buildout of Prospect Park. We didn't tap into other park district funds for that.

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[Mel P. Thillens](#) It took two years of consideration and debate, but the Hinkley bathroom went from an original concept at \$350,000 to \$650,000 to a considered proposal for \$753,000 to a scaled down proposal of about \$500,000 to the current project rebuilding the current facility, now being finished up for \$172,000.

[Like](#)

3

[October 27 at 1:31pm](#)[Remove](#)

[Cindy McDonald Grau](#) [Derek Cadmus](#) - these are the costs - yes.

[Like](#)[October 27 at 1:34pm](#)[Remove](#)

[Mel P. Thillens](#) [Derek Cadmus](#), I understand that you may not know all the details that come out of the meetings, including the results of the debate, but you might consider that not having the details might make it difficult for you to be "virtually certain there are some making these decisions who are very out of touch with community wants and needs."

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[Mel P. Thillens](#) I still think \$172,000 is way too much to remodel a very small bathroom. There are a few factors that make up the reasons why public projects cost way more than private ones. Most have to do with complying with state and federal mandates on buildout. . . . including a mandate (not sure if I dare say it) that rhymes with Regaling Cage.

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[Derek Cadmus](#) How \$753K, \$650K or \$350K were even put on the table proves my point. Are voters the only oversight whose outrage caused consideration to reach \$172K? I'm glad we're on the same page regarding these costs.

2

· [October 27 at 2:13pm](#)[Remove](#)

[Ingrid Groening Czech](#) Thank you Tom Sotos. That's exactly what I meant. No one should be judged by what they have or what they own.

[Like](#)· [October 27 at 3:54pm](#)[Remove](#)

[Derek Cadmus](#) The “have” and the “have nots” can usually be traced back to the “did” and the “did nots”.

[Like](#)

4

· [October 27 at 4:02pm](#)[Remove](#)

[Barbara Gaffke](#) [Tom Sotos](#) let's get poorer.... What car ? It was called a bus . LOL.

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· [October 27 at 4:15pm](#)[Remove](#)

[Cindy McDonald Grau](#) [Mel P. Thillens](#) - 😊

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[Cindy McDonald Grau](#) These buildings are public facilities- they do not have drywall walls or ordinary toilets or plumbing. They have to be handicap accessible, and they almost always need sprinkler systems. They need to withstand hundreds of people using them. They are not like building homes. So there is that to consider as well.

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6

· [October 27 at 4:31pm](#)[Remove](#)

[Dave Clarkin](#) [Tom Sotos](#) you realize that very, very few kids in Chicago have cars? Most kids in my hometown didn't have a car either, they drove their parents.

I agree that it is a diverse town. I don't think our elected bodies reflect that diversity very well. Out of 22 elected officials for the city council, park district and school board, there are only 4 women.

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[Tom Sotos](#) [Dave Clarkin](#) my car was purchased by me from the money I earned pumping gas at the citgo (Philips 66) on prospect and Oakton. It cost 1100 bucks and I saved for over a year at 1 think the them rate of 3.75 hour (did get good tips from the older folk who wanted full service).

As for elected officials. I understand the frustration of lack of gender diversity of elected officials. However, the more fair question to ask is “how many seats were available this past term election and how many men and woman ran and how many men and woman won. You will see that of the available seats and based on how many woman actually ran for a seat, we did great on electing diversely.

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[Mel P. Thillens](#) [Dave Clarkin](#), actually I think it's three in the bodies you named. Alderman [Gail Wilkening](#), and Park Board

Commissioners [Harmony Dean Harrington](#) and Cindy Grau. Oh wait, how can I forget Clerk Betty Henneman? She's such a fixture no one runs against her. If you get a chance, I highly recommend a conversation about local politics with Betty. She has war stories that go back to the days of Marty Butler. It may or may not surprise you that we've fought most of these same basic fights for decades. It's just the players that change. There are no women on D64. If you include D207 you get five more women of those seven board members. If you include Maine Township there are another five women of eight elected officials. Our Republican Township Committeeman is also a woman, [Charlene Foss](#). That comes out to 15 of 38. Still not even, but closer.

Find me more women (or men) who believe that our property taxes are already too high, who can convince me that they will hold the line there unless absolutely necessary, and who are willingly dumb enough to volunteer and run for these positions (sorry ladies, but I do include myself in that 'dumb enough' category). I'll support them with every fiber of my being, as I did with several of the women I mentioned above.

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· October 28 at 5:47am · Edited

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[Mel P. Thillens](#) [Kathy Meade](#), I don't understand. You want us to pay more to the people who work at the Park District, which is in the proposed budget, but you don't want us to raise any costs to you to get those people more money. Where should this money come from? I thought you were all ready to pay a little more to make sure everyone has a living wage. It is also important to note that many programs, as listed in the article, are not increasing.

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13

· October 27 at 2:07pm

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[Kathy Meade](#) [Group Admin](#) No. I am asking you to scale back. Maybe don't renovate and update everything at once. Turn off the irrigation systems. Work on that corporate sponsorship that all the candidates were talking about at the candidate forums. Let's live within our means. Sure, have the \$200 basketball class and \$300 drum lessons. That's fine. But also consider offering a scaled back \$60 basketball or dance class. Balance. Did we need to build out Prospect Park all at once? No. Pay the lifeguards because other districts pay more. Then maybe we could keep the pools open when the staffing gets low when the college kids go back.

Offer a premium day camp for \$1000 and a bare bones camp for \$300..

Some money is better than no money. More people who can afford the park district will come back to the park district to spend money. So you get 5 people to pay \$125 each for a sports skills camp and make \$625. Lower it to \$60 and you could get 15 people who can afford that price and make \$900. More people equals more money.

What's the purpose of pricing people out when you need people to fund the Park District?

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· October 27 at 5:44pm · Edited

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[Christine Speros Mayer](#) Bare bones camp? Teach a class any class at the park district, what some of the demands are lead me to leave teaching there. And not only did I love it I spent my check to enhance my cooking class! I did it for fun and to get children to try new things as well as some things we know they would eat! I had kids whose parent NEVER cooked did take out of some sort everyday but would get mad that their 5 year old wasn't eating fish at the end of 6 weeks!! I had kids who never had a home cooked meal besides nuggets Mac and cheese and parents wanted them eating all veggies after my class. Bare bones never will work! Look at all the complaints on this site! People want a lot, the best they can get but the money has to come from somewhere.

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5

· October 27 at 6:47pm

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[Mel P. Thillens](#) We are certainly not proposing to renovate everything at once, just the things that are due: 25 year old playgrounds, 20 year old landscaping, tennis courts that have cracks big enough to swallow a tennis ball, dying HVAC systems. There are a lot of facilities, and we are proposing to fix up a handful of them.

How would you scale back a program or class, fewer hours, less staff, or some other way? What does 'bare bones' look like to you?

Your supply/demand example doesn't reflect what really happens. We do get plenty of participation at the current rates. From what we've

seen, halving the rates would not result in triple the usage.

Prospect Park did need to be built out all at once, because there is a timeline in which the referendum bonds has to be spent. And once again, those funds were generated by the referendum, and partly because of my insistence, did not come from other capital or operating funds. That's why we struggled so hard to keep the spending under exactly what the voters approved.

We do work on corporate sponsorships, and we get a few, but they are fewer and less lucrative than most think.

People do fund the Park District today. About 45% via taxes. About 50% through programming fees. And the rest through sponsorships and grants.

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· [October 27 at 6:47pm](#)

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[Christine Speros Mayer](#) If the park district want my 2 cents they need to eat the cost and move the batting cages to hinkley were games are played!! Now that's a concept!! They would make money there for warm Up before games! The decision to put them at Oakton was not a good one at all !!!

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4

· [October 27 at 6:50pm](#)

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[Mel P. Thillens](#) [Christine Speros Mayer](#) we discuss that a lot. The decision to put them at Oakton many years ago (before my time) was a bad one. The problem is how ridiculously expensive it would be to move them in comparison to the possible revenue it could generate. A few years back we turned to Park Ridge Baseball and came to an agreement that every participant would pay a few extra bucks to be able to use the batting cages whenever they like. It dramatically increased usage and provided enough revenue to maintain the cages since.

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4

· [October 27 at 7:16pm](#) · [Edited](#)

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[Christine Speros Mayer](#) [Mel P. Thillens](#) well I love that something was done to provide additional revenue.because those were built before I had kids but I see them there and think that was a bad move

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· [October 27 at 7:05pm](#)

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[Cindy McDonald Grau](#) <https://www.publicwatchdog.org/?s=Batting+cages&submit=Go>



[PublicWatchdog.org – Park Ridge » Search Results » Batting cages](#)

The Park Ridge Recreation and Park District...

PUBLICWATCHDOG.ORG

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· [October 27 at 9:32pm](#)

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[Dave Clarkin](#) The last time we were at the outdoor pool, we were unable to get a seat because a non resident was saving four seats for her

kids and three friends she said were coming later. The pool manager refused to take action, even after our son was injured, requiring first aid, and had nowhere to sit but the ground.

I won't go back to Centennial again until they change the policy and actually start enforcing the rule regarding adults having access to chairs.

The woman said if she couldn't have chairs, she was gonna leave and demand a refund. The manager said he couldn't give refunds. He should have given her a full refund and told her to never come back.

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3

[October 27 at 5:30pm](#)

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[Dave Clarkin](#) [Mel P. Thillens](#) I don't object to raising fees at BTB to give raises to staff, I think they deserve a raise.

The fees that Kathy refers to for basketball go - I believe - to a for-profit company that runs the basketball camp. That is a lot of money for a contract that is not competitively bid to a company that is profiting from the use of public space. I think she has a point with the camps.

As for the property tax increase, I am concerned that the park district is going to fall behind in its facilities maintenance, space acquisition if it follows down the same path as District 64. Your charge as board members is to be good stewards of a park district that was well-preserved and built upon over the last 100 years, and ensure it is here for another 100.

I think you will find everyone from Park Ridge in agreement regarding a substantial hike in pool fees for non-residents. I have even considered going a step further and require them to be accompanied by a resident.

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2

[October 27 at 6:43pm](#)

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[Kathy MeadeGroup Admin](#) Thank you [Dave Clarkin](#), that is exactly what I was going to write about the park district privatizing sports programs for for-profit companies. A "bare bones" class would be with park district staff making \$15 an hour instead of all that money going into a for-profit company.

[Like](#)

[October 27 at 6:59pm](#)

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[Tom Sotos](#) Dave. You hit the nail right on the head. Years ago all Park Ridge elected officials neglected the services and facilities and infrastructure of this town. It kept getting pushed back. The current individuals and even the immediate previous individuals have been burdened with this neglect and have been doing their best to allocate some funds to play catch up.

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[October 27 at 7:06pm](#)

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[Kathy MeadeGroup Admin](#) Maine Park was remodeled twice in 4 years.

[Like](#)

[October 27 at 7:07pm](#)

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[Cindy McDonald Grau](#) The office space was turned into recreation space when the office moved to Prospect Park. That space- 2 nature preschool rooms and bathrooms, a music room and room rentals help pay for upkeep and maintenance at Prospect Park. Fire suppression was updated at a high cost due to city code, wi-fi was improved. Phone systems updated, staff offices updated, ADA accessible window added for registrations, mid of the building restrooms available to outside were reconfigured for security reasons, doors for security for the preschools added.....

I am saying this because others might not understand what this remodeling entailed. I know you don't agree it was needed already.

[Like](#)

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· [October 27 at 7:42pm](#)

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[Kathy Meade](#) [Group Admin](#) I'm sure there were a lot of updates necessary but the brand new carpet was ripped up, the gym entrance was renovated into some weird configuration, the halls were repainted. 4 years ago we knew the referendum for Prospect Park was approved (I was sitting there waiting for my preschoolers when the park employees had their celebration party) and the buildings on that property would be renovated to house the offices. Why was Maine Park remodeled then knowing it would need to be remodeled again in 4 years?

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· [October 27 at 7:45pm](#)

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[Cindy McDonald Grau](#) [Kathy Meade](#) - I was not on the board then. These things are years in the making - so most likely no one knew what the future held.

The gym has a window now that parents can look through.

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· [October 27 at 7:50pm](#)

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[Cindy McDonald Grau](#) I'm signing off now.

[Like](#)

· [October 27 at 8:01pm](#)

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[Tom Sotos](#) [Cindy McDonald Grau](#) thank you for your service and for your participation answering question on here. I'm sure it is much appreciated by all.

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· [October 27 at 8:15pm](#)

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[Dave Clarkin](#) Me too! Great public policy conversation tonight, but my 4 year old needs to go to bed.

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· [October 27 at 8:16pm](#)

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[Cindy McDonald Grau](#) [Tom Sotos](#) - you're welcome!

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· [October 27 at 9:23pm](#)

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[Dana Bozeday](#) So is the idea behind raising pool fees for non-residents to drive them away so others get chairs? Or is it to keep resident fees from going up? I'm not sure I am understanding the argument being posed here

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[Dave Clarkin](#) I think we should raise non-resident fees before we raise resident fees.

I also think that rather than making it a recommendation that chairs be for adults, make it a requirement, resident or not.

If fewer nonresidents are there on the weekend, I don't think we will miss the revenue.

Perhaps the park district could share daily pool attendance figures with a resident v nonresident breakdown.

It would also be nice to have the pool open earlier on the weekends. Small kids are ready to go to the pool at nine am. The later opening time forces you to buy a unhealthy lunch at the pool or delay arrival --- which means you can't get a chair.

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· [October 27 at 10:58pm](#)

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[Dave Clarkin](#) Given the concerns ove flooding and the \$140 million proposal from the city, I would also favor an IGA for the park district to acquire flood-prone properties and transition them to open space, whether it's a neighborhood dog park, or a playground, prairie path or a grove. I think we are missing an opportunity to collaborate [Mel P. Thillens](#) and [John Moran](#). Do they even have dog parks in Park Ridge?

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· [October 27 at 7:04pm](#)

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[Mel P. Thillens](#) We do have a dog park at Oakton. Admittedly not the nicest one, but it is there.

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· [October 27 at 7:05pm](#)

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[Kathy MeadeGroup Admin](#) There is a dog park behind Oakton Ice Arena. You have to pay for a membership to keep out the riffraff...or really, anyone.

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· [October 27 at 7:05pm](#)

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[Mel P. Thillens](#) Also, we ventured down the path a few times of an IGA on flood remediation on PD property. The problem, as with most things, is funding. It's expensive to build and both the PD and City end up scratching our heads when we try to scrape together the money.

You'll be happy to know that both Centennial and Prospect have a ton of water detention built in when when built them out. You'll notice the lower areas in both parks surrounded by wild flowers and water loving plants.

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4

· [October 27 at 7:18pm](#) · [Edited](#)

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[Dave Clarkin](#) [Mel P. Thillens](#) the whole point of a dog park, of parks in general, is to be within walking distance of all the homes. That gets you the highest usage, health benefits, property value improvement, increased commercial activity.

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· [October 27 at 7:48pm](#)

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[Barbara Gaffke](#) An open spot is the corner on Northwest Hwy and Western Ave, the small mall.

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[Dave Clarkin](#) A dog park that requires a fee is bizarre. What riff-raff are they trying to keep out? The cocker spaniels?

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[Kathy Meade](#)*Group Admin* I used to bring my dog there. It was a nice park. Now we go to the tennis courts with the rest of the dog owners.

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· [October 27 at 7:59pm](#)

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[Barbara Gaffke](#) [Dave Clarkin](#) non- pedigrees ..mutts ! LoL

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· [October 27 at 8:01pm](#)

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[Al Stern](#) That dog park is always empty. A free dog park would actually get used.

[Like](#)

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· [October 27 at 8:09pm](#)

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[Mel P. Thillens](#) I understand the feeling about a free dog park, and never really advocated either way on this one. Although it is only \$50 per year, not a prohibitively crazy amount.

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· [October 27 at 8:15pm](#)

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[Al Stern](#) Try charging \$50/yr to let people use the playgrounds and see if everyone feels the same.

[Like](#)

2

· [October 27 at 8:16pm](#)

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[Sarah Surisook](#) I would not mind paying for a dog park; we pay for a pass to the forest preserves for our dog, but the one behind Oakton is all wood chip and our dog doesn't like to run there. A park that was grass would be lovely.

[Like](#)

1

· [October 27 at 8:48pm](#)

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[Al Stern](#) Or at least pea gravel. That stuff is pretty cheap and most dogs are fine on it.

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[Jeanine Koch-Clarke](#) I know this is a stale and maybe not popular statement, but if the Park district is critically important to you, than I would assume it would be a buying decision when deciding where you are going to live. Almost everyone gets a choice where to live. We rank and weigh the importance of things in that decision. I'm not suggesting we shouldn't care or fight for what is important for us, but I truly feel some people are a broken record and if you are not getting action on your needs, than it seems maybe you would be happier in a different place; however, somehow I doubt that.

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· [October 27 at 7:27pm](#)

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Cindy McDonald Grau I agree- Jeanine. We can't have everything and luckily we have options.

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· [October 27 at 7:35pm](#)

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Ingrid Groening Czech Jeanine this is just a discussion on the fees and how neighboring park districts charge. No one is bashing the park district. And if you feel these discussions are a broken record, feel free to opt out.

Most people move to Park Ridge for the schools, not the parks. Thanks for your opinion.

[Like](#)

2

· [October 27 at 7:38pm](#)

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Kathy MeadeGroup Admin I appreciate that the "git up and leave" is an option for some people but I have been here since 1991. My kids are 10 and 8 and I have watched the Park District transform from one that was affordable to one that is not in 8 short years. Day Camp used to be \$300. Can you imagine? \$300 for 6 weeks of camp (or maybe it was 4 I can't really remember but I'm sure someone will jump in and correct me)? It was simple though, playground, craft, playground, swim, home—but it was affordable and my kids were able to hang out with their friends. A dance class or a basketball or soccer class was \$60. There were waitlists but somehow they always made more room. Now classes get canceled because there aren't enough kids. We had a basketball class and a dance class that I splurged on with gift cards from grandparents and they both got cancelled due to low enrollment.

The thing is that, yes, I have been a broken record on this. Two years ago I was the only one talking about it. Now there are more and more people agreeing that the park district is way too expensive. This Facebook page also started with only 60 people. Now I approve 10 to 15 people per day.

I am happy here even with the people who want to just kill me. I can also see how it can be better here for everyone. Location and accessibility to the suburbs makes Park Ridge ideal. It is a walkable and a bikeable community. The teachers have been phenomenal and our friends live here.

You don't need to be a part of this movement. That's fine. There is a blocking feature on the Facebook.

[Like](#)

6

· [October 27 at 7:41pm](#) · [Edited](#)

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Ingrid Groening Czech I enjoy reading the comments, whether pro or con.

[Like](#)

3

· [October 27 at 7:42pm](#)

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Jeanine Koch-Clarke **Ingrid Groening Czech** exactly, there isn't a utopia. If there was we would all be living there, instead we CHOSE Park Ridge. I won't be opting out, thank you though!!

[Like](#)

2

· [October 27 at 7:42pm](#)

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Sarah Surisook **Kathy Meade** I don't think the criticisms are all invalid. As I mentioned before, we moved from the city several years ago so services seem like a bargain to us. I do get frustrated by the constant comparisons to Niles; that town is too much IMO and if people love the services they provide but prefer PR schools there are actually neighborhoods where they can move to have the best of both worlds.

[Like](#)

4

· [October 27 at 7:45pm](#)

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Cindy McDonald Grau Our current Park District is paying catchup for the years our facilities were neglected from what I've heard. Perhaps those were the good old days of which you speak.

[Like](#)

1

[October 27 at 7:48pm](#)

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Kathy Meade*Group Admin* You can have the best of both worlds without even living on the side of town that offers the best of both worlds since the non-resident rates are cheaper than the resident rates in Park Ridge. Heck, we've been to open gym at Olympia for free. We've enj...[See More](#)

[Like](#)

3

[October 27 at 7:51pm](#)

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Dave Clarkin It seems a simple question for [Mel P. Thillens](#) and [Cindy McDonald Grau](#): is there somewhere on the park ridge website where we can all view the participation data?

[Like](#)

3

[October 27 at 7:54pm](#)

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Kathy Meade*Group Admin* [Cindy McDonald Grau](#) , I appreciate the PRPD is playing catch up but we also need to consider that while PR is a wealthy community our park district is not wealthy. There is a certain amount of "living within our means" that is necessary. What happens when so many people are priced out that the prices have to be raised again and then more people leave. Like I said in Mel's post. If only 5 people can afford to pay \$125 for a sports skills class the park district only makes \$625. Decrease the price to a more affordable \$60 and 15 sign up for the class and the PD makes \$900.

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[October 27 at 7:54pm](#)

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Cindy McDonald Grau Monthly board reports- I think it's always the first meeting. <http://prparkdistrictil.iqm2.com/Citizens/>



[Meeting Portal - Park Ridge Park District, IL](#)

PRPARKDISTRICTIL.IQM2.COM

[Like](#)

[October 27 at 7:58pm](#)

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Dave Clarkin Park Ridge is not a wealthy community. The average income is around \$60K. The perception that it is a wealthy community and that every family can afford to pay fees if they want to use programs is mistaken.

[Like](#)

4

[October 27 at 8:01pm](#)

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Cindy McDonald Grau [Kathy Meade](#) - yes that's always a possibility as well.

[Like](#)

1
 · [October 27 at 8:02pm](#)

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[Sarah Surisook](#) [Kathy Meade](#) I guess my issue is the opener; it wasn't, "here is an issue, can we solve this problem with x?" But "are you fucking kidding me?!" Again, it may be because I am relatively new, but I really appreciate the park services, and while there are...[See](#)

[More](#)

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5
 · [October 27 at 9:23pm](#)

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[Kathy Meade](#)[Group Admin](#) [Sarah Surisook](#) the outrage was that the cost of park district programs has been an issue. I have spoken to 3 board members who assured me they would create affordable program options if elected. I'm not asking for the moon here. Some affordable options. You can still have the \$1500 day camp and the \$150 skills class. I just want affordable options.

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· [October 27 at 9:28pm](#)

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[Sarah Surisook](#) That's only part of it, I guess. The other part is we sit here **complaining** that sports camp is too expensive in our town vs neighboring towns, our pool passes are too expensive...meanwhile people **die daily** in Puerto Rico, US Virgin Islands are still without basics, nearly 900 people have been shot since Las Vegas, and we act like expensive park services are the worst things out there.

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 · [October 27 at 9:30pm](#)

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[Dave Clarkin](#) It isn't just Kathy. 1 in 6 residents said they don't participate in park ridge park district programs because the fees are too high. That was a 2011 report, how much have fees gone up since then? I have never been to Oakton dog park, but if it's the empty field I assume it is and we are charging folks \$50 to bring their dog there, that seems outrageous. A family membership at the Chicago Botanic Gardens is only \$90, Brookfield Zoo is \$120, Lincoln Park zoo is free. Are we charging \$50 just so a relative handful of people can have a private yard to play with their dog? At some point, the percent of people benefitting declines to the point where it ceases to be a public park and becomes a private club financed by the taxpayers.

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 · [October 27 at 9:40pm](#)

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[Dave Clarkin](#) [Sarah Surisook](#) think globally, act locally. I am trying to stop shootings in Park Ridge by getting our school districts to pay attention to social emotional development. In fact, I think when I brought the issue up on another thread you suggested that stopping gun violence wasn't something the park Ridge PTO should be troubled with and I should take those concerns somewhere else. Fortunately for our city council, school board, and park district board, I have enough energy to be engaged in all of their activities. That is what active citizenship is all about. It's more than just voting in every election.

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4
 · [October 27 at 9:46pm](#)

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[Kathy Meade](#)[Group Admin](#) [Sarah Surisook](#), I know there are other horrors in the world and I am working on that too. I have been in contact with the homeless student liaison in Marion County, Florida. The kids there have been devastated by the hurricane and have lost what little they had to be successful in school. They have lost their basic needs. I brought this to the PTO of my kids school and am now on a committee to collect much needed supplies for these kids. I see a need and work towards it. I don't talk about my volunteer work. I don't do it for recognition. This is the first time I have mentioned anything ever but this Facebook page isn't my only thing.

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5

· [October 27 at 9:49pm](#) · [Edited](#)

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[Sarah Surisook](#) [Dave Clarkin](#) spare me. I never said that, I did say perhaps you not lay all the worlds woes at the feet of the PTO and give some energy to gun legislation groups. You seem to be overly confident that park Ridge is in the dark ages and you are the enlightenment. I like this town and am just tired of everyone crapping on every volunteer who tries. Volunteer if you think you can do better, or offer solutions vs confrontations.

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2

· [October 27 at 9:50pm](#)

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[Dave Clarkin](#) I get that maybe you think you are better than us and smarter than us and our concerns are all petty, [Sarah Surisook](#). But the site is Concerned Home Owners of Park Ridge. And if you think things are all hunky-dory in Park Ridge, I am happy for you. But you are being a bit of a bully to come on the site and tell me my concerns aren't legitimate. I think I have made some pretty reasonable points about why some fee increases might be justified and others might be excessive. If you think I am wrong and the fees should be different, I am happy to hear your views. But to come to a public forum and just demand everyone stop talking about what they want to talk about - and call me "confrontational" in the process, is pretty rich.

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· [October 27 at 10:23pm](#)

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[Dave Clarkin](#) Park districts are not a primary concern for home buyers, Jeanine, although park space within short walking distance can be an attraction for homebuyers. Most people buy their home based on work location, price point, school quality, safety, and then a more amorphous "quality of life."

That said, once your here because this is where you could afford close enough to work with good schools and without getting shot at...you are a member of the park district, the board is elected to represent us, and we all enjoy a first amendment right to petition our elected officials and express our views. And yes, "love it or leave it" is a stale although popular view. Also highly undemocratic. Our government is suppose to reflect the will of the people, not bend the people to it's will.

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· [October 27 at 10:31pm](#)

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[Sarah Surisook](#) [Dave Clarkin](#) I am a bully for asking you to tone down your "gotchas!" Got it, Bro.

[Like](#)

· [October 27 at 11:01pm](#)

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[Dave Clarkin](#) [Sarah Surisook](#) Diehard Hillary Clinton supporter. Nice try, Bro.

[Like](#)

· [October 27 at 11:03pm](#)

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[Dave Clarkin](#) I was referring to your "we sit here...we act like expensive park services are the worst things out there." It's arrogant bullying to think that you can tell people what they should and shouldn't care about. My best friend was stabbed to death by a disturbed fellow student whose parents' money kept buying him out of trouble. So if I want to be concerned about social emotional learning and bullying in our schools, i will. And if you think I am going to allow you to bully me into ignoring the problems in our schools, you are mistaken. You can keep trying if you like.

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· [October 27 at 11:10pm](#)

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[Sarah Surisook](#) Dave, you think you are prototype of a toxic male feminist. You use your authority; a dead friend, an uncle in a union, your ethnic background, to present yourself as an authority who will not be ignored. You may have supported HRC, but you are a Bro.

[Like](#)

· [October 27 at 11:56pm](#)

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Tom Sotos I have never heard anyone accuse [Sarah Surisook](#) of being a Bully. In fact she is probably the furthest from a Bully of anyone commenting on this thread. I personally don't feel anyone on this thread is being a Bully and have never felt bullied, and I have taken some shots over the past couple years.

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· [October 28 at 2:42am](#)

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Dave Clarkin So, while I am glad there is a dog park at Oakton, and I don't even have a dog, many of my neighbors do and I think a dog park in the area would be tremendous benefit.

[Like](#)

· [October 27 at 7:49pm](#)

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Cindy McDonald Grau Tell them to contact me!!

[Like](#)

· [October 27 at 7:51pm](#)

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Ingrid Groening Czech I'd liketo see a splash pool at Oakton for the residents on this end of town..

[Like](#)

· [October 27 at 8:29pm](#)

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Gregory Jude I love that there is a dog park at Oakton. But it is not free. You need to register your dog and then pay to use unlike any community I've ever lived in. I don't have a problem picking up, donating or whatever. But I've never actually seen a dog in that park. We skate, use the cages and the driving range. Wasted space.

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1
· [October 28 at 9:32am](#) · [Edited](#)

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Dave Clarkin I can't tell you how many of those 22 live in million dollar homes, but that only tells you how ostentatious people are with their wealth, not how much they have. A more interesting question would probably be how many belong to the country club?

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· [October 27 at 11:26pm](#)

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Christine Speros Mayer ????? Who is being ostentatious?

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· [October 28 at 12:00am](#)

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Tom Sotos Please tell us how many of the 22 live in million dollar homes. If you actually can answer that question, I would really become concerned.

[Like](#)

2
· [October 28 at 2:45am](#)

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Kathy Meade turned off commenting for this post.

Bottom of Form