



**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
WILMETTE PARK DISTRICT
WILMETTE, ILLINOIS**





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Wilmette Park District (WPD) Board of Park Commissioners seeks an experienced, forward-thinking, and community-focused leader as its next Executive Director. This role is a chance to lead a park district known for high-quality recreational opportunities, facilities, and open spaces in Wilmette, Illinois.

The successful candidate will be approachable, engage with the community, build positive relationships with board members, taxing bodies, Park District employees, and participate in District and community events.

The new Executive Director will be dedicated to the employees' ongoing development, can quickly identify what motivates each employee to succeed and can rally the team around a common goal. The next Executive Director will focus on employees' growth, understand their motivations, and unify the team. They will be a transformative leader who seeks input from staff and board members to make well-informed decisions.

The next Executive Director will have proven successful leadership experience in a similarly complex organization and quickly become familiar with the various services, programs, and facilities of the Wilmette Park District. Reporting to the seven-person elected Board of Park Commissioners, the Executive Director will have the ability to inspire others around the mission, vision, and guiding principles of the agency.

The ideal candidate will have comprehensive knowledge of parks and recreation functions, facility operations, maintenance, financial planning, and execution. Strong written and verbal communication, strategic planning, and decision-making skills are essential. They must be effective in public speaking to various audiences, including officials, the public, staff, and Commissioners. Experience of implementing sustainability practices in various parks and facilities. Effective customer service, interpersonal skills, and active listening for delegating tasks are also required. The new Director will be organized and listen to various stakeholders before making recommendations to the Park Board.

This recruitment is being conducted on a local, regional, and nationwide basis, encouraging applications from all individuals who meet the qualifications. All inquiries relating to the recruitment and selection process for the Executive Director position are to be directed to the consultants listed below who are working with the Wilmette Park Board and its designated Search Committee.

Joe DeLuca, Senior Consultant, jdeluce@mgt.us
or Chuck Balling, Senior Consultant, cballing@mgt.us

MGT

4320 West Kennedy Blvd., Tampa, FL, 33609

TEL: 847-380-3240 Ext.130 or Ext.155

Formal applications should be submitted to: www.govhrjobs.com



HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

Wilmette (population 27,644) is a village in Cook County, Illinois, United States. Bordering Lake Michigan, Kenilworth, Winnetka, Skokie, Northfield, Glenview, and Evanston, Illinois, it is located 14 miles north of Chicago's downtown. The Village of Wilmette has desirable residential neighborhoods, engaged citizens, thriving local restaurants, and excellent schools. The area is surrounded by natural beauty within its borders, including tree-lined streets, Lake Michigan, and an abundance of nearby forest preserves and trails.

The Wilmette Park District was established in 1908. Situated along the picturesque shores of Lake Michigan, the Wilmette Park District spans 354 acres of parkland and manages 28 outdoor spaces and 279,325 square feet of facility space. The District is an independent municipal body with its original focus on acquiring land, planting trees, installing streetlights, and adding sidewalks through parks, especially along the lakefront and throughout the community.

In 1926 the Village of Wilmette established a separate playground and recreation board that levied an annual recreation tax to provide limited recreational programming. After 47 years of split jurisdiction, the playground and recreation board merged with the park district in 1973.

The District provides roughly 4,000 programs, events, and services each year, establishing itself as a key center for community engagement. With a seven-member Board of Park Commissioners, 79 full-time staff, and over 900 part-time staff, the District is well-positioned for continued innovation and excellence under inspired leadership.

The Executive Director serves as the chief executive officer of the Wilmette Park District, responsible for providing visionary leadership, operational oversight, and strategic direction to ensure the continued delivery of exceptional services and facilities to the community. The successful candidate will be expected to continuously demonstrate the character, interpersonal skills, and judgment to create trust, deliver results, and influence a positive and inclusive team culture.



OUR MISSION

We enrich the quality of community life by promoting wellbeing, providing exceptional parks and facilities, and offering creative programming for people of all ages and abilities.

OUR VISION

To be leaders in achieving parks and recreation operational excellence.

OUR COMMITMENT TO INCLUSION

The Wilmette Park District stands against racism, hate, discrimination, prejudice, and intolerance. We are committed to providing a safe, equitable and inclusive environment where all are welcome and treated with dignity and respect. We believe that providing this opportunity for all is core to our mission.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Committed to Excellence - We act with integrity and embrace a culture of innovation and continuous improvement, making decisions that are forward-thinking and delivering service with the highest standards.

Environmental Stewards - We preserve and enhance the natural resources and open spaces entrusted to our care, connecting people to nature, bringing vitality to our community, and sharing in the stewardship of the environment.

Fiscally Responsible - We invest in the resources entrusted to us wisely and responsibly and are accountable to our community.

Inspired Team - We continually invest in our people to promote their professional growth and development and empower them to carry out their work in ways that create meaningful results for our community.

Responsive - We encourage community input, we listen with an open mind and attitude, responding proactively to identified needs with actions that serve all populations in the District.

Welcoming and Inclusive - We create warm, welcoming environments where people feel safe and included, and diversity is celebrated.

QUICK FACTS

Population Served **27,644**

2025 Overall Budget **\$34.8** million

Number of Full-time Employees **79**

Number of Part-time Employees **900**

Number of Acres **354**

18 Hole Golf Course **1**

Basketball Courts **8.5**

Batting Cages **3**

Childhood Center **1**

Community Center **1**

Golf Course Restaurant **1**

Golf Driving Range **1**

Gymnastics Gym **1**

Indoor Ice Rink **2**

Indoor Tennis Courts **8**

Outdoor Ice Rink **3**

Outdoor Pickleball Courts **12**

Outdoor Pool **1**

Outdoor Tennis Courts **18**

Platform (Paddle) Tennis Courts **8**

Playgrounds **24**

Sailing Beach **1**

Skate Park **1**

Dog Park **2**

Sports Fields **38**

Swimming Beaches **3**

Theatre **1**

Volleyball Courts **3**

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Supervise the work of the Park District in accordance with the general policies established by the Board of Park Commissioners.
- Attend all meetings of the Board, participate in all committees, and attend all meetings of the same, except when their own appointment, efficiency, contract, or salary is being considered.
- Develop long-range plans and strategies to ensure the Park District's long-term viability and success.
- Oversee and execute the Park District's Comprehensive and Strategic Plans.
- Advise the Board on recommendations for the advancement of parks and recreation.
- Directly oversee the facilitation of the Wilmette Golf Club.
- Make recommendations regarding park and recreation policies, plans, and programs; prepare and present facts and explanations necessary to assist the Board in its legislative duties.
- Ensure compliance with constitutional or statutory laws, state regulations governing parks, and rules and regulations of the Board.
- Direct the preparation of the annual budget and tax levy for adoption by the Board; administer the budget as enacted by the Board in accordance with legal requirements and adopted policies.
- Hire, train, and evaluate direct reports, including Department Heads, Golf Course General Manager, and Executive Administrative Assistant.
- Serve as the official spokesperson for the Park District.



OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

- Provide strategic leadership by effectively implementing the Wilmette Park District Comprehensive and Strategic Plans.
- Inspire others around the District's mission, vision, and guiding principles.
- Listen and build trust with the community.
- Champion environmental sustainability by promoting responsible practices, conserving resources, and enhancing green spaces.
- Develop a plan for the newly acquired Beth Hillel Congregation Bnai Emunah synagogue campus.
- Complete improvements to Hibbard Park, including new pickleball courts, a picnic shelter, walking path, renovated baseball fields, and signage.



THE NEXT DIRECTOR WILL:

- Have effective financial acumen and human resource management to ensure long-term sustainability, while seeking alternative revenue sources and partnerships.
- Lead daily operations of parks, facilities, and recreational programs to meet community needs.
- Foster positive active leaders, inclusive workplace, and empower staff through training and ongoing development.
- Engage with community members, stakeholders, and partner organizations to strengthen relationships and ensure transparency.
- Promote the continued professional growth, teamwork, and development of the District's staff and provide ongoing training programs for staff, volunteers, and board members.
- Develop an action plan and successfully lead the agency in the Illinois Distinguished Accreditation process.
- Proactively pursue grant and sponsorship opportunities.
- Improve and expand indoor facilities to meet the needs of the residents for fitness and recreation programming.



CANDIDATE REQUIREMENTS

- Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in Parks and Recreation Administration, Leisure Studies, Business Administration, or a related field.
- A Master's degree preferred.
- A minimum of 7 to 10 years of successful administrative experience within the parks and recreation environment is required.
- Certified Parks and Recreation Professional (CPRP) or Certified Park and Recreation Executive (CPRE) certification is preferred.
- Possess working knowledge of park district laws and legislation, finance, and personnel administration.

SALARY RANGE AND BENEFITS

The starting salary range is \$186,000 to \$220,000 depending on qualifications. The District provides an excellent benefits package, including IMRF membership, optional 457 plan, and extensive health and wellness benefits. The Executive Director is provided with a District vehicle (personal use will be taxable).

HOW TO APPLY

Apply online at www.GovHRjobs.com with resume, cover letter, and contact information for five (5) professional references by Friday, April 25, 2025. Questions regarding recruitment may be directed to Joe DeLuce, Senior Consultant, jdeluce@mgt.us or Chuck Balling, Senior Consultant, cballing@mgt.us.

The Wilmette Park District is an Equal Opportunity Employer and welcomes and encourages diverse applicants.

