
WAUKEGAN PARK DISTRICT

PRESS RELEASE

Greg Petry Retires from the Waukegan Park District Friday, June 30, 2017

WAUKEGAN, IL (June 30, 2017) ---Waukegan Park District Executive Director Greg Petry retires on Friday, June 30 after thirty years of dedicated service.

Initially hired as Superintendent of Parks in 1987, Greg Petry was promoted to Executive Director in 1995. Greg's leadership and focus on excellence brought the Waukegan Park District national acclaim with its Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) accreditation in 2012 and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Gold Medal Award in 2013. There are only four other Illinois park districts that claim that achievement.

"Greg Petry is a master at planning and implementing operational systems that support goals and accountability. Over the years, the district flourished due to a referendum that generates more than three million annually for capital improvements. The combination of revenue and the district's strong commitment to the community, fiscal responsibility and collaboration with the City of Waukegan for developer land dedication created 10 new parks; signature facilities-the Field House Sports, Fitness and Aquatics Center, the Waukegan SportsPark, Bowen Playground and Waukegan BMX Track; and a park system with open spaces, recreational facilities, programs and services that are used by our diverse community and its neighbors. Thank you, Greg for your vision, leadership and dedication! You are leaving the District at the top of your game." said George Bridges, Waukegan Park District President.

Greg Petry developed partnerships with other organizations which extended services providing the community with the best service for the greatest value. Gateway facilities, the Waukegan SportsPark and the Field House Sports, Fitness and Aquatics Center not only serve Waukegan residents; both attract regional and national athletic tournaments generating more than \$15 million annually in economic benefit to the area economy, especially hotels and restaurants.

Greg has been recognized for his distinguished service by the Illinois Park and Recreation Association (IPRA) with the Robert Artz Lifetime Achievement Award in 2012 and by the Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD) with the Honored Professional Award in 2016. He served on the Illinois Parks and Recreation Board (IPRA) representing the metro region, he was a member of the Joint IAPD/IPRA Legislative Committee organizing breakfasts with legislators and park district leaders throughout Illinois. He is a past president of the national Sports Turf Management Association and was recognized with its Harry C. Gill Groundskeeper of the Year Award. He founded, became the president and was awarded Park Professional of the Year by the Midwest Institute of Park Executives. He was a frequent speaker at the annual state IPRA conference and contributed to the Illinois Park and Recreation Magazine.

Greg dedicated time and resources, mentoring staff to take on increasing responsibility and move into leadership roles. Jay Lerner, the former Superintendent of Recreation takes over the role of Executive Director effective July 1, 2017.

About the Waukegan Park District

Established on December 26, 1916, the district has 48 sites and more than 735 acres of land, including the 18-hole Bonnie Brook and 9-hole Greenshire Golf Courses. Properties are managed to the highest environmental and conservation standards. Facilities operated by the

district include the Field House Sports, Fitness and Aquatics Center, the Jack Benny Center for the Arts, the Waukegan SportsPark, the Waukegan Skate Park, the Waukegan BMX Track, recreational centers, an outdoor swimming pool, disc golf course, dog exercise area and agility course, outdoor sports fields, picnic areas, playgrounds, and sports courts including basketball, tennis and pickleball. A full range of programs and services are offered year round for all ages, from infants to seniors as well as special needs populations. Healthy lifestyles, wellness initiatives, and a connection with the outdoors and nature are integrated throughout programs, services, and special events. Cultural events are provided by the Waukegan Symphony Orchestra and Concert Chorus, and the Waukegan History Museum. There is something for everyone! The award-winning District employs 61 full-time and over 230 part-time, year round, seasonal, and temporary employees. The District is a member of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD), and Illinois Park and Recreation Association (IPRA). The district maintains national accreditation from the NRPA Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA), Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD) Distinguished Agency accreditation and Park District Risk Management Agency (PDRMA) accreditation and maintains a Level A Loss Control Program. The district was a NRPA Gold Medal Finalist in 2012 and 2013, and awarded the NRPA National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management in 2013.

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Contact: Theodora Anderson
Community Relations
Waukegan Park District
(847) 360-4726
tanderson@waukeganparks.org
www.waukeganparks.org