
WAUKEGAN PARK DISTRICT

PRESS RELEASE

Waukegan Park District Awarded \$750,000 Public Museum Capital Grant from the State of Illinois

Waukegan, Illinois (November 19, 2020) – Governor JB Pritzker announced that the Waukegan Park District has been awarded a \$750,000 Public Museum Capital Grant from the State of Illinois to assist in the expansion of the Waukegan History Museum at the historic Carnegie Library, located at 1 N. Sheridan Road in Waukegan.

Designated as a Waukegan Historic Landmark and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Carnegie Library will be the new site for the Waukegan Historical Society's expanded history programming, archives, collections, exhibits, and research library. The building will also be used by the Waukegan Park District for programs, classes, events, and registrations.

In his announcement, Governor JB Pritzker stated, "Our public museums help tell the story of Illinois, from the founding and cultural heritage of local communities, to our place in the world today. This grant program is making investments in local museums that will allow them to attract more visitors, to foster important research, and to tell important stories for generations to come."

Waukegan Park District President Jeremiah Johnson stated, "The \$750,000 Public Museum Capital Grant will benefit the community significantly. We are thankful that the State of Illinois recognizes the importance of this project for our community and will be supporting us financially. We can't wait to restore the Carnegie Library with our partner, the Waukegan Historical Society, and welcome visitors into a space with expanded history offerings and events."

Waukegan Park District Executive Director Jay Lerner stated, "We are very grateful for the support from the State of Illinois and Governor JB Pritzker! The public museum capital grant for \$750,000 will help fund our efforts to renovate the Carnegie Library. We look forward to working with the Waukegan Historical Society to expand the Waukegan History Museum and share our local history at the Carnegie."

The Illinois Public Museum Capital Grants Program, administered by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), is open to any museum operated by local government or located on municipally-owned land. The investments are funded through Governor Pritzker's Rebuild Illinois multi-year state capital program.

About the Waukegan Park District

Established on December 26, 1916, the district has 50 properties and more than 737 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's Greg Petry SportsPark, the Waukegan Skate Park, the Waukegan BMX Track, recreational centers, disc golf course, dog exercise area and agility course, outdoor sports fields, picnic areas, playgrounds, splash pads, 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 63 full-time and over 230 part-time, 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 has received Government Finance Officer Association awards for Distinguished Budget Presentation and Certificate for Excellence in Financial Reporting for eight consecutive years. The district was awarded the NRPA National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management in 2013 and named a NRPA Gold Medal Finalist in 2012, 2013, and 2019.

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Josue Pasillas
Communications Supervisor
Waukegan Park District
(847) 360-4789
jpasillas@waukeganparks.org
waukeganparks.org