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POL.B.08.01 - General Fiscal Matters

The Board shall exercise prudent financial judgment and practices so that the District remains financially sound. The Board shall review and approve the proposed annual budget for the District. The Board also shall regularly review reports regarding the District's financial status, including accounts payable, current status of each of the funds of the District, and similar reports.

POL.B.08.10 - Competitive Bidding

The Executive Director shall use a competitive bidding process for public works projects undertaken by the Park District, when required by law or otherwise appropriate. When such a project has been let for competitive bidding, the Board will award the contract to the lowest responsible bidder in the best interests of the Park District in accordance with State law. In determining the responsibility of the bidder, the Board may consider the bidders' financial responsibility, general experience, past projects of similar nature, adequacy of equipment, ability to perform under current circumstances, references, and other pertinent matters. Contracts for a public works project should provide that the Board may reject any and all bids when the Board determines that it is in the best interest of the Park District to do so.

POL.B.08.02 - Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the District commences on January 1 and ends on the following December 31.

POL.B.08.03 - Annual Budget, Appropriation Ordinance

The Board shall review and approve an annual budget after review and recommendation of the Administration and Finance Committee. The presentation of the budget shall include a written description of the significant changes to the prior year's budget as well as review of the budgeted and projected revenues and expenditures for each fund in prior fiscal year, the results of significant organizational, operational, or accounting changes, and the timetable for review, revision, public display, and adoption of the budget and appropriation ordinance, the annual tax levy ordinance, and the Truth-in-Taxation hearing (if one is necessary).

The Executive Director shall supervise the preparation of the proposed budget and appropriation ordinance in consultation with the Director of Finance and the District's General Counsel. The proposed budget and appropriation ordinance shall be released for public inspection in the manner provided by law. The Board will hold a public hearing on the proposed budget and appropriation ordinance. The Board shall approve a budget at a Board meeting prior to the beginning of the District's fiscal year, usually at the regular meeting of the Board in December.

POL.B.08.04 - Annual Tax Levy

The Board shall consider and approve a tax levy ordinance annually in accordance with the schedule established by law. The annual tax levy ordinance shall be approved by the Board no later than the regular meeting of the Board in December and filed with the Cook County Clerk within the deadline for filing established by law.

POL.B.08.05 - Annual Audit

The Board shall conduct an annual audit using an independent auditing firm. The Board's policy is for full disclosure of pertinent financial reports. The District's accounting procedures shall conform to all applicable standards, including accepted principles and standards of the Governmental Financial Officers Association, the National Committee on Government Accounting, and the Governmental Accounting Standards Board.

POL.B.08.06 - Program Fees

The Board shall maintain a [Revenue Policy](#) that recognizes the various costs related to the District's facilities and programs, including without limitation facilities operations costs, facilities maintenance costs, program costs, and administrative costs. That policy also shall recognize the various types of programs provided by the District and the scope of those programs, including without limitation community-wide programs (for example special events) that benefit the community as a whole, community-based special interest programs (for example swimming lessons and teen programs) that benefit both participants and the community as a whole, and revenue programs (for example gymnastics and summer camps) that principally benefit the participants. Program fees should be established and adjusted based both on costs and expenses and program type.

POL.B.08.07 - Debt Service Principles and Procedures

Inappropriate levels of general obligation debt can create financial difficulty. For example, short-term borrowing to cover routine costs can be expensive and may be a sign that the District is becoming financially overextended. Further, an unduly high level of debt may place an undue financial burden on the taxpayers and thereby adversely affect the health of the local business community. Reasonable levels of debt, however, may provide a mechanism to reduce costs for the District by allowing funding of projects or equipment purchases sooner than possible if those projects or equipment purchases were paid with current funds, thus reducing or negating cost increases due to inflation. Issuing debt also is a mechanism for spreading the costs of capital improvements equitably among current users and future users of the improvements. The Board also recognizes that the condition of the District's facilities, equipment, and programs are an important component in maintaining the desirability of the area and local property. For this reason, too, it may be desirable to issue debt to secure the funds necessary for maintenance and improvement of the District's facilities, equipment, and programs. The Board thus intends to adhere to the following general debt policies:

- a. The Board will endeavor to achieve and maintain the highest possible bond rating for the District.
- b. Except under extraordinary circumstances, average annual bond maturities shall not exceed 20 years.
- c. The District will endeavor to maintain minimum reserves in the Debt Service Fund at least equal to the next required principal and interest payments on outstanding debt.
- d. Except in emergencies or other extraordinary circumstances, borrowing shall be undertaken only to fund to capital improvements included in the District's 5-Year Capital Projects Plan.

e. Because the District's authority to issue bonds is restricted by the Illinois Property Tax Extension Limitation Act's debt service extension base limit, the Board may choose under appropriate circumstances to issue debt certificates instead of bonds.

f. No person or committee or other entity shall be authorized to create any financial liability on behalf of the District except only as approved in nature and amount by the Board or in accordance with the District's purchasing policy.

g. The 5-Year Capital Projects Plan shall be the basis for planning and consideration of issuance of bonds or other instruments.

POL.B.08.08 - Bond Sales

Bonds may be issued by private placement or through an open bidding process. The District may invite proposals from particular financial institutions and, if so, shall invite financial institutions within the boundaries of the District to be a part of that proposal process. Depending on the market circumstances as determined by the Board, the Executive Director, and any financial consultants advising the Board, bonds may be marketed publicly. The District shall be represented by the District's General counsel acting as issuers counsel, and the District also shall retain bond counsel.

POL.B.08.09 - Grants

The Board shall seek to finance proposed improvements through public or private grants, whenever feasible. The Executive Director and other staff shall be vigilant about exploring all possibilities for obtaining grants and other financial assistance.