

**ROBERTS PARK FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
MAY 12, 2026
MINUTES**

**CALL TO
ORDER**

The regular meeting of the Roberts Park Fire Protection District Board of Trustees was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by President Bernardoni at Station #1, 8611 S. Roberts Road, Justice, Illinois, for the purpose of conducting all regular business of the District, proper notice having been given and posted accordingly.

Secretary Stratakos led the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Present:

President Brian A. Bernardoni

Secretary Steve Stratakos

Treasurer Dan Borst

Chief Christopher Spoo

Commissioner Tim Dooley

Commissioner Ken Osborne

Commissioner Ron Weszelits

Absent:

Executive Advisor Jeff Dees – prior notice given

Others Present: On-Duty and Off-Duty FF/PMs, OM Stacey Collaros, Attorney Vlado Vranjes

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF GUESTS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

President Bernardoni opened the floor for public comments at 6:01 p.m.

With no comments, questions, or concerns, President Bernardoni closed the floor for public comment at 6:01 p.m.

Motion to close the floor for public comments was made by Treasurer Borst and seconded by Secretary Stratakos.

Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Secretary Stratakos, Treasurer Borst, President Bernardoni; Nays: None.

Motion carried

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

2024 Annual Tax Increment Finance Report for the City of Hickory Hills was received. President Bernardoni noted that the Board of Trustees had not received a TIF annual report from the Village of Justice in the past and that the district may want to contact them in order to see if a report is available.

BOARD APPROVAL

Minutes

Motion to approve the Open Session Minutes of April 14, 2026, was made by Secretary Stratakos and seconded by Treasurer Borst. Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Secretary Stratakos, Treasurer Borst; Abstain: President Bernardoni; Nays: None.

Motion carried.

Motion to table the Executive Session Minutes of March 10, 2026, was made by Secretary Stratakos, seconded by Treasurer Borst. Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Secretary Stratakos, Treasurer Borst, President Bernardoni; Nays: None. Motion carried.

Accounts Payable/Treasurer's Reports

Chief Spoo commented that tax distributions and ambulance collections came in above budget for the fiscal year end. President Bernardoni commented that this is the end of the Justice TIF (Ashbury Woods) but others remain. (Accounts Payable April 2026: \$204,426.17; Payroll April 2026: \$370,090.67)

Financial Report/Budget Review – April 30, 2026

The review began with Chief Spoo as James Howard was unable to attend remotely. Chief Spoo said the district closed out the fiscal year at 105% of revenues. The areas of operations that were slightly over were education and training, and the amended budget was in-line. Chief Spoo commented that the Notice of Public Hearing has been published and will be held at the June meeting. Chief Spoo then reviewed the Budget Report and commented that the draft budget for fiscal year 2027 is available and any changes to the budget can still be made before the adoption of the budget at the June BOT meeting. He highlighted the public relations line item that will account for a PR firm/consultant for a possible referendum. There are additional funds for protective equipment and for a grant writer program. The Chief also noted that the funding for the Deputy Chief position has been eliminated for now and that the personnel items for contractual sick time and vacation buyouts are included for the upcoming retirement of a member. President Bernardoni summarized for the record that we are appropriating more funds for PPE to protect our members, and looking to invest in a campaign to raise our revenues through a levy for pension relief amongst other things.

Financial Report – April 30, 2026

James Howard, from Gov. Accounting, was able to join by video call and completed a summary review of the Financial Report for the 12 months ending April 30th, at 100% through the fiscal year. Mr. Howard commented that the Cook County tax distributions deposits did catch up and ended at 105% of budgeted but the reports on the tax years is still not available. Ambulance billing was also above budgeted and up 7% from the prior year. For operations the district stayed in line with the amended budget, GEMT being the largest factor. Final was better than break even with about a \$12,000 surplus. Mr. Howard commented that the we need to hit the target of 40% fund balance ratios and we need that to grow to cover future capital needs. Mr. Howard also commented that 2nd installment tax distributions are already noted to be late and this was confirmed by President Bernardoni.

Investment Report – April 30, 2026

Ed Lavin from Sawyer Falduto went over the investment report in person. Mr. Lavin stated that at the onset of the year there were expectations that interest rates were going to go down and now it is more likely that we may see interest rate increases. Inflation is higher and the conflict in the Middle East has effected what is going on in investment markets. Fuel costs are up and will continue. Mr. Lavin commented that due to the limits on the types of investments that the district is allowed to hold, the district is protected from much of the uncertainty. As of April the district's balance is \$1,713,000. The year to date gains are slightly above \$10,000 and the majority of the funds were deposited within the last month. The district is currently earning 3.9% yield. All holdings are only up to \$250,000 per issue so that the investments have full FDIC insurance.

REPORTS

Fire Chief's Report:

Fire Chief Spoo presented his report:

Incidents: April 2026

- Total incidents: 384
- 70% EMS
- 53 Invalid Assists
- 11 MVA's in District
- Aid Given/Received: 23/18
- I294: 7 Responses

- Lyons Township: 235 Responses
- 62 in the Trace
- 33 in Sterling Estates
- 4 in Ashbury Woods
- Palos Township: 134 Responses
- Forest Preserve: 2 Responses

President Bernardoni asked Chief Spoo about key intersections involved in vehicle accident and what role the district can play in dealing with state and local authorities for traffic incident reporting.

Personnel:

- FF Herrera and FF Dvorak are currently injured but are making progress according to Proven Occ Health. FF Dvorak was just released and FF Herrera should be back to full duty in a week.
- Still working our way through the hiring list to fill the open position.
- Making slight shift changes due to upcoming promotions.
- BC Anderson has announced his retirement.

Finances:

- Draft budget has been prepared and submitted to James Howard.
- Notice of budget hearing at the next meeting has been published.

Grants:

- Applied for IDPH grant
- Added funding for a grant writer to the FY27 budget

Operations:

- Tower 305 failed its UL test and is out of service again
- Truck 309 had leaf springs repaired

Training:

- 932 Training Hours Completed – A new record
- Members attended our Spring live fire training at Bedford Park
- Large turnout of off duty part-time members for the live fire training
- Members attended a company officer course at Oak Lawn
- Two members completed Instructor II course
- Three members completed Common Passenger Vehicle Rescue course
- One member completed Heavy Vehicle Rescue course

Community Risk Reduction:

- Did fire safety talks for the 3rd graders at Glen Oaks
- Attended the Hills Chamber of Commerce senior resource fair
- FF Scanlon received contact information for a social services provider that will refer our residents to the appropriate agency

Fire Prevention:

- Met with Mayor Howley regarding the fire inspection proposal that was discussed at the last meeting. We will draft an IGA for approval by the city.
- Working with HHPD and the City of Hickory Hills regarding fog burglary deterrent devices. An explanation was provided by Chief Spoo

- Four plan reviews and five construction inspections have been completed
- Fire inspector has been requested to testify at an administrative hearing regarding fire hydrants in Chief Mobile Home Park

SWAT:

- No report

MISC:

- Our phone system crashed. It is antiquated and was going to need replacement soon. We are in the process of switching over to Verizon for phone service under the state of IL contract.
- Attended District 109 and District 117 annual safety meetings.
- Chief Spoo graduated

Commissioners:

Commissioner Osborne stated that they had the regular quarterly meeting last month and discussed full time firefighter testing, promotional testing and timing, and how quickly the lists are being exhausted. Commissioner Osborne mentioned including possible new testing in the upcoming budget. Chief Spoo acknowledged their concerns and said he may get the ball rolling for the Battalion Chief testing soon since the list will be exhausted in July. Commissioners and Chief also noted that they had not heard from the union regarding any changes to testing for the CBA. Clarification is needed before testing can begin again.

Attorney:

No Report.

POLICY REVIEW

President Bernardoni asked Stacey to create policy manual binders for the Board of Trustees and the Commissioners. Two hard copy, (non-digital version) binders will be printed.

Chief Spoo reported that upon review with Executive Advisor Dees, that the Lexipol software used for policy can be replaced with a searchable PDF document that can be maintained in-house. Legal counsel will be able to review the document, and we will track members and obtain signatures from the members for the acknowledgement of district policy.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. President Bernardoni announced the IAFFPD Conference is in East Peoria on June 11-13.
- B. The President of the IAPFD passed away. Damon Shuldt is the new president. He is the Chief from Martinton FPD. President Bernardoni continues to serve as the area coordinator for North East Illinois.
- C. President Bernardoni thanked Chief Spoo for his role with the Illinois Fire Chiefs and discussed the governor's Build Illinois Plan and dwelling egress.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. The Notice of Public Hearing for the Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for FY 26 -27 to be held on June 9, 2026 was read by President Bernardoni.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

Motion to close the floor for public comments was made by Secretary Stratakos, seconded by Treasurer Borst.

Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Secretary Stratakos, Treasurer Borst, President Bernardoni; Nays: None.

Motion carried.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

None.

CLOSED SESSION

President Bernardoni asked for a motion to go into closed session to discuss a personnel and land related matters. Motion to recess the open session and begin a closed session was made at 7:02 p.m. by Secretary Stratakos, seconded by Treasurer Borst. Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Secretary Stratakos, Treasurer Borst, President Bernardoni; Nays: None.

Motion carried.

The open session reconvened with all Trustees present.

Motion to reopen the meeting and return to open session was made at 7:09 p.m. by Secretary Stratakos, seconded by Treasurer Borst. Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Secretary Stratakos, Treasurer Borst, President Bernardoni;

Nays: None.

Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 p.m. was made by Secretary Stratakos and seconded by Treasurer Borst. Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Secretary Stratakos, Treasurer Borst, President Bernardoni; Nays: None.

Motion carried.

Open Session Minutes prepared by Stacey Collaros, Office Manager

Approved June 9, 2026