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Lombard Park District Executive Director Announces His Retirement

After serving over 36 years in the Parks and Recreation field, and devoting over 25 years in Lombard, Executive Director Paul Friedrichs announces he will retire at the end of 2023.

"My decision to retire is bittersweet," Friedrichs said. "I've had the privilege of being the District's Executive Director for the past 16 years. Over that time, I have been supported by 20 different elected commissioners and have always appreciated their investment of time and energy on behalf of our residents. My career has been very rewarding, having an amazing team behind me with an active and engaged community."

Friedrichs was hired at the Lombard Park District in 1998 as the Director of Finance and Personnel and was appointed Executive Director in June of 2007. During his time, he oversaw the construction of Park District's facilities, Paradise Bay Water Park and Madison Meadow Athletic Center. Friedrichs secured Illinois Department of Natural Resources grant funds to the redevelopment of Four Seasons, Sunset Knoll and Southland parks. In 2021, Friedrichs recognized the challenges of COVID-19 vaccine access and equity in Lombard. With his determination and passion for the community, the District partnered with Jewel Osco to provide over 5,000 individuals with COVID-19 vaccines at the Madison Meadow Athletic Center.

The Lombard Park District has achieved numerous awards under Paul's leadership including: Illinois Distinguished Accredited Agency, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Gold Medal Award in 2009, Gold Medal Finalist 2017-2019, and NRPA's CAPRA Accreditation in 2011, 2016 and 2021. The District has also been recognized by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) with the Certificate in Achievement in Financial reporting every year since 2000 and the GFOA Distinguished Budget Presentation Award annually since 2013. Paul was also named "Professional of the Year" from the Illinois Parks and Recreation Association in 2010.

Throughout his tenure as Executive Director, Friedrichs has actively served in local service organizations including membership and Presidency of both Lombard Lions and Rotary Club of Lombard; and as board member, and two-year term as Chairman of the Board for the Northeast DuPage Special Recreation Association from 2017-2019.

Park District Board President, Dave Lemar said, "Paul leaves a legacy of excellence that he has shaped during his years at the Lombard Park District. His dedication surpassed his duty, not only serving the Park District, but the entire Lombard community. Knowing that this mindset has been instilled in the talented team behind him assures us that the Park District will continue its path of excellence. We wish him the best on his well-deserved retirement."

His remaining time with the District, Friedrichs is looking forward to developing the expansion plans for Lilacia Park, working with the Board to complete a new Comprehensive and Strategic Plan, completing Phase II of Four Seasons, beginning the Southland redevelopment, while ensuring a seamless transition to a new Executive Director.

"I have always appreciated the Board of Park Commissioners, my staff, partners, volunteers, and residents for being great supporters of Parks and Recreation in this community. Thank you all," Friedrichs said.

On behalf of the Lombard Park District Board and Staff, we thank Paul for his passion, dedication, and contributions to the community.