

Kankakee Valley Park District announces staff, service reductions

On Friday, December 23, 2016, Kankakee Valley Park District announced cost-cutting measures.

The Kankakee Valley Park District receives roughly 69 percent (\$2.08 million) of its operating revenue from property taxes and 19 percent (\$581,700) from fees, grants, and other sources. In the past, the District has issued bonds to offset the difference and balance the budget due to declining property taxes, lack of fees and grants.

The District Board and Executive Director is committed to working within their fiscal constraints. They have had to implement a reduction plan to complete the fiscal year. While reducing staff and services they will continue to provide the highest level of recreational services possible to District residents.

As a result, full- and part-time positions are on lay-off, furlough, while some positions had to be eliminated. Union positions will also be on Lay-off. Lay-off notices were issued Wednesday and Thursday.

In addition, hours at the Rec Center, will be reduced per week. Programs will be either change locations, have reduced offerings, or be eliminated. Specific park rental facilities will close for the winter with anticipation of availability in the spring.

The cost-reducing measures will begin to take place [Monday, Dec. 26](#), which will be the first day of lay-off for staff. Hours will change at the Rec Center. There will be other operational changes implemented throughout the district that will have minimal impact on the residents.

The Districts goal is to meet financial obligations and provide a balanced budget in 2017-2018. This will be done by cost-saving actions and strict budgeting practices. The District has been reviewing several different ways to close the gap without reducing the workforce. Unfortunately, the revenue shortfall is large enough that they must resort to a reduction in force and services.

The Districts revenues have been lower than its operating expenses for several years. The District has no choice but to reduce costs, and salaries and benefits are their largest expenses.”

Reducing staff, hours and reducing the Rec Center is a difficult step, but it is necessary. The cost-cutting plan is designed to lower expenses and continue to provide services to residents.