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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Glen Ellyn Park District Receives One of the First “Sunshine Awards” Granted to a Park District**

GLEN ELLYN, IL – The Glen Ellyn Park District recently received a “Sunshine Award” from the Illinois Policy Institute, a nonpartisan and nonprofit research organization, for their achievements in government transparency. The Glen Ellyn Park District is one of the first park districts in Illinois to receive the award.



Several years ago, the current Park Board of Commissioners identified and established improving government transparency for the Glen Ellyn Park District as a priority. Over the past year, the Glen Ellyn Park District has worked collaboratively with Brian Costin, Director of Government Reform for the Illinois Policy Institute, to improve their online transparency and satisfy a 10-Point Transparency checklist. The Glen Ellyn Park District was successful in achieving an above passing grade, satisfying the institute’s “Local Transparency Project.”

“Online transparency is very important so citizens can partake in local government in an educated manner and to protect against corruption. To get in our Sunshine Award category, you have to get 80% or better. Out of the 350 or so government agencies we’ve evaluated, only around 45 have achieved that. I want to thank the Board for their hard work on becoming more transparent for their citizens,” said Costin.

The 10-Point Transparency Checklist measures how much public data is readily available on a government website and includes: financial audits, contact information for elected officials, information on public meetings, taxes and fees, and guidelines for citizens to access public information through the Freedom of Information Act.

“I am very proud of the park district for receiving this award. Our commitment to transparency is about more than just our website, but also reaching out to residents for input on important topics, broadcasting and archiving all of our meetings, and informing residents about park district news through various sources. I hope that more government agencies make the effort to operate transparently,” said Melissa Creech, Glen Ellyn Park District Board of Commissioners.

For more information on the Glen Ellyn Park District, please visit [www.gepark.org](http://www.gepark.org) or view the Park District’s transparency information at [http://gepark.org/boa\\_transparency.html](http://gepark.org/boa_transparency.html).

For additional information regarding the Illinois Policy Institute and their transparency audit, visit [www.illinoispolicy.org](http://www.illinoispolicy.org).

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#### **About the Glen Ellyn Park District**

Established in 1919, Glen Ellyn Park District's mission is "driven to foster diverse, community based leisure opportunities, through a harmonious blend of quality recreation programs, facilities and open space which will enhance the quality of life into the future."

The Park District serves 35,000 residents in Glen Ellyn and unincorporated Glen Ellyn, Carol Stream, Glendale Heights, Lombard and Wheaton. The Park District owns and maintains 30 parks and facilities and offers cultural, athletic and general interest programs and special events for its residents, from infants through seniors.