

November 14, 2024

To: Champaign County Board
1776 E. Washington
Urbana IL 61802

Report of Rantoul Park District Decennial Committee on Local Government Efficiency

Pursuant to the requirements of 50 IL CS 70/1 et seq, the Rantoul Park District has created a Decennial Committee to study local governmental efficiencies.

The members of the committee include Gary Hardin, President of the Board of the Board of Commissioners of the Rantoul Park District, William R. Scott, Secretary of the Rantoul Park District, Allen Jones and Brenda Combest, each of who are long time members of the community.

Pursuant to the requirements of law, the committee has done the following: studied the governmental unit, governing statutes, ordinances, jurisdiction and collected data and analyzed same to prepare this report, include recommendations, if any.

The committee makes the following observations in submitting this report:

1. The Rantoul Park District was created by statute in 1949 and has served the Rantoul community since then.
2. At the time of the creation of the Rantoul Park District, a significant part of the real estate and population of the community was directly tied to Chanute Air Force Base,
3. In the 1960s, the Rantoul Park District determined it would best be best for the community if a public golf course was created to be owned and operated by the Rantoul Park District. The Rantoul Park District purchased 160 acres and Brookhill Golf Course was created and has been operated since then as the sole source of income generated by the Rantoul Park District, apart from tax revenues.
4. When the Federal Government closed Chanute Air Force Base in the 1990s, it (A) immediately reduced the population of the community by close to 50%, and (B) opened the Willow Pond golf course to the public (which was only open to the Air Force members before), thereby doubling the number of golf courses available to members of the community. The impact on the finances of the Rantoul Park District was significant and continues to this day. The Rantoul Park District exploited the option of trading properties with the new owner of Willow Pond Golf Course for the purpose of eliminating one golf Course and providing additional funds for Parks. Federal Regulations prohibited it.
5. The Rantoul Park District has no administrative offices. The Rantoul Park District has no full-time or part-time administrative personnel. One of the primary areas where one might look to create greater efficiencies in operations would be streamlining operations in administrative

offices, and staff does not exist for the Rantoul Park District. Records are stored and ministerial administrative services have been provided at no cost to the Rantoul Park District for over 45 years.

6. The accounting, secretarial and legal work of the Rantoul Park District are provided by citizens of the community, whose compensation is probably close to 50% of what it would be if services were provided outside the district.

7. The Rantoul Park District General Fund maximum rate is .35 and the assessed value of the Rantoul Park District for real estate tax purposes is \$144,475,761. If the Rantoul Park District taxed the property within the Rantoul Park District at the maximum allowable rate for the General Fund the Rantoul Park District would generate approximately almost 7 times the amount of taxes it levies through the General Fund at this time. Thus the Rantoul Park District is not drawing upon the resources available to it for real estate tax purposes in anyway shape or form that is close to what is allowed. By way of an example, the current liability insurance premiums payable by the Rantoul Park District are about \$33,000 per year. The Rantoul Park District is allowed to levy for that, but only levied only \$4000 this year, again relying another resources to fund that obligation. Thus, there is currently a dramatic under taxation of the properties within the Park District compared to what it could be.

8. In reviewing the operations of the Brookhill Golf Course and the costs of doing so, the Board has had the opportunity to hire several new managers and superintendents over the last 30 years. In so doing the Board has had the opportunity to compare salaries and other compensation related matters as paid by other publicly owned, and municipal golf courses in Central Illinois. The compensation being paid to the management staff at Brookhill golf course is at the lower end of the spectrum. The staffing cannot be reduced any more.


9. The Rantoul Park District has worked cooperatively for decades with the Village of Rantoul in an effort to provide facilities that will support and enhance the community. For decades, the Rantoul Park District has provided storage facilities and baseball diamonds for use by the Rantoul Recreation department. Very recently, the Rantoul Park District worked cooperatively with the Village of Rantoul in an effort to allow the Village to acquire and develop the sports complex facility on South Murray Road. The Rantoul Park District owned 30 acres of farmland on South Murray Rd. which had been acquired 20 years ago or so, with the view of developing it for parks as the Village developed in that direction. The Village needed that property in order to facilitate the acquisition and development of the sports complex. The Rantoul Park District agreed to acquire in exchange property from the Village, which was available for park purposes. In so doing, the Rantoul Park District relinquished income producing property and acquired in its stead park lands that were rarely used and very costly to maintain. One of the only apparent needs for increased efficiency would be for the Rantoul Park District to sell the newly acquired property, and eliminate the cost of maintaining that property while providing additional funds for maintaining and improving other parks. The Rantoul Park District recently obtained approval from a referendum to allow that to happen and hopefully in the foreseeable future, the Rantoul Park District will be relieved of that property and receive sales proceeds and have additional income available to maintain and improve other Rantoul Park District properties.

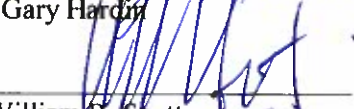
10. One of the other areas of cooperation between the Rantoul Park District and with the Village was hiring the Village Recreation Department to maintain certain park areas within the Rantoul Park District. Over time, it was determined that the cost to the Rantoul Park District for such services was significantly higher than the Rantoul Park District could acquire from private purveyors of same services That connection was therefore withdrawn.

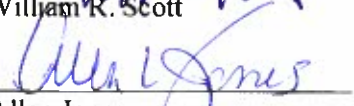
11. The Rantoul Park District Board has considered somewhat superficially the idea of “merging” into the Village of Rantoul, but it is not believed that there are any efficiencies of operation that could result from such merger at this point in history.

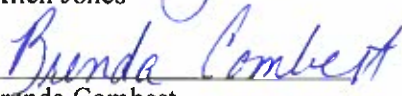
Respectfully Submitted

Rantoul Park District Decennial Committee on Local Government Efficiency

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