

Finance and Administration Best Practices

The Administration and Finance Department conducted a best practice analysis comparing our district with other Chicago area suburban park districts in order to obtain a comparable level of operations and associated best practices for the district’s business, administrative, human resources and information technologies operations.

Responses were received from many districts, but staff felt the following park districts were most comparable:

- Bartlett (West suburb)
- Elk Grove (West suburb)
- Highland Park (North suburb)
- Rockford (West suburb)
- Skokie (South suburb)

The following information details the areas that were questioned and the associated results.

Demographics

Demographic questions relating to the size of the district and its operations were obtained. This information is valuable because the overall operations of most districts rely on tax dollars. These dollars are received based on the districts overall EAV (Equalized Assessed Value) and their tax rate. Additionally EAV can be further analyzed based on population to determine if the tax base is more residential or commercial which in turn relates to the amount of services that a district must provide.

The overall budget gives insight into the total operations of the district. This amount however can be skewed based on capital and debt service expenditures. The total number of parks and facilities also demonstrates the required level of operations.

Demographics	Hoffman Estates	Bartlett	Elk Grove	Highland Park	Rockford	Skokie
Population	51,895	41,208	33,127	30,000	199,463	64,784
EAV (\$billion)	1.541	3.425	1.697	2.089	2.459	2.332
Tax Levy (\$million)	8.020	7.284	12.168	10.385	23.415	12.072
Budget (\$million)	23.6	15.0	21.0	18.0	30.3	26.0
Facilities	7	8	8	9	22	12
Parks	70	43	43	44	155	42
Acres	829	597	473	600	4,929	240

The demographic information above shows that the operations for Rockford are significantly larger than the other districts. Many of the best practices that we compared relate to overall operations and are not adversely affected by the size of the district.