

Glenview Park Board approves sexual harassment policy



The Glenview Park District's Park Center. (Alexandra Kukulka / Pioneer Press)

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In a 6-1 vote, the Glenview Park District Board of Commissioners approved a new sexual harassment policy Dec. 21.

The park district previously addressed sexual harassment in its personnel guidelines, said Deputy Executive Director Katie Skibbe. Park district officials created this policy because state legislation was passed in November requiring all government entities to create a sexual harassment policy, according to a board report.

The policy expands on what was listed in the guidelines, gives additional information and clarifies who to report sexual harassment to, Skibbe said. Sexual harassment is still addressed in the guidelines, but they have been updated to let employees know more information can be found in the policy, she said.

Commissioner Daniel Peterson voted against the policy because he said he believes “there has been a rush” to draft it. He said his biggest concern is with the introduction of the policy because it makes contradictory remarks about sexual harassment being a subset of discrimination.

Peterson said he is concerned that if sexual harassment is considered discrimination it creates a defense because someone can argue that they acted that way toward everyone and not just a potential victim of sexual harassment. He said he supports implementing a sexual harassment policy, but suggested removing discrimination from it.

“I would urge us to slow down, get this right, make sure we have something that we can enforce,” Peterson said.

The district’s attorney James Rock said the policy is similar to the sexual harassment policy implemented by Park District Risk Management Agency, which is the district’s insurance provider that would cover the costs of any potential claim filed under this policy.

“PDRMA strongly recommends discrimination stay in and our attorneys who worked on this policy felt the same way,” Rock said.

Commissioner Jennifer Roberts said that the policy was written and looked over by a group of lawyers who specialize in human resources policy. Peterson pointed out a grammatical error in the last sentence of the policy introduction “so it does have some problems with it, and ... maybe it has other problems and needs a little more work,” he said.

The board ultimately approved the policy with an amendment to change the grammatical error.