

**PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

JUNE 22, 2026

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Peterson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL

Committee Members present: Scott Creighton, Kameron Hanson, Kim Noding, Lisa Odens, Doug Peterson, and Megan Weber. Also present: Streets, Parks, and Fleet Superintendent Norm Michels, Finance Director Deb Wegeleben, and Recreation and Communication Coordinator Corrie Scott.

5. OPEN FORUM

Chair Peterson opened the open forum at 6:01 p.m. No one came forward. Chair Peterson closed the open forum at 6:01 p.m.

4. ADOPT AGENDA

Committee Member Hanson motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Committee Member Odens, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Committee Member Hanson motioned to accept the April 27, 2026 Parks Advisory Committee minutes as presented. Seconded by Committee Member Creighton, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

7. BUSINESS

7A. BOY SCOUT GARBAGE CAN IMPROVEMENT

Eagle Scout Lucas Volna presented his idea to create and install garbage can enclosures at River Oaks Park. He stated that they will have lids to keep trash in the garbage cans and keep animals out. He also stated that there will be posts to keep them secure rather than having them chained to trees. Michels asked about the materials being used. Volna stated that they would be made of

cedar toned wood planks and deck boards. Hanson asked if the wood will be stained. Volna stated that they would not be stained. Peterson asked about the length of the post. Volna stated they would be a 4"x4" that are 2' into the ground.

Creighton asked if this is going over existing garbage cans or in addition to existing cans. Michels clarified that these would enclose the existing garbage cans. He stated that there would still be a bag to ensure easy removal of the garbage by staff. Odens asked what weight the lids may be and if they would be easy to lift. Volna stated they would be around 2 pounds and should be easy to access. Michels asked about how Volna plans to carry out the project and if he will be able to fund the project or receive help building the enclosures. Volna stated that he would ask his friends and family to help build them and he plans to ask his dad's employer and the fire department to donate.

Creighton asked if Volna is asking for any funding through the City. Wegeleben stated that the City would not be able to fund this project. Peterson asked about a timeline if the project is approved. Volna stated that it would take a couple of weeks to build the five enclosures. Weber asked how long the enclosures will last. Volna stated about five years. Noding recommended that Volna request for a donation from the Lions, American Legion or another local organization. Hanson offered to donate. Peterson asked about the wear of the hinges and if he can ensure to reinforce the lids.

Noding asked about the placement of the cans. Michels stated that he would help to direct placement of the cans, but that Volna has good suggestions including having one closer to the parking lot. Odens asked about the height of the enclosures in comparison to the existing cans. Michels stated that they will make sure the enclosures are only an inch or two taller than the bins. Volna stated that he will measure the cans and use that as a reference.

Committee Member Hanson motioned to recommend to City Council approval of the Boy Scout Garbage Can Improvement Project. Seconded by Committee Member Creighton, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

7B. CURRENT BALANCE OF FUNDS UPDATE

Wegeleben reviewed the current city budget pertaining to parks. She stated that Local Government Aid may be cut in the future, and it will affect the Capital Improvement Funds. She stated that it is a good idea to consider lower cost amenities that are inexpensive to replace.

Noding stated that someone recommended pullup bars and dip bars for Lakeside Park as a low-cost amenity. Odens stated that her daughter specifically asked about monkey bars when looking at the plans for Lakeside Park. Noding stated that she doesn't see monkey bars in park plans often anymore. Odens stated it may be because equipment is becoming more intricate and themed, but that monkey bars could be a simple and more inexpensive option.

Odens stated that she visited a park that was made completely out of wood and asked about the feasibility. Michels stated that wood needs to be certified due to the liability involved and that the only place to get certified wood is from Canada, which would make it more expensive. He stated that composite is an alternative option that may be less expensive than wood. He stated that installing your own park would then cause the liability to fall on the City rather than the manufacturer and although the up-front cost would be lower, it could be more expensive for the City in the long term.

Odens recommended installing simpler and safer options built by the City and then mix it up with purchased equipment that is installed by the manufacturer to keep the liability lower. She recommended a few different amenities as simple as steps. Noding asked about going through different vendors. Wegeleben clarified that the more expensive projects are state bid so staff must go with vendors within Minnesota.

Weber asked whether there has been additional income from parking sales at Lakeside Park with attendance rising after the new playground was installed. Wegeleben stated that staff does track the income at Lakeside Park throughout the year. Michels stated that although additional revenue may come in, there will also be increased cost of maintenance with additional attendance. Wegeleben stated that it takes 14% of the general levy to make up for the deficit associated with parks. She stated that about \$74,000 is raised every year in parking passes and fees, but that the cost associated with Lakeside Park is significantly higher than this. Hanson asked who enforces parking. Wegeleben stated that the Police Department can look up who has paid for parking, and they give a \$50 ticket to those who have not paid.

7C. STAFF UPDATES

Scott reviewed the status of various programs and recreation taking place in the community's parks. She reminded the Parks Members to encourage residents to submit photos to the Summer Photo Contest. She stated that the May Movie in the Park was rescheduled due to rain and the reschedule date fell on High School graduation and the All-Night Grad Party. She stated that it was the busiest Movie in the Parks that she has seen and that they will avoid scheduling events on the same day as Graduation in the future to allow for more support from the Police Department and Reserve Officers. She reviewed that Lakeside Park's new playground also opened and was very well received online and in person.

Scott stated that Music in the Park had a couple of rainy days, but that the bands were well received and she thanked seasonal staff and Reserve Officers for helping ensure the safety of event-goers each week. She stated that the Big Lake Farmers Market is open rain or shine, as long as weather doesn't get dangerous. Peterson asked about vendor attendance. Scott stated that on the rainy days the market sees more cancellations, but that overall projected vendor attendance has increased this year in comparison to previous seasons.

Michels reviewed the status of current park projects and maintenance in the community. Michels stated that the Lakeside Park playground had a ribbon cutting and is open to the public. He stated that the Lake Ridge playground has been installed and that staff is working on redoing irrigation before final grading. He stated that Shores of Lake Mitchell had some vandalism, but that it has almost completely been repaired. He stated that once the parks are ready, there will be a ribbon cutting for each one.

Michels stated that he is reaching out to vendors for estimates on equipment for Mitchell Farms Park. Once he receives more information he will bring back some options to the Parks Committee for discussion. He stated that the only irrigation systems that are currently on are at Browns Park and Veterans Memorial Park due to the rain. He stated that the cost of irrigation has reduced this year. Michels also stated that all of the parks are prepped for the new Verizon system, but that it is only actively in use at Lakeside Park to reduce the monthly cost until it is necessary.

Michels stated that the new parking kiosk at Lakeside Park was purchased and training will take place before it is installed. He stated that Public Works staff has been preparing for Spud Fest taking place at the end of June.

7D. STRATEGIC PLAN STANDING ITEM

Michels reviewed the Strategic Plan and asked for the PAC to recommend revisions as needed. Michels stated that the playground inspections have been completed and that the Strategic Plan will be updated for the July meeting.

Creighton asked about looking into relocation of the hockey rinks. Michels stated that a discussion on the ice rinks will be going to City Council in July. Hanson asked about locating the rinks at the new City Hall. Michels stated that there won't be enough outdoor space for rinks at the new location.

8. COMMITTEE MEMBERS' REPORTS – None.

9. OTHER

Michels stated that this year there are four mowers rather than three and they are working on trimming as well as general mowing. In the past Sentence to Serve has helped with trimming, but they are not always available.

Peterson asked if a formal motion is needed for the person who interviewed for the Parks Advisory Committee vacancy. Scott confirmed that no formal motion is needed. She stated that the recommendation by the interview panel will go to City Council in July.

Noding asked about irrigation at Browns and Veterans Park. Michels stated that they are left on because they get drier being more full sun and being in such a busy part of town. He stated that they are also smaller parks that use up less water than other parks in the City. Michels stated that he has received positive feedback regarding the flowers at Browns Park. Scott recognized the work that Noding put into the flowers at Browns Park, Lakeside Park, and across the street from Veterans Park on Highway 25.

Noding asked if the dip bars and pull up bars would be low enough in cost to be purchased without needing City Council formal approval. Wegeleben stated that the purchase needs to be below \$5,000, but that the Parks Advisory Committee doesn't have the authority to make decisions about purchasing. Michels stated that replacement of current park equipment such as replacing a broken swing can be done, but any decisions about installation of new equipment in an existing park would need Council approval regardless of the cost. Michels also stated that the way the playground equipment is designed only allows for so much equipment per square foot for safety reasons. He stated that at this point any of the existing parks would not allow for additional equipment without expanding the footprint of the park equipment altogether.

Noding asked about placing pull up bars and dip bars near the existing exercise equipment located on the North side of Lakeside Park. Michels stated that the current equipment no longer has parts that can be replaced. Odens recommended replacing that equipment if it is in poor shape. Wegeleben stated that the Parks Advisory Committee could make a formal recommendation to Council if they would like to see the equipment replaced with something new.

10. ADJOURN

Committee Member Weber motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:52 p.m. Seconded by Committee Member Noding, unanimous ayes, meeting adjourned.