



**Park and Recreation Commission  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
June 25, 2025  
6:30 PM**

Hause Park – Park Pavilion  
2616 4<sup>th</sup> Ave E

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Greenlee-Karp called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

**II. ROLL CALL**

COMMISSION

Laura Greenlee-Karp, Chair  
Sarah Zahradka, Vice Chair  
David Andren, Commissioner  
Lloyd Grachek, Commissioner  
Ben Hansen, Commissioner, excused  
Ingrid Koller, Commissioner  
Rachel Lucas, Commissioner

STAFF/LIAISONS

Cassidy Schweer, City Council Liaison  
Sara Lang, Staff Liaison  
Ron Ritchie, Public Works Director  
Dan Winek, Finance Director

**III. ADOPT AGENDA**

Chair Greenlee-Karp called for a motion to adopt the June 25, 2025, meeting agenda.  
M/Andren, S/Zahradka  
Motion carried 6-0.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- A. Approval of Minutes from May 28, 2025, PRC Meeting

Chair Greenlee-Karp called for a motion to approve the May 28, 2025, meeting minutes with an update to note that Dorothy Park was not heavily used during the Memorial Day holiday.  
M/Andren, S/Lucas  
Motion carried 6-0.

**V. MEETING OPEN TO PUBLIC**

No members of the public were in attendance.

**VI. COMMISSION BUSINESS, ACTION ITEMS & RECOMMENDATIONS**

A. CIP Discussion

Public Works Director Ron Ritchie and Finance Director Dan Winek discussed the CIP recommendations from the Parks and Recreation Commission. Staff thanked the Commission for their work on the CIP recommendations.

For the 2025 recommendations, staff and the Commission discussed the projects and developed a plan forward for each one. Public Works will work on demolishing both of the Casey Lake open air shelters and ball fields 3 and 4 with potentially rebuilding one of the open-air shelters in 2026. If one is suggested to rebuild, the Commission will be included in the discussion of placement. Additions to Colby Hills in the current playground space will not work due to lack of crash zone space and the open space across the space is used for a hockey rink and would require additional accessibility features with the installation of new equipment. The Commission will continue to do research on how to add to the playground to be more inclusive of older ages. Public Works will construct and install a Gaga ball pit in Hause Park which will be a permanent feature but are recommending delaying a Gaga ball pit at Northwood (waiting to see how much Hause is used) and at Tower (may need to be moved with a new water tower). Playground equipment will be researched by Public Works for Polar Park in 2025 based on the previous equipment recommendation provided by the Commission. Public Works will compile some research on the areas the City owns around the Gateway Trail as the Commission clarified that the request for picnic tables and nature play features is not for the cleared area up the hill on the trail but rather closer to the biking trail. More discussion will occur on the Urban Ecology Center at a later meeting.

For 2026 and beyond, staff recommends that the hockey rink at Casey Lake Park be focused on prior to an active playground, pushing the playground out a few years in the CIP. The Commission agreed that the hockey rink could be a great feature if repaired and would like to explore the idea of moving it to a better location within the park if possible. In regard to the proposed McKnight development, the City would also like to develop plans, with engineering specs, for a more detailed proposal for McKnight updates. Staff Liaison Lang will contact HGA for cost estimates on surveys and what next steps would be in the process.

Chair Greenlee-Karp called for a motion to approve the 2025 CIP recommendations to go to Council on July 1<sup>st</sup>.

M/Andren, S/Grachek

Motion carried 6-0.

The Commission has been asked to send representatives to the City Council meeting on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, to speak on the recommendations for the 2025 budget items.

Finance Director Winek presented the current parks-related CIP proposal that will be presented to the City Council at the coming meetings. Winek discussed the Park Dedication Fund balance for 2025 and for the next 10 years. There is no projections for future growth for the Park Dedication Fund. The Commission has recommended using \$450,000 from that fund to help with costs related to the McKnight revitalization. Winek continued with the discussion by presenting the current balance of the Park Fund and future projections, if no changes are made to the projects. The projections show a negative balance in the Park Fund by 2027. The determination is that the projects cannot be currently afforded without grants or borrowing. Winek also presented a plan to increase the amount received from the levy for Parks and Recreation, which would help to alleviate the potential from the negative balance in the future, however that would need to be approved by City Council starting in 2026.

B. Southwood Maintenance

The Commission asked Public Works Director Ron Ritchie to provide background on how maintenance at Southwood Nature Preserve has been funded and completed and what the plan is moving forward. Ritchie explained that previously, the Southwood Nature Preserve Task Force would take the lead on recommendations, however they were not an official City group. Ritchie noted that Public Works does not have the resources to know what should be done for maintenance at Southwood except for mowing, wood chips and infrastructure upgrades. Commissioner Andren asked what Public Works plans for invasive plants and buckthorn removal moving forward. Ritchie noted that Public Works can remove buckthorn but would need advisement from others on additional maintenance. The Commission recommended that Public Works reach out to organizations to see what the cost would be to develop a yearly plan for maintenance.

### C. Commissioner Discussion

Chair Greenlee-Karp has asked the Commissioners to use this time to bring up discussing points, other than updates on the parks they are liaisons for in the City.

Chair Greenlee-Karp had nothing to discuss.

Vice-Chair Zahradka had nothing to discuss.

Commissioner Andren had nothing to discuss.

Commissioner Grachek had nothing to discuss.

Commissioner Koller had nothing to discuss.

Commissioner Lucas had nothing to discuss.

## **VII. REPORTS FROM STAFF**

Staff Liaison Lang noted the upcoming events related to the Parks and Recreation Commission and that the two upcoming Movie in the Park events will need volunteers. It was also noted that the Park Passport Program is continuing to move and Communications Coordinator, Ava Griemert, is working on a design. The prizes will include a zipper pull and a sticker and the grand prize will be a hammock.

## **VIII. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS & PARK LIAISONS**

Chair Greenlee-Karp had no updates.

Vice-Chair Zahradka had no updates.

Commissioner Andren had no updates.

Commissioner Grachek had no updates.

Commissioner Koller had no updates.

Commissioner Lucas had no updates.



## **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Greenlee-Karp asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:31 PM.

M/Zahradka, S/Lucas

Motion carried 6-0.

**The next regularly scheduled Park and Recreation Commission Meeting will be on July 23, 2025.**