



**Park and Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
July 23 2025
6:30 PM**

Casey Lake Park – Park Pavilion
2089 17th 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, excused
David Andren, Commissioner, excused
Lloyd Grachek, Commissioner
Ben Hansen, Commissioner
Ingrid Koller, Commissioner
Rachel Lucas, Commissioner

STAFF/LIAISONS

Cassidy Schweer, City Council Liaison, excused
Sara Lang, Staff Liaison

III. ADOPT AGENDA

Chair Greenlee-Karp called for a motion to adopt the July 23, 2025 meeting agenda.
M/Koller, S/Grachek
Motion carried 5-0.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of Minutes from June 25, 2025 PRC Meeting

Chair Greenlee-Karp called for a motion to approve the June 25, 2025 meeting minutes.
M/Lucas, S/Koller
Motion carried 5-0.

V. MEETING OPEN TO PUBLIC

Char Winters, 2252 Mohawk Rd, asked why non-ash trees are being removed from Casey Lake Park, as well as if the open-air shelters are being replaced and can the obstacle course come back to the park.

Mark Slaikeu, 2597 Dianne St, asked if there could be additional or larger signage to enforce no parking in the park at Casey as residents are witnessing people drive over the curb to unload and park. It was mentioned that residents had been previously told to call 911 when they see the problem occurring but that doesn't work as the cars are usually gone by the time the police arrive.

Jim Selchow, 2590 Dianne St; asked why the weeds have not been cut out around lake in Casey over the last several years and would like to know the grand plan for back of the park with the road construction.

Glen Olson, 2027 17th Ave E; noted that the EAB treated ash trees on 7th Ave are being strangled by the grates in the sidewalk and sent photos to Staff Liaison Lang.

Don Suchomel, 2169 Belmont Ln E; noted that the chain link fence at Colby Hills Park is sharp along the bottom and two children have been caught underneath recently. Photos of this issue were sent to Staff Liaison Lang.

VI. COMMISSION BUSINESS, ACTION ITEMS & RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Updates from Public Works

The Commission has been provided with a copy of the City Council resolution 2025-064 which approves projects for 2025.

Ball fields 3 and 4 at Casey Lake Park have been removed and are being updated to greenspace with dirt and seed. The two open air shelters at the park have also been removed. In 2026, Public Works will work with the Commission on a new open-air shelter including developing a plan for community outreach that can assist with selecting a location and style.

The Gaga Pit at Northwood Park is moving forward in replacement of the proposed one at Hause Park. Hause Park would require additional ADA considerations therefore that will not be constructed in 2025. The question for the Commission is whether it is preferred to have a wood one built by Public Works that would be made of treated wood or a plastic one purchased online. The Commission recommended that a wood one be built by Public Works for a natural look and to be more sustainable. Staff Liaison Lang clarified that Public Works would remove the equipment in the winter for the installation of the hockey rink and storage will not be an issue.

The playground at Polar Park is moving forward and the recommendation provided by the Commission to Public Works is what will be ordered. The timeline is dependent on the vendor, with equipment availability, however it is anticipated to be completed by the end of fall. Staff Liaison Lang asked the Commission what color they prefer, and they stated, "North St. Paul blue."

The requested location for the benches and nature play at the Urban Ecology Center does not belong to the City but rather to the DNR. The DNR contact was given to a couple of Commissioners to reach out to see if the DNR would be interested in investing in some benches and nature play there and if they would be willing to repair the wayfinding sign. The Commission recommended a picnic table be installed up on the hill, near the current platform. It was mentioned that the park sign is not visible from the overgrown grass and bushes.

Staff Liaison Lang also discussed the progress on the maintenance plan for the Southwood Nature Preserve. Public Works assigned the City Horticulturalist to develop plans to maintain the Preserve moving forward. The Commission asked if the City Horticulturalist would be willing to create plans for more parks including Silver Lake Park and Casey Lake Park that would help with the invasives growing in the area. Staff Liaison Lang will follow up with Public Works to see if that could be a possibility.

B. 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 no updates.

Commissioner Grachek noted that the Hause pickleball courts are full every day.

Commissioner Hansen asked if he could receive more clarity on the construction going on the roads and the back of Casey Lake Park and Staff Liaison Lang noted she would follow up with information. It was also asked why trees are being removed from Casey Lake Park. It was also suggested that the Commission ask for community feedback in 2026 when creating soccer fields and rebuilding a shelter.

Commissioner Koller noted that several weeks ago a garbage can was on fire near the Silver Lake bathroom building which damaged the receptacle and the eaves of the building. The issues were cleaned up right away by Public Works. It was asked if the garbage on the beach is cleaned weekly. Staff Liaison Lang noted that Public Works has seasonal workers that pick-up garbage. Commissioner Koller noted that there is only one bench left in the beach area at Silver Lake Park and was wondering if another could be added. The Commission discussed and recommended adding a picnic table or two near the beach at Silver Lake Park as well. Commissioner Koller also noted that the Silver Lake beach party was a success.

Commissioner Lucas asked for Park Passport Program updates. Staff Liaison Lang noted that the items (the zipper pull and stickers) have been ordered for the Park Passport Program and the program will be published online as soon as they arrive. Commissioner Lucas asked if Public Works Director Ron Ritchie and Communications Coordinator Ava Griemert could attend meetings at least twice a year to answer questions and provide status updates. It was also noted that the two exercise in the park events were well attended and were great successes.

VII. REPORTS FROM STAFF

Staff Liaison Lang reported that staff are still investigating options for a survey of the McKnight Athletic Complex.

A special thank you to Rachel for creating a map of the parks that note the particular Commission liaisons for each one.

VIII. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS & PARK LIAISONS

Chair Greenlee-Karp asked if the graffiti at Hause was taken care of and also mentioned that when using the park recently, there was quite a bit of trash near the picnic tables and wondered if a sign could be added reminding folks to use the trash receptacles.

Commissioner Grachek had no additional updates.

Commissioner Hansen had no additional updates.

Commissioner Koller had no additional updates.

Commissioner Lucas noted seeing trees planted at Casey Lake Park and that there are fireflies around the park. There were no updates for Northwood Park or Tower Park.



IX. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Greenlee-Karp asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:23 PM.

M/Grachek, S/Lucas

Motion carried 5-0.

The next regularly scheduled Park and Recreation Commission Meeting will be on August 27, 2025.