



**Park and Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
November 19, 2025
6:30 PM**

North St. Paul City Hall – Council Chambers
2400 Margaret Street

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, excused
Lloyd Grachek, Commissioner
Ben Hansen, Commissioner, excused
Ingrid Koller, Commissioner
Rachel Lucas, Commissioner, excused

STAFF/LIAISONS

Cassidy Schweer, City Council Liaison
Sara Lang-Noyola, Staff Liaison
Ken Roberts, Community Development Director

III. ADOPT AGENDA

Chair Greenlee-Karp called for a motion to adopt the November 19, 2025 meeting agenda.
M/Grachek, S/Zahradka
Motion carried 4-0.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. Approval of Minutes from October 22, 2025 PRC Meeting

Chair Greenlee-Karp called for a motion to approve the October 22, 2025 meeting minutes.
M/Koller, S/Grachek
Motion carried 4-0.

V. MEETING OPEN TO PUBLIC

No members of the public were in attendance.

VI. COMMISSION BUSINESS, ACTION ITEMS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. 2025 Event Recap and 2026 Proposed Events



Ava Griemert, the City's Communications and Events Coordinator, presented on a recap of the events in 2025 as well as proposed events in 2026.

For 2025, events included Fire and Ice, parks clean-up, workout events in the park, music in the park events, movie in the park events, cleaning the food shelf and the upcoming Holly Jolly Night. The Silver Lake Beach Party, workout in the parks and the kid's movie night were the largest successes. Using multiple parks, leaning into event themes and trying new ideas worked well for these events. Areas to improve include the Fire and Ice event with more promotion, pre-making luminaries and moving hot chocolate by the ice rink and the other event to improve is the parks clean-up day by creating a subcommittee to help plan the day. Commissioner Koller volunteered to be on the subcommittee. Chair Greenlee-Karp noted that getting more student involvement would be beneficial.

For 2026, similar events to 2025 are planned however there is an addition of a time capsule event, which includes working with the Historical Society and Scout Museum, to open the time capsule and have music and food for attendees. Commissioner Koller suggested finding residents that remember the capsule being buried to invite them to the ceremony. Chair Greenlee-Karp asked if a street dance is possible at the capsule event. An additional workout in the park will be added as yoga in the morning at Silver Lake Park. Expectations were laid out to the Commissioners asking them to volunteer for at least 2 events throughout the year. An email will go out to the Commissioners a month before the event asking for help.

Vice-Chair Zahradka commended Ava Griemert on the hard work for creating the events and thanked her for the planning. It was asked how events can be promoted above what is currently done. An idea was discussed of adding a list of events to the website and sending out magnets to residents with the events listed or a mailer in the utility bills.

B. McKnight Next Steps

Staff Liaison Lang-Noyola introduced the subject by acknowledging the interest by the Parks and Recreation Commission to move forward with improving the McKnight Athletic Complex. Staff has since discussed the path forward and has developed a list of questions and considerations that Staff and the Commission will need to consider if the project moves forward.

Staff Liaison Lang-Noyola noted that staff are waiting on the Housing and Urban Development department to provide additional documentation regarding the land usage requirements for the area. Once the land usage requirements are clearly defined, the Parks and Recreation Commission has the option to present their recommendations to the City Council. At that time, City Council can decide if the McKnight Athletic Complex is a project they would like to move forward with in the near future.

Ken Roberts, the North St. Paul Community Development Director, described the conversation at the City Council workshop on 11/18/25 in regard to future spending and direction of the McKnight Athletic Complex. The City Council listed their priorities for future City spending and noted the importance of maintaining current infrastructure and facilities as well as reviewing the current and future tax levy. The City Council rated their spending priorities which included maintaining infrastructure, streets and utilities at the top and parks tied for the bottom. If the PRC feels strongly about the McKnight Athletic Complex, all of the available park's funding would need to be repurposed to that, however no other parks projects would have funding.

Chair Greenlee-Karp asked what Ken's understanding of the Park and Open Space Master Plan is and the history of the Commission. It was noted that City Council asked the Commission not to spend any money until a complete plan is developed. Chair Greenlee-Karp noted that the Commission has completed everything that the City Council has asked. Chair Greenlee-Karp added that the City Council



Workshop presentation last night was leading the Council and they couldn't come to fair conclusion. It was further noted that the McKnight project was used as an example of a project that is too expensive to prioritize at this time. Chair Greenlee-Karp noted that the Finance Director stated that the Council will need to dip into Parks Fund for projects that the City would like to complete. Chair Greenlee-Karp noted her understanding of public funding and that the School District, for example, has intentional funding accounts to avoid dipping into other accounts.

Vice-Chair Zahradka asked what the plans for City Council voting based on the workshop. Community Development Director Roberts noted the Council meeting on December 2nd will include Truth and Taxation levy hearing and the December 16th Council meeting will be when the Council adopts the final budget and updated CIP. Vice-Chair Zahradka asked how she should proceed with concerns and it was noted that she should attend the next City Council meeting.

Commissioner Grachek asked what the City Councils thoughts are on the McKnight Athletic Complex and it was noted that Staff are not sure at this time.

Commissioner Koller asked when the HUD agreement came up and to clarify what it is. Staff Liaison Lang-Noyola noted that Staff has been aware of an agreement however still are unsure about the details but will share as soon as they can. Preliminary details on the HUD agreement came up when the title work was completed during the certificate of survey process.

Council member Schweer added that the City annual budget can be adjusted at any time and to consider that three Council Members were in attendance at the workshop. It was also noted that no Council Member wants the levy to go up, however, Council Members will change in a year and encouraged the Commission to stay open minded.

The Commission agreed that the CIP for 2026 should be updated to budget for engineered plans of the McKnight Athletic Complex. Commissioner Grachek considered if the Commission should spend that much money without spending on current parks. Vice-Chair Zahradka advocated budgeting for the plans and that waiting any longer will cost even more money. Commissioner Koller noted it is more efficient to include the entire McKnight Athletic Complex in the engineered plan and that the Commission has been talking about updates there for over a decade and stressed the importance of the visibility of the site.

Commissioner Grachek commended patience of the Commission.

Chair Greenlee-Karp called for a motion to recommend amending the 2026 CIP to include the addition of \$300,000 for an engineered plan for the McKnight Athletic Complex.

M/Greenlee-Karp, S/Grachek

Motion carried 4-0.

VII. REPORTS FROM STAFF

Staff Liaison Lang-Noyola noted that the playground at Polar Park is scheduled to be replaced in the first week of December. Pickleball and volleyball nets came down earlier this week.

Ken appreciates the conversation and questions; going to be a process, council on board.

VIII. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS & PARK LIAISONS

Commissioner Grachek had no updates.



Vice-Chair Zahradka asked if there is an update on adding woodchips to the Urban Ecology Center. Staff Liaison Lang-Noyola said Public Works is looking into it.

Commissioner Koller had no updates.

Chair Greenlee-Karp had no updates.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Greenlee-Karp asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:56 PM.

M/Grachek, S/Zahradka

Motion carried 4-0.

The next regularly scheduled Park and Recreation Commission Meeting will be January, 2026.