



PRC PARK BOARD MEETING MINUTES

WRITTEN BY: Melonie Trang, Administrative Support

MEETING PURPOSE: Monthly Park Board meeting

MEETING DATE: July 9, 2025

LOCATION: Parks and Recreation Office

ATTENDEES:

PRC Board Members: Thom MacLean, Genia Castro Waller, Jon Thompson, Jami Clark, Laura Drager, Jon Thompson, Jim Rott, Maia Dickerson, Melissa Dickerson

PRPL Staff Members: Gavin Woltjer, Interim-Director; Cole McQuillan, Parks Superintendent; Kory Thomson, Recreation Superintendent; Brad Wright, Parks Project Manager; Brandon Schmidt, Cemetery Supervisor; Jake Milliron, Community Outreach & Engagement Coordinator; Allison Thomson, Customer Service Coordinator

City Staff Members: Kevin Iffland, Assistant City Administrator; Elyse Monat, Transportation Planner

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: 11: 00 am

PUBLIC ATTENDEES: Jan Pursell, Stephanie Dodaro, Kamryn Merrill

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA:

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: *Board Chairman MacLean entertained a motion for the May 11, 2025, minutes. Board member Laura Drager made a motion to approve. Board member Jon Thompson seconded. On a voice vote, all were in favor and motion passed.*

INTERIM-DIRECTORS REPORT:

- **August Board Meeting Location:** Staff and Parks Board discussed moving the August Board meeting location. ***A motion was made by Board member Maia***

Dickerson to move the August Parks Board meeting to South Park Gazebo. It was seconded and motion was passed.

- **ARC (Amend Recreation Center) Update:** We will be doing a tour at the end of August at the construction site. Tour should be about an hour long. Parks board will be invited and sent the date and time once he has coordinated with the project manager.
- Thank you to Partners for Parks informative presentation at the Western Heritage Center

PUBLIC/BOARD COMMENT:

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Parks Update - Parks Superintendent Cole McQuillan:

- We have had a lot of special events in our parks including the fireworks display put on by Harvest Church up at Castlerock on the 4th
- Shakespeare in the Parks held their event at Pioneer last night and will hold another one again tonight
- Had a big softball tournament at Poly Vista Park; 45 teams came in to play
- School lunch program started up in June. Lunch program sites are located throughout the city in various parks
- We have been unable to activate our irrigation in some of our westend parks specifically in Olympic and Harvest due to damage caused by TDS installing fiber optics underground. Trying to work with them on repairs.
- Have two full time positions open; working on getting those filled
- Forestry division is working on getting Hemlock removed at Riverfront

B. Recreation Update - Recreation Specialist Chris Martin:

- Doing some additional training due with our seasonal staff, mainly with our pool staff
- We have over 60 lifeguards this year
- We received upgrades to our old shuttle buses; we now have two passenger vans
- Magic City Camp and Adventure camps are full
- Swim lessons have started
- Rec2U are averaging 400 kids a week, that is more than double from last year
- Pools have been busy
- Found a company in Phoenix AR that had a replacement pump for Rose Pool

Board member Dickerson asked if the Rec2U program has been pretty consistent with 400 kids a week. Mr. Thomson said yes

C. Projects Update - Project Manager Brad Wright:

- Pre-construction meeting for the Rose Park north trail is scheduled for today with construction beginning shortly after.
- Reviewing the estimates for construction of Kaden's Court
- Shade structure and restroom for Coulson is expected to be delivered at the end of this month
- Lights are on their way for the Rose Park trail solar lighting
- Grandview irrigation automation is at substantial completion
- Court resurfacing and pickleball court installation is expected to be completed by the end of the week at North Park court
- Work should begin the first week of August on the Arnold Drain trail
- Centennial Dog Park sidewalk is currently being poured
- Resurfacing is complete at the South Park south basketball court
- New set of stamped drawings is expected to be complete this week for the Skyline shade structure

D. Volunteer Update – Community Outreach & Engagement Coor. Jake Milliron:

- Working on the signage at the Centennial Dog Park
- Got interviewed on “My Montana”; will be posting and sharing that interview
- Community Garden is going well; gearing up for the “Parade of Gardens” August 2nd.

Board member Thompson asked if the department does anything with the Songbird Garden. Mr. McQuillan said we do startup/winterization irrigation well pump for them.

E. Mountview Cemetery Update – Brandon Schmidt:

- June was busy; did seventeen services at the cemetery and sold eight graves
- Sold six graves so far this month
- Updated fees starting July 1, went up 10%
- Seeing a bit of employee turnover right now; couple have been health issues, one seasonal and one full-time employee, also sent one full-time employee over to parks.
- Got a tree nursery up and running
- Getting a couple boulders inscribed for entry signs into the cemetery

Board member Dickerson asked about the comment from Brandon that the graves being sold has been high, she wanted to know the comparison from last year. Mr. Schmidt said last year he sold a total of 20 and so far in the last few weeks he has sold 14.

Board member Thompson asked if Brandon has done any green burials. Mr. Schmidt said he has done three.

Board member Clark if the graves sold have been for immediate burial. Mr. Schmidt said no, future.

Board member Drager asked Brandon how many internments he does in a month. Mr. Schmidt said 110-120 a year.

F. Buffalo Migration Mural Collaborative – Brad Wright:

Stephanie Dodaro and Kamryn Merrill are doing an International Mural Project where they are painting Bison murals from Canada to Mexico. Their first completed one is in Laramie WY. They have started ones in Placedo Texas and Oaxaca Mexico. Ms. Dodaro and Ms. Merrill have expressed interest in doing a bison mural at the back end of the North Park Recreation building.

Mr. Dodaro and Ms. Merrill presented mockups but those are contingent upon the input from the department, board and community. They said what they are imagining is the bison coming through the wall and onto 6th avenue. They said they can send a mockup to the board in an email once the project has been approved by the board to be done and once, they have finished with the mockups.

Board member Dickerson asked if there would be any educational materials installed around the mural. They said that is a great point and it could be developed in the mural. They said they do have a link to their website on the mural in Laramie that people can find information on bison, bison migration, and the artists.

Board member Thompson asked if there will be an agreement with the Parks and Recreation Department on the maintenance of the mural. Ms. Dodaro and Ms. Merrill said that is a point and have discussed it a little bit with Brad prior to today's meeting.

Board member Drager asked for a timeline on the project. Mr. Dodaro and Ms. Merrill said that is a difficult thing to answer at this time, but it could potentially be started next week. They would offer a timeline once they had the mockups.

Interim Director Woltjer said staff is requesting for a motion on the presented mural project. ***Board member Jami Clark made a motion to approve for the Buffalo Migration Mural at North Park. Board member Melissa Henderson seconded.***

Board member Jon Thompson asked if staff had any comments. Mr. Woltjer said he would want this group to be caveated to the motion that whatever drawings are made that there is a certain timeline upon receiving those for approval then move on to a timeline.

Ms. Dodaro and Ms. Merrill mentioned that there is a possibility to use a different wall in Billings if need be.

Chairman MacLean asked for the board to give their permission (vote) for the North Park Center be used for this purpose (mural). On a voice vote, all approved.

G. Parks Board Discussion – Chairman MacLean:

Board member Dickerson gave an update that the committee is still reviewing the list of properties to be disposed of. She said hopefully taking a lot of parks off that list. Mr. Woltjer said once the list has been finalized it will be brought before the parks board.

Adjournment: Chairman MacLean asked for a motion to adjourn. Board member Laura Drager so moved. It was seconded and meeting was adjourned.

(Please note these are summary minutes; this meeting is audio recorded and available to the public for any additional information discussed)