

Parks and Recreation Committee
Meeting Minutes
Thursday July 10, 2025 - 5:00 p.m.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those present.

Roll Call

Public Works Supervisor Joe Zierden conducted roll call with members Gail Arne, Kimberly Slipy, Diane Williams, and Megan Zierden in attendance. Deanne Trottier was absent. Staff present included Zierden, City Administrator Allie Polsfuss, and Deputy Clerk Deb Runksmeier.

Parks Master Plan Discussion and Ranking

Joe Zierden reported that there was good interest in the proposal, with several companies submitting bids. He distributed printed packets and scoring sheets to the committee members, noting that some of the scoring sheets were smeared. Joe explained that the three criteria they had discussed previously were included, along with points. He requested that everyone write their name on the sheets for record-keeping purposes.

Zierden suggested that the committee members take the packets home to review and compare at their own pace, rather than rushing to score them during the meeting. He proposed discussing the results either at a special meeting or at the next regular meeting, depending on when everyone completed their reviews.

Chair Arne suggested that staff should separate out what costs were equal across all proposals and what were additional, to make comparisons easier. She noted differences in graphics and the extent of work with funding among the proposals.

Committee members discussed their initial impressions of the proposals. Some key points raised included:

- The level of detail provided varied among proposals
- Some proposals included timelines while others didn't
- Experience and local knowledge were seen as important factors
- The committee appreciated proposals that showed familiarity with Breezy Point and its existing plans

The committee decided to have members submit their ratings by July 31st. Joe would then compile the scores and comments. They discussed the possibility of narrowing down to the top 2-3 proposals and potentially having those firms come in for presentations, depending on the results.

A motion was made by Megan Zierden and seconded by Kimberly Slipy that staff will collect and tabulate the ratings from the committee, and if there's one proposal that's clearly top-rated, proceed to make that as a recommendation to the city council in August. The motion passed 3-0 with Williams abstention.

Old Business

Arne reported that the city website was outdated, still mentioning the Paul Bunyan foot that no longer exists. She planned to report to the council in August about the Parks and Recreation Committee's activities.

Staff Reports

Joe Zierden provided several updates on park-related matters:

- Budget planning for next year had begun. Items identified included:
- Adding pavement to connect existing trails to the relocated shelter and community garden accesses
- Thinning out the brushy area between the main playground and community garden
- Replenishing wood chips in the playground area (estimated cost \$5,000-\$10,000)
- Potentially repainting the basketball court
- Landscaping around the new shelter and installing picnic tables and benches
- The community garden was progressing well, with plans to finish the inside work, mulching, and installing furniture in August.
- An article about the SHIP grant was nearly ready for publication.
- Clarified that the \$50,000 set aside annually for parks could be used in various ways, including pay-as-you-go or to secure a loan.

Committee Member Reports

Megan Zierden updated the committee on changes to the Sourcewell grant application process. They have created a new online portal for applications, which streamlines the process for multiple grant requests. She suggested that staff should set up an account for the city to access grant opportunities.

Kimberly Slipy reported on a meeting she and Gail had with Amy Gray from the Initiative Foundation regarding starting a partner fund or endowment for Parks and Recreation. She explained the different options for funds, including community foundations and designated funds. The committee discussed the potential benefits and challenges of setting up such a fund, including the need for a dedicated group of fundraisers and considerations about how the fund would interact with the city government.

Slipy also mentioned the Thriving Communities Initiative, a grant program from the Initiative Foundation that could provide funding and support for city projects and training. She noted that the application deadline was approaching, but there might be flexibility given the city's recent leadership changes.

Arne informed the committee that a donor sign for the community garden had been created and would be installed soon. She also reported high interest in garden plots, with at least five

people requesting spots. The committee discussed the possibility of expanding the garden in the future to accommodate more plots.

Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Williams and seconded by Slipy. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:05 pm

DRAFT