

February 3, 2026 Park Board meeting minutes.

- **Meeting Logistics & Attendance** (0:31-1:30): The meeting begins with a roll call and approval of the January park board report. Scott, initially running late, joins the meeting and is listed as present.
- **Budget 101** (1:33-16:10): Mike provides a detailed explanation of the town's budget structure, focusing on the park board's independent tax rate and revenue.
  - The park board has its own tax rate of 0.025 by 2, which the council can adjust.
  - For the current tax year, the park board expects to generate **\$86,697 from property taxes** (2:54-3:16).
  - The 2025 budget was **\$91,260** (4:36-4:39).
  - Revenues are projected to increase by about 3% annually, which is a state mandate for revenue generation, regardless of cost increases or town growth (8:07-9:02).
- **Online Reservation System** (16:25-30:23): The board discusses implementing an online reservation system for park rentals.
  - A key challenge is the two-tiered rental rate (resident vs. non-resident) as the online platform doesn't support this distinction automatically (17:11-17:29). The board decides to move to a **flat rate of \$200 for Hermance Park rentals**, acknowledging this will generate more revenue and potentially fund future improvements (29:41-30:01).
  - The initial module doesn't allow renters to complete applications online (18:20-18:28). An additional **\$750 fee** is proposed to enable online forms and e-signatures, bringing the one-time cost to **\$1,200** and an annual fee of \$75 (24:27-24:41). The board approves this motion unanimously (24:46-24:48).
  - Renters will still need to come in person to pay deposits and pick up keys (23:47-23:52).
- **Farmers Market Update** (30:49-31:19): The farmers market will not be hosted in a park but at a local church, so the parks won't be involved at this time.
- **Hiring a Park Employee** (31:25-36:12): The idea of hiring a part-time park employee is discussed.
  - **\$3,000 is budgeted** for a part-time position (32:05-32:09), with a previous hourly rate of **\$17-\$18** (36:31-36:34).
  - The board decides to table the discussion until the next meeting to brainstorm specific tasks for the employee, which could include assisting with park maintenance, managing volunteer efforts, and potentially grant writing (32:46-36:12).
- **Hermance Park Wetland Planting Project** (36:44-53:42): Updates are provided on the wetland planting project in Hermance Park.

- A list of low-maintenance, wet-tolerant native plants has been compiled (36:58-37:13).
- The discussion includes expanding the planting area beyond the former playground site (38:18-38:25) and potentially adding a **walking path** (38:35-38:58) which would require heavy equipment and soil amendment (37:46-38:10).
- Volunteers will be sought for planting, and assistance from the town with equipment is being explored (51:59-52:06).
- **Memorial Park Proposal** (53:47-1:03:13): The board discusses a proposal for a memorial sign in Memorial Park.
  - An initial estimate for a 2-foot by 3-foot aluminum sign, similar in appearance to existing bronze signs but more theft-resistant, is **\$4,500** (54:40-54:45).
  - The sign could fit approximately **50 names** (1:00:25-1:00:26), with the option for a double-sided engraving if more space is needed (1:00:39-1:00:44).
  - The board discusses the potential impact of INDOT construction on the park and the criteria for selecting names for the memorial (56:06-59:02).
  - An application process for memorializing names is suggested, with some flexibility for eligibility outside strict parameters (1:02:06-1:03:07).
- **Election of Park Board President and Vice President** (1:03:30-1:04:41): Mike Ropp is re-elected as President, and Scott Dreamer is elected as Vice President.
- **Miscellaneous Discussion** (1:04:47-1:07:22): The video concludes with a brief discussion about Rosemarie's re-appointment and an ongoing legal dispute regarding land ownership involving the Town of Bristol.