



PARKS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

June 16, 2025

1. **ROLL CALL:**

Members Present: Councilors; Gary Vis, and Nick Laninga
Members Absent: Mark Wohlrab

Staff Present: Mayor; Scott Korthuis, City Administrator; John Williams, Parks Director; Brent DeRuyter, and Parks Admin. Assistant/Coord.; Nancy Norris

Guest: Rec District Commissioner Bob Johnson, and Rec. District Coordinator Amanda May

2. **ACTION ITEMS:**

A. Approval of Parks Committee Minutes- May 19, 2025

Action: The Parks Committee approved May 19, 2025, Parks Committee minutes.

B. Dickinson House Lease Renewal

The Dickinson House Tenant agreed to continue to lease the Dickinson house. There are no changes to the current lease including no fee increase for this year. The lease is a one-year term and will expire in June 2026, the tenant has been informed that there will be a fee increase if renewed again in June of 2026.

Action: The Parks Committee approved the Dickinson House Lease Renewal and recommended Council approval.

3. **INFORMATION ITEMS:**

A. Follow-Up Discussion with Parks and Recreation District on Future Projects

The Rec. District asked for a timeline and the next step of action regarding Benson Park development. The Rec District would like to see the development of grass sports fields in the northern area of the property, restrooms and parking.

The Parks Committee recommends the first steps is to meet with Public Works, Finance, and Community Development for the early stage of development and how it fits in with the Pepin Creek plans and to figure out the cost to maintain the grounds once developed.

Possible future projects would be the Dickinson Park Jim Kaemingk Sr. Trail connection, Restrooms at Schoolyard Parks and possibly assisting with upgrading field netting, lighting and new restroom concessions facilities at Bender Fields.



B. Discussion/Report Regarding Parks Website

Director DeRuyter provided the 2024 and the most current 2025 Park Picnic Facilities and Sports Fields Bookings and Revenue. DeRuyter pointed out that 2025 is aligning with 2024, noting the fees have increased for 2025 so the revenue will be higher than what was taken in 2024. The annual fee for the program is approximately \$10,000.

Norris shared the frustrations of the program that both staff, sports coordinators and community users have with the program. The Civic Rec online program is geared for Parks and Recreation Depts. who offer activities and programs for their community members. Norris explained that 90% of the Civic Rec program does not work for our department and that she has had to customize the program to meet our needs.

DeRuyter will be looking into a different program that is more affordable and customized to our department's specific needs and if it aligns with the City's payment platform.

C. Updates on Parks and Trails

Schoolyard Park

- Playground Equipment Installation has begun- with a great group of volunteers.
- Final drawings/revisions from restroom facility designer almost complete
- Update on the amount raised by Mt. Baker Rotary for a splash pad, The Rotary raised a generous amount for money specifically for a splash pad. DeRuyter will be seeking additional funding to support the development and maintenance for the splash park.

Parks Department Shop Addition

- Contractor has submitted final plans for review and permits to Community Development Department.

Camera Update there is the possibility of adding a camera to the shop to aid security to the facility and North Bender.

Northwood Lynden Jim

- Finalizing a schedule and pricing for a meter for North Prairie Cottage HOA

D. Parking and Signage Updates

New signage will be posted at Bender Fields Park. The signage will include: No overnight camping, no back in parking, towing signage, and pickleball use rules, and no ATV/ Golf carts on sports fields. Ordinances are being created to support the enforcement of violators. The ordinance numbers will be added to the signs once approved and created.



E. Berthusen Gun Club Lease Update

The Gun Club has signed the newly updated lease.

F. Parks Staff Updates

DeRuyter explained that the park maintenance staff is stretched thin, even with the hiring of a full-time employee there was no gain in manhours, due to the cutting of a seasonal position and taking on the additional weekly 20 manhours for the janitorial duties of the of City buildings and the downtown restrooms and additional lawncare and landscape of the WWTP & WTP. This has burdened the staff by trying to keep up with maintaining the current parks, and new added park properties and trails.

The Parks Committee asked Brent to look into the feasibility of robotic mowers to assist with maintenance and other cost savings for the 2026 and 2027 Parks budget.

G. Potential Equipment Purchases

The rebuild of the field painter did not work and a new field painter was purchased.

The robot mower at City Hall has nearly reached its life span and should be replaced.

4. ITEMS ADDED

A. Tree/Bench Donation at Berthusen Park

Action: The Parks Committee reviewed the Tree and Bench donation request and approved the wording of the plaque and approval of a tree and bench to be placed at Berthusen Park.

B. Berthusen Advisory May 2025 Minutes for information only

Meeting Adjourned 5:25pm

NEXT MEETING- Monday, July 21, 2025