

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Meeting
Madison Heights, Michigan
May 01, 2025

A Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Meeting was held on Thursday, May 01, 2025 at 5:30 PM at the Department of Public Services, 801 Ajax Dr.

CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:34 PM. A quorum was immediately established at 5:35 PM.

ROLL CALL

Present: Juska-Svoba, Harris, Molencupp, Mier, Swan, R. Chambliss, Shiemke, Prowse, Ballantine.

Absent: Lenaway, Lagos, Strunk, Rohrbach*, C. Chambliss*, Danescu*

* denotes those members who gave notice.

1. Excuse Absences (if applicable)
2. Introductions

The assembled Board went around the table and introduced themselves.

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

No additions or deletions to the Agenda were proposed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3. Approval of Minutes from 4/18/24

Motion by R. Chambliss, second by Molencupp to approve the minutes as written, unanimous approval.

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

No public were present who wished to speak.

REPORTS

4. Activities and Events Sub-Committee

Nobody was present who is seated on this committee.

5. Student Report

Madison High School: R. Chambliss reported on behalf of C. Chambliss. Various sports are doing very well this year. Senior decision day and pinning day are coming up, with a number of seniors signed to colleges for sports scholarships. The media center at the middle school has been renovated, and middle school sports and academics are all doing well. The district received a large grant to hold a summer education camp with triple the enrollment of last year in the k-8 age group.

The summer carnival will be held May 23-26, and three new Trustees have been seated on the Board.

Lamphere High School: No student representative.

Bishop Foley High School: No student representative.

6. School Board Representative Report

Madison District: R. Chambliss reported that the final phase of bond work will be completed this year; there was a significant savings in a reassessment of the middle school roof, which only needs sectional repairs as opposed to a full replacement. The district will be adding boys volleyball next spring.

Lamphere District: Swan reported on events in the district: 8th grade Washington DC trip, 5K for Wellness, and the school play. May is a busy month with many events. There is a special election on Tuesday, May 5 for the bond proposal; a great deal of extensive research and planning went into preparing this proposal.

7. Council Report

Council Alternate Mier reported on the budget, mentioning that things are a little tighter this year, with the reduction of some proposed positions and approximately \$1 million in capital outlay. We are keeping a close eye on the budget in years to come with economic concerns. The ECC is holding its plant sale on May 25, Memorial Day weekend. The County's Ambassador Park plan will be kicking off soon.

8. Administration Report

Ballantine reported on the administrative duties that fall under the DPS umbrella, reiterating how he depends on his supervisory team, and reiterating what an excellent hire Brendan has been for the Recreation division. Ballantine then provided a summary of road construction in the area, as well as major parks projects coming up in the next couple years.

9. Oakland County Parks and Recreation Report

Prowse reported on behalf of Danescu that they have hired more staff at the Nature Center, including former Madison Heights naturalist Matt Hackett. The next year is the 30th anniversary of the nature center, and the 60th anniversary of Oakland County Parks; it is his intention that the Nature Center celebration is not lost in the shuffle. Prowse reported on wildlife in the woods, including the County's plan to reintroduce some species. There is a great deal of programming scheduled, and this years field trips and birthday parties are set to significantly exceed last year's. Prowse summarized various educational partnerships with area schools, and reiterated that one of the goals of Director Ward is to double nature education outreach; any schools or civic organizations, please contact him! OCPR is getting a new portable starlab; the existing technology is now obsolete, after 40 years of holding the program.

10. Madison Heights Recreation Report

Shiemke reported on events held since the fall, as well as the City's basketball, t-ball, and softball programming. Summer camp registrations are stable, new this year is the licensing of our summer camp through the state, a process he has already been through

twice in other communities. Brendan brings 9 years experience in running summer camps, so he is looking forward to embracing and breathing new life into ours. Recreation modified the refund policy to a week ahead of schedule instead of 24 hours, as we have had to cancel many programs due to last-minute dropouts. Festival is coming up, planning on the usual things and not reinventing the wheel. Shiemke reiterated that he enjoys these community events, and seeing our residents out enjoying them.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

11. Recreation Master Plan

Ballantine reported that the master plan is normally done with a contractor, but due to the nonresponsiveness of our selected vendor, and the availability of internal resources, the decision was made to do the work in-house, and part ways. The Board is going to be leaned on heavily to get the word out about the survey, especially at upcoming city and city board events. Ballantine noted that he is only one person, the Board is only 10 people with ideas that they would like to see in the parks, which may not reflect those of other demographics in the community. Harris suggested a survey be mailed out to the members to see who is available for which civic event to hand out survey postcards; Ballantine will facilitate. Prowse suggested a stack could be put on the desk at the Nature Center. Ballantine provided a history of the master plan process, and reiterated that the goal in the master planning is to spread the net as wide as possible to determine what the community wishes to see in its park system, and the City can then budget and plan accordingly to make it happen.

ADJOURNMENT

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 6:29 PM

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