

CITY OF RICHLAND CENTER

AGENDA ITEM DATA SHEET

Agenda Item: Ordinance No. 2026-06 Dissolving the Park Board and Amending the Code to Reassign Parks and Recreation Oversight

Meeting Date: Council on 4/21/2026 and 5/5/2026

Background: The Park Board (also referred to as the Parks and Grounds Commission and Board of Park Commissioners) was established under Chapter 50 of the Code of Ordinances and holds statutory authority over city parks under Wis. Stat. § 27.08. That authority is cross-referenced throughout Chapters 701 (Parks), 702 (Cemeteries), and 704 (City Properties).

On April 21, 2026, the Common Council decided to dissolve the Board of Park Commissioners. After years of dedicated service to the City's parks, the Board's advisory and oversight role has naturally evolved into the work now carried out by the City's Parks & Recreation Director and administrator form of government. Bringing park governance fully within the existing City structure reflects that evolution and will allow the City to respond to parks priorities with greater efficiency and coordination

What Ordinance 2026-06 does: This is a single omnibus ordinance organized into five articles:

| Article I — Dissolution of the Board of Park Commissioners and Repeal of Chapter 50 | |
|---|--|
| Dissolves the Board | Terminates all current member terms on the effective date. No further appointments shall be made. |
| Vests authority | General park governance → Common Council. Operational management → City Administrator. Routine permits → Parks & Recreation Director. |
| Park Fund | Allocates the \$12,422.45 balance to three priority projects (see Financial Impact). Residual funds transfer to the control of the Parks & Recreation Director for punch-list items. |
| County notification | City Administrator directed to notify Richland County Board Chair. |
| Savings clause | Preserves all permits, contracts, and legal actions initiated under the prior Chapter 50. |
| Article II — Amendment of Chapter 701 (Parks) | |
| Permit authority | Routine park permits (advertising, camping, vehicles, alcohol consumption in parks) are delegated to the Parks & Recreation Director. Additional approval is no longer required for routine permits. |
| Supervision | Parks & Recreation Director reports to the City Administrator (not the Park Board). |
| Article III — Amendment of Chapter 702 (Cemeteries) | |
| Cemetery oversight | Removes the Park Board from cemetery oversight. Public Works Committee oversees; City Administrator manages day-to-day. Burial fees set by the Public Works Committee. |
| Article IV — Amendment of Chapter 704 (City Properties) | |
| Property jurisdiction | Expressly adds all public park areas to the Public Works Committee's jurisdiction. Updates the catch-all to cover all City properties not specifically assigned to another body. |
| Article V — General Provisions | |
| Effective date | All articles take effect simultaneously upon passage and publication. |

EFFECT ON PARK OPERATIONS

City parks will continue to be operated and maintained without interruption by existing City staff under the direction of the Parks & Recreation Director and Public Works Director. No staffing changes result from this Ordinance. The parks budget remains a City appropriation subject to annual Council approval.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The Park Board directed the allocation of the \$12,422.45 Park Fund balance at its April 30, 2026 meeting. Ordinance 2026-06 ratifies that allocation:

| Project | Amount |
|---|----------------------|
| Splash Pad — concrete pad and shade structure | \$4,200.00 |
| Krouskop Park — ballfield dugout fences | \$2,850.00 |
| Soccer field signage — under-highway trail access | \$439.00 |
| Commemorative plaques (one per project) | <i>from residual</i> |
| <i>Residual — Parks & Recreation Director discretion (punch-list/maintenance)</i> | <i>~\$4,933.45</i> |
| TOTAL PARK FUND BALANCE | \$12,422.45 |

No ongoing fiscal impact. Future Park gifts and donations will be handled in accordance with the City’s adopted Donation Policy.

Suggested Action:

Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2026-06, an Omnibus Ordinance dissolving the Board of Park Commissioners, repealing Chapter 50, and amending Chapters 701, 702, and 704 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Richland Center
