



**TWO
RIVERS**
WISCONSIN

ADVISORY RECREATION BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, May 20, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Koska Room - Community House
1520 17th Street, Two Rivers, WI 54241

MINUTES

1. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Council Rep Scott Stechmesser, Daniel Cortte, Chris Eggert-Rosenthal, Tom Lawler, Jennifer Watry, Doug Brandt-Council Rep, Jennifer Watry ABSENT: Erin Lamal, Jason Scharping, Travis Kadow, Erin Lamal

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Dan Cortte, Seconded by Tom Lawler.

3. CORRESPONDENCE - None

4. COMMENTS FOR THE PUBLIC (Limited to 3 minutes each)

Marilee Hirvela congratulated the Parks & Recreation Department on a job well done during the recent storm cleanup efforts. She also expressed appreciation that the geraniums were planted in the cemetery.

Marilee commented on the perennial pilot program in Central Park, noting she hopes the plants will be placed in areas that receive more sunlight. She stated that perennials can be sensitive to sun versus shade conditions and expressed concern regarding who is selecting the plants and the level of maintenance and care that will be required. She also shared that she believes the pilot program should continue for more than one year.

Marilee also asked questions regarding the Lakeshore Community Foundation and whether the City would become involved with the organization for the Perpetual Care Flower Program. Her questions included whether participation could be discontinued in the future and what fees would be associated with the program.

Rusty Walesh stated that he had heard the perpetual care flower program may be discontinued and was interested in hearing more discussion about it during the meeting. Later in the meeting, Rusty shared how successful their volleyball tournament has been and noted that part of that success is due to the Community House facilities.

Paige Gerroll provided the Recreation Director with a list of deer-resistant perennials and recommendations on which plants would perform best in the cemetery setting.

Shawntel Hoffman voiced concerns that perennials may have a shorter bloom period. She commented that geraniums are very hardy plants and bloom for an extended period of time.

5. NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion of 2027 Adventure Tri-Athlon Idea

Discussion took place regarding the possibility of creating a fun race event that would fit within the scope of the department, promote the City of Two Rivers, and serve as a fundraiser for department operations. The event would be fee-based to help reduce the need for sponsorships.

A proposed multi-sport race concept was discussed, including biking, trail running, and kayaking segments. Board members asked questions regarding staffing needs. It was noted that NEWP would assist with the water safety portion for the kayak segment, and staff hope to partner with an additional volunteer group as well. Due to the nature of the race, staffing needs are expected to be minimal.

It was also noted that similar races have become very popular in the Sheboygan area because they focus more on fun and participation rather than competition, making them a good introduction for first-time triathlon participants.

General board support was expressed for exploring an event of this nature further.

B. Discussion of Cemetery Perennial Flower Trial

- a. There are no ordinance changes being suggested at this time.
- b. The 2026 perpetual flower program will continue as planned.
- c. City Council has made no decisions regarding working with the Lakeshore Community Foundation.

Clarification was made that the department has a very motivated and knowledgeable volunteer assisting with additional perennial plantings in Central Park due to budget cutbacks affecting landscaping services this year.

It was also explained that a small section in Cemetery Section G, where no graves are currently located, has been marked off to test perennial plantings in a sunny area. The pilot area will allow cemetery staff to evaluate how the plants grow and practice mowing and maintenance around them during the trial program.

C. Discussion of cemetery tree planting and turf grass reduction idea

The Parks & Recreation Department is considering applying for a grant opportunity that would not require a financial match from the City. The grant would allow the department to explore long-term planning concepts for the cemetery aimed at reducing operating costs, increasing community benefit, and supporting sustainability efforts.

Concepts discussed included reducing some turf grass areas and replacing them with well-maintained and curated native plant zones, along with additional trees and walking paths to promote the area as a quiet recreational space.

Board discussion included questions regarding whether the concept could potentially add costs rather than reduce them, as well as concerns about where current mulch, tree, and snow piles would be relocated if changes were made to existing turf areas. Other board members expressed interest in exploring the idea further since the planning effort would come at no cost to the City through the grant opportunity.

7. DIRECTOR'S REPORTS

a. Program and Event Updates

Senior Center: See attached presentation for detailed April registration numbers and dates. May Events: Holland Tulip Time Trip, Senior Center Rummage Sale, Tie Blanket Work session, Rock Painting class, and Chatting with the Chiefs.

Programs:

- **Softball:** 63 participants across 5 teams (Ponytail, Single A, Double A); games begin this week.
- **Baseball:** 60 participants across 5 teams (Peanut, Peewee, PONY); games begin next week.
- **T-Ball:** 39 participants (5/6 program) and 30 participants (4K program).
- **Youth Nights:** Held at TRHS varsity games (Softball 5/12, Baseball 5/14).
- **Registration:** Open for summer soccer camps, 4-week sports camps, and adult yoga.
- **Equipment:** Two new pitching machines purchased for baseball and softball programs.
- **Farmers Market:** 33 vendors, highest participation to date.
- **Youth Track:** 50 participants; program concluded this week.
- **Summer School Swimming:** 136 participants.
- **Summer Dance:** Registration is open.

Special Events:

New this year: Battle of the Bars event to help raise funds for the 4th of July fireworks, 50-Year Time Capsule Opening scheduled for July 4, Bites on the Beach food truck rally planned for August 22 at the beach.

b. Parks and Facilities Updates

Storm (5/17/26) Damage Update: A conservative estimate indicates the loss of over 200 trees throughout Parks & Recreation parks and properties. Additional damage was reported to facilities including the Vietnam Ballfield dugout, the Magee green space storage building, and several fences. Total damages are estimated to exceed \$100,000.

c. Planning and Grants Updates

Save the dates were shared for upcoming planning and grant-related opportunities:

8. ITEMS FOR FUTURE ADVISORY RECREATION BOARD MEETINGS

None

9. NEXT MEETING - June 10, 2026

10. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Dan Cortte, Seconded by Jennifer Watry.

Respectfully submitted, Laura Hooper, Parks & Recreation Office Manager

