

PARKS, RECREATION & FORESTRY COMMISSION  
Monday, June 1, 2026 at 4:30 p.m.

The Parks, Recreation & Forestry Commission met on the above date and time. The following members were present: Jennifer Clayton, Kerry Kneser, Emily Lessner, Dana Davis, and Brad Clark. Absent: Kyle Krueger and Julie Chapman. Also present were Andrea Draeger, Hunter Karnitz, Ryan Schmidt, and Ryan Thurow, along with members of the public.

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m.

A motion was made by Dana Davis, seconded by Kerry Kneser, to move the election of officers to the beginning of the meeting. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

**A. Review and take action: elect president and secretary**

Jennifer Clayton moved to extend Kerry Kneser's term as Commission President for one additional month, seconded by Emily Lessner, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

Kerry Kneser moved to nominate Dana Davis as Commission Secretary for purposes of recording backup minutes when requested, seconded by Brad Clark, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

**2. Review and Approval of Minutes**

Jennifer Clayton moved to approve the April 20, 2026 Parks, Recreation & Forestry Commission minutes and April 21, 2026 Senior Center Advisory Board minutes as presented, seconded by Dana Davis, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

**3. Review and Approval of Financial Reports**

Dana Davis moved to approve the financial reports as presented, seconded by Brad Clark, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

Discussion included a request from Dana Davis to include percentage-to-budget information in future financial reports.

**4. Citizens to be Heard**

Steve [Last Name unavailable], representing the Watertown Tennis Association, addressed the Commission regarding newly implemented facility use agreements and rental fees. He stated the organization was unaware of the requirements and expressed concern that the fees create an excessive burden on the association and would be unfair to charge them for rental of tennis courts as the city has not done so in the past. He noted the organization has historically contributed significant donations and improvements to the tennis facilities, including resurfacing projects, tarp covers, benches, a storage shed, etc. though was unable to provide dollar amounts beyond court resurfacing.

Meg Scullin, representing Watertown Volleyball, Inc., addressed the Commission regarding the facility use agreement and fees. She explained the nonprofit organization has served the community for more than 40 years and provides equipment and maintenance support for the volleyball courts, including lights, nets, balls, and mosquito repellent. She stated the

organization was unaware of the fees until shortly before registration deadlines and estimated that the proposed fees would exceed \$3,000.

Stefanie Broere thanked department staff for their assistance and communication regarding processes necessary to support Main Street programming and the continuation of community events this year.

Kim Schooley, representing the YMCA, explained the organization does not have sufficient green space for many of its programs and understands that facility use generates costs. She requested consideration of reduced facility rental fees to help maintain affordable programming opportunities for participants with the YMCA as part of their facility use agreement this year.

## **5. Business**

### **B. Review and take action: Revised banner application**

Andrea Draeger reviewed proposed revisions to the temporary banner permit application, including the removal of Brandt-Quirk Park as an approved banner location, and pending further review of the banner policy by the city attorney.

Brad Clark moved to approve the revised temporary banner permit application as presented, seconded by Dana Davis, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

### **C. Review and take action: YMCA Facility Use Contract and waiver of fees**

The Commission discussed the YMCA facility use agreement and associated fees. Kerry Kneser reviewed previous efforts to maintain consistency among facility users. Ryan Schmidt discussed the importance of maintaining objective fee structures while exploring potential future revisions, including nonprofit classifications and fee adjustments within the Fees and Charges Schedule.

Commissioners discussed balancing revenue generation with the department's mission of providing community recreation opportunities. Brad Clark suggested evaluating fee caps and alternative fee structures. Dana Davis noted the need to generate revenue while continuing to support community recreation programming.

Brad Clark moved to table the YMCA Facility Use Agreement until a revised fee structure could be reviewed by the next meeting, seconded by Kerry Kneser, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

### **D. Review and take action: Outlawz Concession Permit and waiver of fees**

Commissioners reviewed the Outlawz facility use agreement, concession permit, and request for fee reduction.

Kerry Kneser moved to approve the concession in parks permit and deny the request for reduced fees, pending any applicable future revisions to the department's fee structure, seconded by Dana Davis, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

### **E. Review and take action: Thunder Facility Use Contract**

Andrea Draeger reviewed the updated facility use agreement reflecting a new organizational contact.

Dana Davis moved to approve the agreement, seconded by Brad Clark, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

**F. Review and take action: Luther Preparatory School Facility Use Contract**

Brad Clark moved to approve the facility use agreement, seconded by Kerry Kneser, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

**G Review and take action: Farmington Flames Facility Use Contract**

Jennifer Clayton moved to approve the facility use agreement, seconded by Emily Lessner, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

**H. Review and take action: Trinity St. Luke's Facility Use Contract**

Dana Davis moved to approve the facility use agreement, seconded by Brad Clark, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

**I. Review and take action: Gomez Soccer Facility Use Contract**

The Commission reviewed the proposed agreement for the Gomez Soccer program, which utilizes facilities for multiple age groups and programs. Total applicable fees were reviewed. Staff also discussed communications involving the Mayor and City Attorney regarding prior soccer programming at Grinwald Park.

Jennifer Clayton moved to approve the facility use agreement as presented, seconded by Brad Clark, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

**J. Review and take action: Watertown Youth Tennis Facility Use Contract**

Kerry Kneser moved to approve the facility use agreement as presented, seconded by Jennifer Clayton, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

**6. Director's Report**

**A. Director introduction, CIP budget items, aquatic and staffing updates**

Ryan Schmidt introduced himself as the new Director of Parks, Recreation & Forestry.

He provided updates regarding Capital Improvement Plan priorities currently being reviewed by Finance and the Mayor.

Aquatic Center preparations continue for the June 13 opening. Maura Prochaska has been hired as LTE Aquatics Manager in place of a full-time aquatics position. Recruitment efforts have included multiple hiring open houses, and seasonal staff training is scheduled to begin the following evening.

**B. Parks and forestry program and maintenance updates**

Parks and Forestry staff reported approximately 40 trees were planted through the Rooted in Watertown initiative. An additional 75 trees will be planted through a Wisconsin DNR grant, and staff are collaborating with the Rock River Coalition and RMS on a grant opportunity to plant an additional 20 trees. The Right Tree, Right Spot program successfully distributed all 50 available trees.

Aquatic Center improvements include installation of a new diving board and handrails for the large slide. The Brandt-Quirk tennis court reconstruction project is anticipated to begin in June and conclude in July.

### **C. Recreation program updates**

Hunter Karnitz provided recreation programming updates. Spring soccer has concluded, while adult softball continues. Yoga at Bentzin Family Town Square began the previous weekend. Day Camp, summer volleyball, youth baseball, and water aerobics programs are beginning, and additional summer fitness classes are being added.

### **D. Senior Center and enrichment program and building project updates**

Staff provided updates on Senior & Community Center building and enrichment programming. Recent projects included work to be completed related to the elevator, front entrance door, and generator fence (completed). Staff also recapped the Senior Care Fair, Ties & Tiaras event, Volunteer Recognition Program event, and World Migratory Bird Day event.

Upcoming events include the Senior Center Cookout Fundraiser on June 26, Kids Fest on July 12, and National Senior Citizen Day on August 19.

## **7. Adjournment**

Jennifer Clayton moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:41 p.m., seconded by Emily Lessner, and carried by unanimous voice vote.

Next meeting date: June 15, 2026.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Draeger  
Senior Center, Enrichment, and Office Manager

Note: These minutes are uncorrected, and any corrections made thereto will be noted in the proceedings at which these minutes are approved.