

Director's Report – September 2025

“We must hope to give them a sense of what it means to be a loyal friend, a loving parent, a citizen who leaves his home, his neighborhood and town better than he found it.” George H.W. Bush

The close of summer gives us an opportunity to reflect on the strength of our programming as well as the challenges facing our facilities and operations. Two programs in particular stand out this season. The Aquatic Center had one of its strongest years in recent memory, generating nearly \$132,000 in revenue against \$140,000 in operating expenses (excluding debt service). While the Aquatic Center operates at a loss, the attendance and participation trends clearly point to a vibrant and valued community amenity. Our Summer Camp program also exceeded expectations, bringing in over \$90,000 in revenue while holding expenses to \$72,000. Even with additional staff required to handle higher registration numbers and a shift toward more outdoor play, the program delivered strong financial performance alongside meaningful community impact.

These successes stand in contrast to the continued feedback we have received about our facilities and parks. The appearance of our properties is consistently mentioned as a concern, and the condition of the Jackson Street Park walking trail has drawn negative comments from many users. Additionally, the Community Center roof remains in need of significant repair. While youth sports programming is trending positively and changes have been well received overall, some participants have expressed dissatisfaction with stricter policies around late registrations and team changes.

In response to both budget pressures and these facility needs, we have taken deliberate steps to control costs. Mowing frequency has been reduced, the acreage actively maintained has been narrowed, and personnel have been reduced as part of the reduction of property maintenance. We have extended and expanded our significant deferred maintenance strategies, postponing larger capital repairs while focusing on smaller, low-cost improvements such as painting, wildflower seed collection, and disc golf course upgrades supported by community partnerships. Operational expenses have also been carefully examined, with the vehicle lease identified as the next logical area for phased elimination in the coming years. These measures have resulted in current spending tracking 8% below budget for the year. However, it is important to note that deferred maintenance and delayed supply purchases only shift costs forward—they do not erase them.