

Willard Parks Department – Monthly Report, June 2025

Quote of the month: **“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.”**

— *Mahatma Gandhi*

Program Highlights

Soccer

Our spring soccer season concluded successfully, with strong participation and positive feedback from families. Staff and volunteers worked tirelessly to manage scheduling challenges and field prep, creating a positive experience for over 250 youth participants.

Baseball/Softball

We currently have 125 participants registered for baseball and softball. Games have begun, and while weather has caused some delays, the season is off to a great start. Staff have worked hard to ensure fields are maintained and that communication with families remains timely and effective. The level of engagement from families and coaches continues to show strong community investment in youth sports.

Freedom Fest

Planning for Freedom Fest is well underway. Entertainment and vendors are being finalized, and marketing underway. The team is aiming for a fun, family-friendly event that highlights community pride and brings people together. As always, we are working to maximize the impact of the event while remaining within budgetary limits and managing staffing capacity.

Community Survey Results

Recent survey responses reflect strong community support for our programs and facilities. Respondents frequently cited the importance of having access to youth sports, special events, and recreational spaces. Feedback also pointed to concerns about facility upkeep and the long-term sustainability of services, reinforcing the community’s desire to see consistent investment in parks and recreation.

Facility & Maintenance Updates

Aquatic Center

Staff continue to manage significant maintenance issues at the pool. A cascade of mechanical failures—including multiple pump malfunctions and chemical feed system breakdowns—has made balancing the pool’s chemical levels a daily challenge. As a result, chemical usage has been unusually high, and we continue to work with vendors and service technicians to address these concerns as efficiently as possible. Staff are doing their best to maintain safe operations in difficult conditions.

Recreation Center

A leak has developed in the roof of the Recreation Center. Fortunately, the repair is expected to be covered under the roofing company’s existing service warranty. We’ve initiated contact with the contractor, and we anticipate timely remediation without cost to the department.

Organizational Perspective

The department continues to operate with a high level of commitment and creativity, while working hard to meet the goal of a 10% reduction of expenses while facing significant setbacks. Staff remain focused on delivering high-quality programs and maintaining facilities, even in the face of aging infrastructure, growing community needs, and limited resources.

As professionals in this field, we recognize that recreation is not just a luxury—it is a public good. It strengthens communities, supports youth development, and enhances quality of life.

We understand the need for fiscal responsibility, and we remain committed to doing more with less when necessary. However, long-term success will require thoughtful support, realistic expectations, and recognition of the essential role parks and recreation play in the health and vitality of our community.

Conclusion

While challenges persist, our department continues to persevere with professionalism, purpose, and pride. The dedication of our staff, the passion of our volunteers, and the loyalty of our participants are what drive us forward. We look forward to continued collaboration and to ensuring our department remains a valuable asset to the City of Willard.