

Willard Parks & Recreation Board Work Study Session

Pre-Session Discussion Guide

Purpose:

This work study session is designed to help us move forward together—with clarity, shared purpose, and a deep understanding of what success looks like for Parks & Recreation in Willard.

Your reflections on the following topics will help ensure we are making informed, intentional decisions that reflect our community's needs, your vision, and the realities of our resources.

Session Goals

- Define what success looks like for Parks & Recreation in Willard.
- Clarify expectations for service levels, target audiences, and financial accountability.
- Align around cost recovery models and long-term investment strategies.
- Incorporate lessons from the past to shape a stronger future.
- Offer an open space for feedback, concerns, and shared vision.

Guiding Questions

1. What does success look like for Parks & Recreation?

- What outcomes should we aim for?
- Is success measured in participation, financial performance, visibility, equity, or something else?

2. What level of service does our community expect and deserve?

- Are we providing basic recreational access or striving for broad community enrichment?
- Where should we grow, improve, or scale back?

3. Who should we prioritize serving?

- Families, youth, seniors, underserved groups?
- Should different programs target different audiences and cost models?

4. What defines a successful program?

- Financially self-sustaining?
- High participation?
- High-impact but low-revenue?
- What are the key performance indicators we should use?

5. What return should the community expect on tax-funded services?

- Should every dollar be recouped through fees?
- What non-financial returns (community health, engagement, pride) matter most?

6. What cost recovery model should we follow?

- Should essential services be subsidized while specialty programs recover more costs?
- Do you support a tiered model like the Pyramid Model? (see attachment)

7. How should we fund planning and capital improvements?

- **Master Planning:** Should planning be operational, grant-funded, or tied to larger initiatives?
- **Capital Projects:** Should we seek grants, bonds, partnerships, or phased investments?

8. How do we balance doing more vs. doing better?

- Would you prefer to see fewer high-quality programs or more widespread offerings with leaner resources?
- Are you comfortable with pilots and experimentation?

9. How do current goals and budget realities shape our path?

- What existing goals and financial realities should guide today's decisions?
- How do you envision Parks & Recreation evolving in the next:
 - **3 years** (staffing, operations, short-term goals)?
 - **5 years** (growth, facility updates, program expansion)?
 - **10+ years** (long-term infrastructure, legacy investments)?

10. Looking Back to Look Forward: Historical Insight

If you've served on the board for several years, your perspective is invaluable. Please consider:

- What challenges have we already faced that new members should be aware of?
- What long-standing issues remain unresolved?
- What successes or changes are worth building on?

11. Open-Ended Feedback

Please use this space (or bring your thoughts to the session) to share any ideas, concerns, questions, or priorities that don't fit neatly into the categories above. We welcome your voice.

Next Steps

Please review and reflect on these questions before the session. Feel free to write down your thoughts or just come ready to discuss.

We are looking forward to a respectful and collaborative conversation that honors our shared commitment to this community.