



PARKS & RECREATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Monday, May 4, 2026, at 4:30 PM
West Hills Social Commons, 500 Dunnell Dr, Owatonna, MN 55060

1. OPENING BUSINESS

Call to Order at 4:33 p.m. by John Theil

Executive Members Present: Chair, Jon Thiel, Secretary, Sara Baird

Board Members Present: Tyler Cochran, Nancy Ness

Members Absent: Vice-Chair: Gina McGuire, Carter Klecker

Staff Present: Eric Anderson, Maureen Lyons

Guests Present: Leanne T Alt, Deb Arlt, Dan Boeke, Jenni Brittain, Rose Cotter-Lyfud, Aaron Ebeling, Zella Ebeling, Cindy Fowler, Theresa Harsma, Gary W Johnson, Debra Kamholz, Don McCann, Naomi Nagel, Doug Voss, Melissa Zimmerman

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Nancy Ness to approve the agenda. Second by Tyler Cochran. All members voted aye.

3. APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

Motion by Tyler Cochran to approve the Park Board meeting minutes and bring them before the Council. Second by Sara Baird. All members voted aye.

4. PERSONS WISHING TO APPEAR

The public forum is intended to afford the public an opportunity to address topics to the Park Board. The public forum will be no longer than 30 minutes in length, and each presenter will have no more than five (5) minutes to speak. Topics of discussion are restricted to local park and recreation topics. The Park Board will only listen and not take action on public forum presentations.

4.a. Theresa Harsma shared opinions regarding mosquito control for the protection of pollinators.

4.b. Cindy Fowler shared opinions regarding mosquito control against the broad application of chemicals.

4.c. Zella Ebeling shared opinions regarding mosquito control to provide habitat for insects.

4.d. Rose Cotter shared opinions regarding mosquito control to protect human health.

4.e. Debra Kamholz shared opinions regarding mosquito control to protect the food chain in the future.

4.f. Aaron Ebeling shared opinions regarding mosquito control to protect fireflies.

4.g. Melissa Zimmerman shared opinions regarding the use of chemicals that may impact

human health.

5. NEW BUSINESS

5.a. Presentation Leanne Alt of the Bee Friendly Environmental Alliance presented on the potential impact of mosquito spraying

5.b. Park Permit - Horseshoe League

5.c. Park Permit - Disc Golf League

5.d. Park Permit - Mineral Springs Park wedding

Motion by Nancy Ness to approve Park Permits as presented. Second by Tyler Cochran. All members voted aye.

5.e. Election of Officers

Nomination by Tyler Cochran for the Executive Committee to remain in their current roles for another year with Jon Theil as Chair, Gina McGuire as Vice-Chair and Sara Baird as Secretary. Second by Nancy Ness. Having no other nominations, all members voted aye.

Nan Silkunas has chosen not to renew her position, leaving an opening on the Park Board.

6. OLD BUSINESS

6.a. Annual Work Plan

A preliminary annual work plan for the Park Advisory Board was emailed to members. The plan may help with agenda planning and reports throughout the year, building continuity for both new and existing board members. Comments and feedback may be shared with Jon and Eric prior to the June meeting. The plan will be added to the June Agenda as an action item.

7. COMMUNICATION

7.a. Park Maintenance Update

7.b. Recreation Division Update

7.c. Regional Park Designation Update – Three items were completed in April

7.d. Emergency Disaster Reimbursement Update: Reimbursement for replacement of the funbrellas will come from the state after invoices are paid. Reimbursement for parks labor and equipment for clean-up is being processed from the state now. Replacement funbrellas for River Springs Water Park will not arrive in time for the start of the season. In the meantime, existing pieces and parts will be used to create a couple of functional units to provide as much shade as possible. Park Board requested that communication be planned to alert the public to the lack of shade.

7.e. Communication from Park Board Members:

Nancy Ness has questions and would like to better understand the mosquito control process.

Tyler Cochran is interested in the cost and history of mosquito control measures.

Jon Theil requested the product/s used, frequency/timing, and cost of mosquito control.

Sara Baird shared that the parks look beautiful. Regarding Mosquito control, she is curious about who decided on the products used and the timing and coordination of communication to alert citizens.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to Adjourn: Tyler Cochran, Second: Nancy Ness, All Members voted Aye at 5:46 p.m.

