



Park Commission Meeting

August 4, 2025

7:00 PM

Fridley City Hall, 7071 University Avenue NE

Minutes

Call to Order

Chair Borman called the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present

EB Graham
Peter Borman
Melissa Luna
Tim Kirk
Jodi Rehlander
Ken Schultz
Don Whalen

Also Present

Mike Maher, Parks and Recreation Director

Approve Parks & Recreation Commission Agenda for August 4, 2025

Motion by Commissioner Schultz to approve the August 4, 2025, meeting agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Whalen. The motion passed unanimously.

Approve Parks & Recreation Commission Minutes for June 2, 2025

Motion by Commissioner Kirk to approve the June 2, 2025, meeting minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Graham. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

1. Discussion on Ordinance Update Allowing for Youth Member and Non-Voting Youth Sports Representative Member of Parks and Recreation Commission

Mike Maher, Parks and Recreation Director, stated that the City Council recently updated the ordinance governing advisory commissions to include language that allows for the appointment of a youth member to each of the advisory commissions. Language was also added to allow one non-voting member of the Parks and Recreation Commission, nominated by a Fridley youth

sports organization and confirmed by the Council. It was confirmed that these two members would be in addition to the seven members of the Commission, for a total of nine.

Chair Borman commented that it seems the youth sports organization would be tasked with nominating a member to serve, noting that the organization would then be tasked to reappoint if the member left their organization.

Commissioner Schultz asked about the intention of adding this type of member. Mr. Maher commented that through the Commons Park planning process, they learned that it is important to have the needs of youth sports communicated, and this would allow the flow of communication to move both ways. Commissioner Schultz asked if the member would then be tasked to communicate with other sports in the organization. Mr. Maher noted that soccer, baseball, and football are the largest park users, and therefore, he would want to ensure that the member is informed on those sports topics.

Commissioner Graham asked if the City has spoken with FYSA and whether the organization has this interest. Mr. Maher was unsure.

Mr. Maher recognized that FYSA is the larger sports organization, but other organizations could also be considered. The Commission agreed that they should begin with FYSA, but other organizations could be considered if the organization uses City parks and has Fridley youth involved.

Chair Borman commented that he does see the benefit of adding a youth member as well.

Mr. Maher commented that City staff is working to advertise the opportunities, and there will then be an open application period this fall with the expectation to appoint members around November.

Motion by Commissioner Rehlander to have the ex officio position application process open to all Fridley youth sports organizations. Seconded by Commissioner Luna. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Flanery Park Community Engagement Summary

Mr. Maher commented that Flanery Park is on the schedule for improvements in 2026; therefore, staff have begun the process for community engagement. He reviewed the Park System Improvement Plan (PSIP) recommendations for the park, as well as the input received through community engagement.

Roger McGowan, 7450 Lakeside Road, agreed that the rinks are underutilized but believes that is because there are no warming houses. He noted that the two times he used the rink last year, he was the only skater, and he does not often see others using the rinks, but would like them to remain. He agreed that there is a need for a parking lot and supported the reorientation of the

tennis courts. He stated that he does not see people play tennis, but the courts are used for pickleball, and he would like to see at least two designated pickleball courts. He provided input on the basketball courts, noting that a full court would be nice and a situation that prevents the ball from rolling away. He stated that if there are going to be trails, it would be better to have them paved. He believed that the trees should be thinned out. He commented that residents have not been allowed inside the park building, so he could not comment on the condition of the building. He identified a shaded area that could benefit from added picnic tables. He asked if the restrooms and shelter could be made available to the general public and not just those renting the space.

Mr. Maher explained that they do not open the building and restrooms to the general public because of the risk for vandalism and other issues; therefore, they are only open for rentals. He stated that restrooms are typically opened in community parks where there are more users to deter that type of activity. He stated that the warming house was closed due to lack of use, noting that there would be a pleasure rink at Commons Park with a staffed warming house.

Commissioner Graham asked if there would be an issue with noise if the courts were converted to pickleball. Mr. McGowan commented that he would not have an issue with the noise.

Commissioner Whalen commented that Edgewater Gardens Park has been updated to convert the tennis court into two pickleball courts along with a full-sized basketball court, if the resident wanted to see an example of those items. Mr. Maher commented that Commons Park will also have six pickleball courts.

Mr. Maher commented that some items in this planning process are not yet clear, but those decisions do not need to be made tonight. He stated that they could proceed with the playground planning and work out the details on the other elements at the staff level to bring back additional information.

Commissioner Kirk suggested that additional information should be added in future discussions related to the water treatment element.

Commissioner Schultz recognized the comment of the resident that the rink is not used and therefore supports the removal of the rink. He asked if the parking would be large enough to support the demand. He stated that it would also be helpful to have information on the rental data of the space to determine if funds should be allocated for that use. Mr. Maher estimated about 12 rentals per year, but recognized that this has fluctuated based on construction and other updated rentals available at other parks.

Mr. Maher explained that the PSIP included budgets for items, such as playgrounds, but the cost for those items increases over the years. He stated that this will now be year five of the plan, and they have to be more creative in how they update the parks to include features that will be used rather than everything that was originally in the plan to stay within the budgeted amounts.

Commissioner Schultz recognized that there are two side-by-side tennis courts at this time and asked if one court could be converted to pickleball. Mr. Maher commented that there are alignment issues, but they could look at creative options. Chair Borman believed that it makes the most sense to realign the court and fix the drainage issues.

Motion by Commissioner Graham to select playground concept 1 for Flanery Park. Seconded by Commissioner Whalen. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Summit Square Park Community Engagement Summary

Mr. Maher provided an overview of the recommended improvements within the PSIP as well as the community engagement responses received.

Motion by Commissioner Graham to select playground option two for Summit Square Park. Seconded by Commissioner Rehlander. The motion passed unanimously.

4. 2026 Proposed Meeting Dates

Mr. Maher presented the proposed 2026 meeting dates.

Motion by Commissioner Schultz to approve the 2026 meeting dates as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Graham. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

None

Staff Reports

5. Fridley Parks and Recreation Staff Report

Mr. Maher provided an update on the events, activities, and programming that have occurred thus far for the summer months, as well as upcoming events, activities, and programming opportunities. He also provided updates on the progress of park improvement projects.

Unfinished Business

None

Adjournment

Commissioner Luna made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:46 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Kirk. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Maher, Staff Liaison