

MINUTES
[Approved December 4, 2025]
LIBERTY PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD
November 6, 2025
Liberty Community Center

CALL TO ORDER

The regular business meeting of the Liberty Parks and Recreation Board was called to order by Board President Ryal Brier at 6:05 p.m.

Board members in attendance were: Ryal Brier, Anissa Christine, James Gifford, Christopher Hand, Rachel Hollinberger, Jackie Kennedy, Deb Loomis, John Riedel, and Vern Windsor. Staff members in attendance were BJ Staab, Parks and Recreation Director; Tom Garland, Assistant Director; Jimmy Gibbs, Assistant Director; and Erika Brant, Community Engagement Manager.

OPEN FORUM – There was no one present to address the Board.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Jackie Kennedy asked for minor revisions to the October 2, 2025 minutes. Vern Windsor made the motion, seconded by Anissa Christine, to approve the October 2, 2025 minutes as amended by Jackie Kennedy. Motion passed unanimously. Christopher Hand and Deb Loomis abstained due to absence at the October meeting.

VOTE:

Ryal Brier	AYE
Anissa Christine	AYE
James Gifford	AYE
Christopher Hand	ABSTAIN
Rachel Hollinberger	AYE
Jackie Kennedy	AYE
Deb Loomis	ABSTAIN
John Riedel	AYE
Vern Windsor	AYE

OLD BUSINESS

- **Historical Markers**
The Historical Marker Task Force has decided to take a breather for a few months. Since the plan is to install all storyboards in 2026, they will have a shorter turn around time than the bronze markers. The task force plans to reconvene around March 2026.
- **Walnut Woods & Rush Creek Naming**
BJ Staab shared that Staff planned to call Walnut Woods and Rush Creek City Conservation Areas rather than Parks. This decision was made based on the land use agreements for both properties with the Missouri Department of Conservation. On maps, online, and in all communications they will be referred to as Walnut Woods Conservation Area and Rush Creek Conservation Area.

- **Will Smith Basketball Court Opening**

BJ Staab shared that the court opening was a great event with an amazing turn out. He shared that photos were shared on the Liberty Parks & Rec Facebook page. Deb Loomis agreed that it was a great event. Ryal Brier thanked everyone who was able to attend. Deb Loomis asked if the logo had been installed. BJ Staab shared that it was still in production. It has been approved and he promised to let the Board know when it was installed.

- **CivicPlus Recreation Software Update**

Jimmy Gibbs shared that he and other City Staff had met with CivicPlus just yesterday and were working toward launching the updated software. He shared that there was representation from multiple Parks Departments as well as Finance and IT. He shared the group would be meeting every week to two weeks and still hoped to launch in February 2026. BJ Staab reminded the Board that a lot of communication would be shared with the public and especially members as Staff moved forward with the process.

NEW BUSINESS

Clay County Senior Services Grant Funding - Memberships

Beginning in 2008, the Parks and Recreation Department began receiving \$8,000 in grant funding for Liberty Community Center physical activity classes. The City continued to apply for and receive \$8,000 grants annually through 2013. Amounts provided in subsequent years were increased:

- In 2014, the grant funding was raised to \$31,600 and facility memberships were added to encourage more physical activity in senior adults.
- In 2015, the allocation to the Liberty Community Center was increased to \$36,000.
- In 2016, the allocation was increased to \$48,000.
- 2017, \$96,000 was requested with \$60,000.00 approved. At that time, information from the Clay County Senior Services board indicated funding in the future was anticipated to remain at \$60,000.
- 2018, \$60,000 requested; \$60,000 granted.
- 2019, \$60,000 requested; \$54,000 granted.
- 2020, \$60,000 requested; \$48,600 granted.
- 2021, \$60,000 requested; \$57,600 granted.
- 2022, \$60,000 requested; \$60,000 granted.
- 2023, \$60,000 requested; \$60,000 granted.
- 2024, \$60,000 requested; \$60,000 granted.
- 2025, \$60,000 requested; \$60,000 granted.
- 2026, \$60,000 requested; \$60,000 granted.

For 2026, staff proposes a 10% increase in membership fees and day passes at the LCC to help balance the budget and offset rising operational costs.

The proposed 2026 senior rates are as follows:

Annual Membership (paid in full): \$385

Monthly Membership (bank draft): \$35.75 per month

With the CCSS grant applied, the senior rates would be:

Annual Membership (paid in full): \$265 per year

Monthly Membership (bank draft): \$25.75 per month

All group exercise classes will continue to be included with memberships. This change is pending approval of the 2026 operations budget.

Deb Loomis asked if this was a reimbursement program. Jimmy Gibbs confirmed that it is a reimbursement program and is based on how many seniors take advantage of the program. Rachel Hollinberger asked for clarification on how senior memberships worked and asked what the requirements were to receive a scholarship. BJ Staab shared that the program was age based only. The grant provides \$120 towards the purchase of a \$350 annual senior membership. Membership funds are available for both new and renewals. However, to be eligible for renewal members must make at least 72 visits the previous year. He also shared that typically seniors can get free memberships using this funding as well as additional layered options from their health insurance or through the Liberty Parks & Rec Foundation scholarships.

John Riedel made the motion, seconded by Rachel Hollinberger to recommend acceptance of the MOU with Clay County Senior Services to City Council. Motion passed unanimously.

VOTE:

Ryal Brier	AYE
Anissa Christine	AYE
James Gifford	AYE
Christopher Hand	AYE
Rachel Hollinberger	AYE
Jackie Kennedy	AYE
Deb Loomis	AYE
John Riedel	AYE
Vern Windsor	AYE

FY2026 Parks & Rec Budget Presentation

BJ Staab shared proposed budget for Parks & Rec for 2026. Highlights include:

Overall 2026 Budget Impacts:

- Minimum Wage increases to \$15/hour in January 2026
- Salary & Benefits changes for full time employees
- Increasing costs of supplies
- Community wants and needs (Based on feedback from Resonus Engagement & Parks Master Plan)
- Challenges with balancing the budget

2026 Parks & Rec Increased Expenses:

Minimum Wage has increased from \$13.75 in 2025 to \$15 in 2026. That will increase the 2026 budget over 2025 in the following ways:

- Total Parks & Rec Increase Due to Minimum Wage Change: \$82,536
 - Community Center: \$31,552 increase
 - Sports Complex: \$50,984 increase

Overall, Parks & Rec is seeing increased costs for many items. A snapshot of those includes:

	2025 Expense	2026 Budget	2026 vs. 2025
Janitorial/Cleaning Supplies	\$73,000	\$79,200	\$6,200
Utilities – Electricity	\$217,500	\$235,000	\$17,500
Fuel	\$38,000	\$44,000	\$6,000
Ballfield Light Repairs	\$22,000	\$25,000	Power Surges
Fertilizer/Chemicals CFSC	\$8,000	\$9,600	Avg 20% Increase

Additionally, fitness equipment is averaging a 12-15% increase every year and sports equipment is averaging a 5-8% increase every year. So, with the same budget year over year staff must purchase less equipment.

2026 Budget Impacts to Balance the Budget – Sports Complex/Sports Programs:

- Increase price of concession items.
- Increase KC Sports per team fee by \$12/team.
- Increase program fees.
 - Increase Rec Sports = Softball, Baseball, Flag Football, Volleyball, Soccer, and Basketball \$120 = increase to \$130
 - Increase Comp Sports = Flag Football \$120 to \$140, Basketball \$700 to \$850, BB & SB reduce # of Games
 - Increase all Adult Sport Leagues Team fees = varies \$25 to \$100 per team.
- Reduce amount spent on Rec Supplies (t-shirts, equipment, medals, uniforms) from \$135,000 to \$120,000.

2026 Budget Impacts to Balance the Budget – Community Center:

- Increase membership rates by 10% with an estimated \$70,000 in increased revenue.
- Decrease building maintenance line item and push back replacement of locker room shower partitions and LPAT theater floor repairs.
- Decrease minor equipment line item which includes fitness equipment, pool starting blocks & slide.

2026 Proposed Park Projects & Equipment

- Capital Projects & Equipment Utilizing Parks Sales Tax
 - Liberty Performing Arts Theater HVAC
 - Little Shoal Creek Trail Grant Match
 - Liberty Community Center Small Outdoor Pool Plastering
 - Lease for Enterprise Trucks
- Operations Projects Utilizing \$350,000 General Fund Transfer
 - Stocksdale Trail Maps/Kiosks
 - City Park Playground Shade over the Family (metal) slide
 - Westboro/Canterbury Trail Overlay (partial)
 - Northwyck Trail Overlay (hopefully the entire trail)
 - Bennett Park Skate Park Design w/ Community Engagement
 - Bennett Park Updated Master Plan w/ Community Engagement
 - Stocksdale upgrade Parking Lot at the Dog Park

- Northwyck new playground surface (Grant funded)
- Northwyck new playground (the rope climbing ball will stay)
- Other items if funding is available:
 - Pickleball Restroom
 - Additional Trail overlay
 - Homestead to Westboro Trail Connection construction

BJ Staab reminded the Board that projects would be evaluated mid-year in 2026 once bids have been obtained and approved. Currently the costs of the proposed projects are just estimates and the exact cost could fluctuate.

BJ Staab shared that he presented this to the City’s Budget Committee on October 30. BJ Staab will share this presentation at a City Council Study Session in November, and City Council will consider the full budget at meetings in December. He promised to let the Board know the exact dates so those who were available could attend the meetings.

Deb Loomis made the motion, seconded by Vern Windsor to recommend the FY2026 Parks & Rec Budget as presented to City Council. Motion passed unanimously.

VOTE:

Ryal Brier	AYE
Anissa Christine	AYE
James Gifford	AYE
Christopher Hand	AYE
Rachel Hollinberger	AYE
Jackie Kennedy	AYE
Deb Loomis	AYE
John Riedel	AYE
Vern Windsor	AYE

Bennett Park Master Plan

Ryal Brier asked the Board to consider amending the agenda to consider a proposal from Vireo to create a Bennett Park Master Plan.

Vern Windsor made a motion, seconded by James Gifford to amend agenda to include this new action item. Motion passed unanimously.

VOTE:

Ryal Brier	AYE
Anissa Christine	AYE
James Gifford	AYE
Christopher Hand	AYE
Rachel Hollinberger	AYE
Jackie Kennedy	AYE
Deb Loomis	AYE
John Riedel	AYE
Vern Windsor	AYE

BJ Staab shared that he and Tom Garland have been working with Vireo, a local landscape architecture, planning, and design firm, on creating a Bennett Park Master Plan. BJ Staab reminded the Board that Vireo had created a plan for Bennett Park in 2017, and this would be an updated plan that considered feedback from the Resonus engagement conducted in 2025 and information from the Imagine Liberty 2032 Parks Master Plan created in 2023. He shared that Vireo would create options of what the Park could look like and would give the Board and Staff a road map as updates are made to the Park.

Jackie Kennedy made the motion, seconded by James Gifford, to recommend acceptance of the proposal to City Council. Motion passed unanimously.

VOTE:

Ryal Brier	AYE
Anissa Christine	AYE
James Gifford	AYE
Christopher Hand	AYE
Rachel Hollinberger	AYE
Jackie Kennedy	AYE
Deb Loomis	AYE
John Riedel	AYE
Vern Windsor	AYE

CORRESPONDENCE

BJ Staab shared correspondence from Councilwoman Kelley Wrenn Pozel complementing the Stocksdale Dog Park and sharing a recent positive encounter she had while visiting the park. He also shared correspondence from James Smith, President of Hoops 4 Hope, Inc., expressing gratitude for the work done on the Will Smith Basketball Court in Ruth Moore Park and for helping plan and support the groundbreaking ceremony hosted on October 27.

FINANCE – BJ Staab shared financial reports through September 2025.

REPORTS –

- Administration Division Report – No additional questions outside of the printed report.
- Parks Division Report – No additional questions outside of the printed report.
- Recreation Report – No additional questions outside of the printed report.
- Liberty Foundation Report – No additional questions outside of the printed report.

MISCELLANEOUS – No additional business was presented.

ADJOURNMENT – Meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Liberty Parks and Recreation Board is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, December 4, 2025, 6:00 p.m. at the Liberty Community Center.