

MINUTES
[Approved March 5, 2026]
LIBERTY PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD
February 5, 2026
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 6:00 p.m.

Board members in attendance were: Ryal Brier, Anissa Christine, James Gifford, Christopher Hand, Jackie Kennedy, 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. Board members Rachel Hollinberger and Deb Loomis were absent.

OPEN FORUM – Carly Carlton, the new Liberty Parks & Rec Health & Wellness Manager, was present to introduce herself to the Board.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Anissa Christine made the motion, seconded by James Gifford, to approve the January 8, 2026 minutes as presented. Motion passed unanimously. Vern Windsor abstained due to absence at the January meeting.

VOTE:

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

OLD BUSINESS

Historic Markers

Jackie Kennedy reminded the Board the Task Force was planning to take a break until the Spring, however the group is also in charge of the posters in the kiosks in Downtown Liberty. Therefore, the Task Force is planning to meet in mid-February 2026 to work on the kiosk posters and the plan for the 2026 historic markers. Jackie Kennedy also shared that the markers for City Park had already been written and submitted to Erika Brant. She also shared that the marker for Wilshire Park was nearing completion, and that the Northwyck Park and Arthur’s Park would be completed later in the year. Jackie Kennedy also shared that she was still working on contacting Mary Jane Duffy, but hadn’t had luck getting in contact with her. BJ Staab shared that the tobacco barn had not yet been moved.

Erika Brant shared that in 2026 Visit Liberty would be featuring one historical marker per month in posts on social media. She also shared that for featured markers in parks, the Liberty Parks & Rec Facebook

page would share the Visit Liberty post. She also shared with the Board that a map of all of the historical markers in Liberty had been created and would be shared as part of this campaign.

Community Center Membership Update

BJ Staab shared membership numbers since the move to resident vs. non-resident pricing. He shared that since the price change, 130 memberships were cancelled, but 115 new memberships had been added. Additionally, when counting individual members, the Liberty Community Center had 24 more people who are members than pre-rate change.

BJ Staab also shared that pre-COVID, the Liberty Community Center had approximately 5,100 members. That fell to 3,906 in 2020. It took the Liberty Community Center 3 years to recover from COVID and in 2026 memberships total approximately 5,700. BJ Staab promised staff would continue to track membership numbers, but that so far everyone felt good about the rate change. He also shared that overall memberships are increasing and the facility is full on a daily basis.

Music Park in Canterbury Park

BJ Staab reminded the Board that Rob Weagley had attended the December Park Board meeting to present his idea for a music park in Canterbury Park. BJ Staab shared that he had introduced Rob Weagley to the Liberty Arts Foundation Board, and they decided to work together to fundraise and build this new amenity. BJ Staab also shared a proposed rendering of the new music park amenity. He shared that it would include 8 instruments, and they estimated the instruments and benches would cost approximately \$70,000.

BJ Staab reminded the Board that this music park was intended to honor all of the fine arts instructors in the LPS school district. Jackie Kennedy asked for clarification on what instruments were included in the proposed plan. BJ Staab shared they were mostly percussion instruments and includes chimes, drums, xylophones. He shared that most included mallets that were attached to the instruments.

BJ Staab shared that the Liberty Arts Foundation and Rob Weagley have started fundraising, but they did not yet have exact timeline. BJ Staab shared that fundraising included the option to adopt an instrument, so plaques may be placed on specific instruments, but that those details would be worked out as fundraising progresses. He promised to share updates with the Board throughout the year.

NEW BUSINESS

Bennett Park Master Plan Presentation

Steve Rhoades and Larry Reynolds from Vireo were present to share three initial concepts for Bennett Park with the Board based on the feedback received during the public engagement conducted in 2025.

After viewing the plans, Jackie Kennedy shared that Concept B was her least favorite because it removed the baseball field completely. She also asked about the possibility of a hill slide. ??? shared that all three concepts would allow for a hill slide, but these concepts did not allow for that level of detail. He shared that these were meant to help determine placement of amenity groupings rather than select specific equipment. Overall Jackie Kennedy shared that she preferred Concept C.

James Gifford shared that he preferred the concepts where the Bennett Park Dr. was closed because he felt eliminating cars from the center of the park would create a safer environment. He also shared that he felt that is what the neighborhood would prefer since it was one of the items discussed extensively at the neighborhood meeting in 2025. BJ Staab agreed the neighbors did express frustration with only being

able to access portions of the park by walking on the road, but he shared that he wasn't sure how they would feel about the complete removal of the road.

BJ Staab reminded the Board that building out the final Bennett Park plan would need to be a phased approach due to budget constraints. He shared that he was hoping to identify the location for the playground vs. the skate park soon so that American Ramp Company could move forward on a skate park design. He also shared he hoped to narrow the ideas down to two concepts so they could be presented again to the public for another round of public comment. Steve Rhoades shared the ideas from all three concepts could be combined and that the two concepts presented to the public should feature one with Bennett Park Dr. open and one with it closed.

Steve Rhoades and Larry Reynolds shared they would compile the feedback they received from the Board and will create two concepts that can be shared with the public.

Agreement with MoDOT for CO2 Reduction Grant

In 2017 Vireo provided a preliminary trail route to connect Campbell Road where the Homestead Trail terminates west to Liberty Drive. With the primary design completed staff worked with the developers of Homestead subdivision to extend the trail further west to connect Buckingham drive with a pedestrian bridge over Little Shoal Creek to Campbell Road. The developer agreed to build the trail in 2023 as part of Homestead Hills second phase if the City would cover the cost for the bridge over Little Shoal Creek. In the spring of 2024 the bridge was installed and the trail pavement completed. This completed Segment C of Little Shoal Creek from the 2017 Liberty Trail Alignment Report.

In 2024, the City applied for funding through MARC's Connected KC 2050 call for projects, that application was successful and the City was awarded \$950,000 to complete segments A & B of Little Shoal Creek Trail. This connection will provide alternative routes for bicyclists and pedestrians to connect to schools and shopping west of the Flintlock flyover I-35. This section of trail is planned to cross the creek twice and will need to connect to Liberty Drive/N. Flintlock near the Flintlock Roundabout.

City Council approved a contract BHC Civil Engineering for the Little Shoal Creek Trail design from Old Campbell Road to Liberty Drive/N. Flintlock in August 2025. That work to complete a final trail design and floodplain permit is in process and is expected to be completed in 2026.

The grant funds for this trail will be available as reimbursement for construction costs and require coordination and an agreement with the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT). The awarded grant provides up to \$950,000 with a total estimated total cost of approximately \$1.3 million to complete the trail. Additional funds to complete the trail will come from the Parks Sales Tax.

MoDOT requires an ordinance from the Local Public Agency (LPA) authorizing the City to enter into a funding agreement. The Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission CRP Agreement is attached for review and signature.

Staff recommends approval of an ordinance authorizing the Mayor of the City of Liberty, Missouri to execute a CRP Funding Agreement between the City of Liberty, Missouri and the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission to provide funding assistance for the construction of a 1.3-mile trail segment connecting Liberty Drive/N. Flintlock Rd. to Campbell Dr. that will complete Little Shoal Creek Trail. Project CRP – 3392(410).

Christopher Hand made the motion, seconded by Vern Windsor to recommend staff recommendation to City Council. Motion passed unanimously.

VOTE:

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

Resolution Authorizing Recreation Trails Grant

The Wilshire Park trail, which provides a walking connection for students of Alexander Doniphan Elementary School, includes a bridge crossing a creek. Over time, the creek has eroded the east bank and the bridge abutment. Although structural engineers have deemed the bridge safe for current use, they have recommended repairs be made as soon as possible.

In 2025, Parks Board approved a contract to engage BHC Civil Engineers to review the abutment of the Wilshire Park Trail Bridge and suggest repairs. That work is underway and is expected to be completed in early 2026. Staff expects the bridge replacement will cost around \$160,000.

To help fund the bridge replacement, Staff recommends applying for federal funding from the Recreational Trails Program (RTP). This grant will match up to 50% of the total cost of the project and is a reimbursement grant.

Grant applications for the RTP are due on February 20, 2026. And if successful, funding would be made available in 2027.

Jackie Kennedy made the motion, seconded by James Gifford to recommend staff recommendation to City Council. Motion passed unanimously.

VOTE:

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

Easement Acceptance in Homestead Subdivision

In 2017 Vireo design consultants provided a preliminary trail route to connect Canterbury Park to the Homestead trail. City staff have been working to finalize the trail location and permitting in order to start

construction of the trail. Staff reached out to the Developer for Homestead first phase to seek permission to cross vacant lots in the subdivision. This would create access to City property and allow staff to start brush removal for the trail.

Staff asked the developer if they would consider a permanent trail access easement between two existing lots to allow the neighborhood better access to the planned trail. The developer reviewed the location and agreed to donate a pedestrian access easement. The cost will be one dollar for the easement and then fees to record the document with Clay County.

Parks staff is recommending the City accept the easement and record it for permanent pedestrian access easement.

Tom Garland shared a map with the Board to show the location of the easement.

Jackie Kennedy made the motion, seconded by Christopher Hand to recommend staff recommendation to City Council. Motion passed unanimously.

VOTE:

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

Bennett Park Skatepark Improvements

The Liberty Parks and Recreation Board desires for the park system to be a key player in the creation of a destination community that both retains current and attracts new residents, businesses, and visitors to Liberty. As part of that, the Board has interest in building a destination skate and bike park.

In May 2025, staff began discussing skate and bike parks with American Ramp. American Ramp is one of the best Action Sports Park design and construction teams in the Country. For over 20 years American Ramp has worked with civic leaders, park planners and advocates to develop skate and bike park facilities in their communities.

American Ramp Company is part of Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing program. American Ramp has been awarded a cooperative purchasing contract in the category of; skateparks, bike parks, design, consultation, and construction.

Staff has negotiated a final scope of services and contract with American Ramp for Park Board consideration. The contract has been written with a not-to-exceed amount of \$19,800.

BJ Staab shared that American Ramp will need a location for the skate park in Bennett Park before they can begin work. Therefore, this contract can be approved, however design work would wait until after the final round of public input was completed for the Bennett Park Master Plan.

Vern Windsor made the motion, seconded by Anissa Christine to recommend entering into an agreement with American Ramp Company for the design of a skate park at Bennett Park. Motion passed unanimously.

VOTE:

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

Adult Sports Apparel

The Parks and Recreation Department facilitates a wide variety of youth and adult sports leagues and camps throughout the year which require the purchase of uniforms, jerseys, caps, socks, champion apparel, and the like.

An RFP was advertised soliciting vendors to provide full-service apparel management for each of the programs.

Two proposals were received: TW Custom Branding and TEAMBILT. An RFP was also sent to Custom Graphics and Challenger Teamwear with no response. A “basket of goods” analysis was used to compare unit pricing proposed. Staff used FY 2025 participation numbers of apparel units managed to project FY 2026 and 2027 annual costs per item bid.

- Award #1 – TW Sportswear – Adult Sports Apparel - \$2,912.80
 - A contract has been written for the amount budgeted.

Jimmy Gibbs reminded the Board that they approved all of the other 2026 sports apparel at a previous meeting, however the selected company for adult sports apparel had to be rebid. Two companies responded to the new bid and staff recommended entering into a contract with TW Sportswear.

James Gifford made the motion, seconded by Vern Windsor to recommend staff recommendation to City Council. Motion passed unanimously.

VOTE:

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

CORRESPONDENCE

N/A for February.

FINANCE – BJ Staab shared financial reports through December 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 – BJ Staab shared that the National Interscholastic Cycling Association would be hosting a mountain biking tournament at Stocksdale Park from October 11-12, 2026. He shared that they would be renting the trails, and that all of Stocksdale Park would be closed for those two dates in October. He promised to share more information later in the year.

ADJOURNMENT – Meeting adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Liberty Parks and Recreation Board is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, March 5, 2026, 6:00 p.m. at the Liberty Community Center.