

MINUTES

On July 9th, 2025 the Parks and Recreation Board met at 01:30 p.m. at the Parks and Recreation Board Room located at 509 S. Johnson Street Amarillo, TX, 79107 for a Regular Meeting.

VOTING MEMBERS	PRESENT	NO. MEETINGS HELD SINCE APPOINTMENT	NO. OF MEETINGS ATTENDED
Mr. Howard Smith	YES	17	16
Mr. Ronnie Walker	YES	17	15
Mr. Robert Altman	YES	63	58
Ms. Tiffany Podzemny	YES	53	50
Mr. Rodney Hill	NO	17	15
Mr. Thomas Riney	YES	17	16
Mr. Ronny Head	YES	17	17
Mr. Shelby Massey	YES	34	32
Mrs. Skylar Gallop	NO	23	15
Mr. Alan Cox	YES	6	5
Mr. Jeremy Pekar	YES	4	3

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

MICHAEL KASHUBA	DIRECTOR OF PARKS AND RECREATION
JAMES STOW	ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PARKS AND RECREATION
BECKI DRYER	ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PARKS AND RECREATION
GEORGE PRIOLO	GENERAL MANAGER OF GOLF OPERATIONS
BERKELEY HILLIARD	ZOO CURATOR
CINDY PEREZ	BEAUTIFICATION/ARTS
ALICE FINCHER	ATHLETIC SUPERVISOR
AUSTIN FARLEY	AQUATICS SUPERVISOR
ASHLEY GUERRERO	RECORDING SECRETARY
MEGAN SMITH	OFFICE MANAGER

ITEM 1 Call to Order

Chairman, Ms. Tiffany Podzemny, established a quorum and called the regular scheduled meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to order at 1:32p.m.

ITEM 2 Public Comments

No comments were made.

ITEM 3 Discuss and Consider Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Alan Cox, said motion seconded by Mr. Thomas Riney, voting aye were 9 members, voting no were none, carried to approve meeting minutes from June 11th, 2025.

ITEM 4A The Parks and Recreation Board will Discuss or Receive Reports on the Following Current Matters or Projects:

1. Administration: Mr. Michael Kashuba informed the Board that the Independence Day Plus One Community Celebration was held successfully this year, drawing increased attendance with an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 people compared to last year's 10,000 to 15,000 attendees. To improve traffic management, shuttle services and road closures were implemented during the celebration. The event received positive feedback from the community. A city council presentation is scheduled for July 22nd to recap the celebration and discuss future event timing. Additionally, the upcoming Pirates in the Park event is expected to be a significant gathering. Furthermore, the city council has approved equipment purchases aimed at enhancing golf course maintenance and athletic field maintenance.
2. Amarillo Zoo: Ms. Berkeley Hillard informed the board that the African lion Solomon passed away at the age of 20 due to ankylosing spondylitis, an age-related condition. Due to safety and economic considerations, there are no plans to introduce a replacement lion at this time. Nonetheless, summer programming continues as scheduled, offering a variety of family activities for the community to enjoy.

3. **Beautification and Public Arts:** Mrs. Cindy Perez shared that the latest two murals have been completed and are now on display. The first mural, located at Paso at 5101 10th Avenue, was created by artist Raela Ornelas. The second mural is at Cactus Cove Inn and Suites, located at 2501 East I-40. This piece is unique, as half of it is welded art depicting a steer with horns. Additionally, the flowers in the mural have stems embedded with names of individuals significant to the organization or in memory of them, making it a very special tribute. Short interviews with the artists and business owners are being conducted and will be shared on social media to provide insight into the inspiration behind the artwork.
4. **Athletics:** Mr. James Stow provided a brief update on athletics. The adult softball season resumed this week with 77 teams, and volleyball begins next week with 131 teams. The “Hot as a Firecracker” all-night softball tournament will take place this weekend at John Stiff Park, with 29 teams participating. Mr. Michael Kashuba also addressed field maintenance efforts. While artificial turf remains a long-term option, the high cost is a concern. As an interim solution, infield groomers will be tested on several fields to help address low spots that often lead to rainouts. The goal is to improve playability and reduce cancellations caused by infield conditions.
5. **Aquatics:** Ms. Becki Dryer provided an update on the summer season, highlighting strong performance with total revenue from our pools reaching \$186,000. Thompson contributed \$122,000, Southeast \$39,000, and Southwest \$25,000. Nachos have emerged as the top concession item, generating \$10,000 in sales. In June, 68 children participated in swim lessons, and 141 pool parties have been booked to date. Additionally, last month’s dive-in movie event, featuring *Lilo and Stitch*, drew an attendance of 115 guests who enjoyed watching the film while floating in the pool. Southeast and Southwest facilities will close on August 10, while Thompson will remain open on weekends through Labor Day.
6. **Capital Projects:** Mr. James Stow reported continued progress across several parks and recreation projects. All padel courts have been installed at the tennis center, featuring turf surfaces with sand, with only minor electrical work remaining for lighting installation. At Thompson Park, construction of the inclusive playground is underway; however, full completion is anticipated in September due to the delayed arrival of the signature playground feature, expected in mid-August. The resurfacing of John Ward Park has been completed and the site is now open for use. Parking lot construction has commenced at both John Stiff South and Rick Klein South. Additionally, the Pleasant Valley playground, which required replacement due to vandalism, has been fully restored and reopened to the public.
7. **Golf Operations** Mr. George Priolo reported that for the month of June, a total of 1,342 rounds were played across both courses, with Comanche accounting for 898 rounds and Ross 444 rounds. Revenue for June increased by \$80,609, with Comanche contributing \$64,000 and Ross \$16,000. Year-to-date, revenue is up by \$310,000, with Comanche generating \$199,000 and Ross \$110,000. Combined revenues for June totaled \$676,000, consisting of \$295,000 from Comanche and \$381,000 from Ross. Year-to-date combined revenue has reached \$3.358 million, with Comanche contributing approximately \$1.299 million and Ross just over \$2 million. Furthermore, the venues have hosted 31 combined charity events, including four major tournaments, raising approximately \$627,000.
8. **Park Maintenance:** Mr. James Stow acknowledged the outstanding work of Brad Nalley (Superintendent) and Mike Asbill (Assistant Superintendent), noting that their efforts are being recognized and appreciated. He also highlighted the benefits of the MGO work order system, which has improved accountability among contractors. While there have been some initial challenges during implementation, the park maintenance team has adapted well to the new software and continues to make steady progress in utilizing its features effectively.
9. **Recreation and Special Events:** Ms. Becki Dryer highlighted the continued success of day camp programming this summer, with approximately 75 campers participating each week at Warford. Weekly themes have included “Around the World,” “Animal Week,” and “Mad Science,” supported by a range of enrichment activities such as karate and yoga instruction, along with guest appearances by a magician and a face painter this week. Campers also take part in weekly field trips, while older participants engage in service projects. In June, the department hosted several free sports camps, including baseball with 21 participants, football with 26, and a “Hooked on Fishing” event that welcomed 50 attendees. She also noted that the Starlight Theater series continues to draw strong community interest, with 504 attendees at the June 17

performance by Groove Anthem and 634 attendees at the June 24 concert featuring Old Dog Trey.

10. Senior Services: The free lunch program officially launched in June, offering meals at no cost to individuals aged 50 and older. The program is a partnership with the High Plains Food Bank, which provides daily meal deliveries. During the first four days of operation, 64 individuals were served. The program has been well-received, and participants have expressed appreciation for the meals provided.
11. Tennis Operations: Mr. James Stow mentioned the paid summer camps are averaging between 8 to 10 participants per day. The program includes both full-day and half-day options, with the majority enrolled in half-day sessions and one participant currently enrolled in the full-day camp.
12. Warford Activity Center: Ms. Becki Dryer noted that the Warford Activity Center is experiencing strong community engagement this season. The completion of a new mural at the pool, designed by artist Naira Torres, has enhanced the visual appeal of the facility. Additionally, the renewal of the volleyball club's contract represents a positive step toward long-term program stability and continued facility utilization.

ITEM 5 Present, Discuss, and Consider Project Ideas for Paramount Park

The Board has actively engaged with community partners, including Outdoor Amarillo and the Paramount neighborhood, on a pilot project aligned with the Parks Master Plan to enhance local parks. The initiative emphasizes collaboration with neighborhoods to scale neighborhood parks to a more sustainable level, ensuring they can be effectively maintained by both the city and the community. This approach focuses on reducing high-cost, large-scale assets and prioritizing core features such as playgrounds, open space, trails, and other fundamental amenities.

The proposed plan for Paramount Park features tennis courts, expanded picnic seating, pickleball courts, open space, a cornhole area, a basketball court, and a playground. Mr. Bob Altman introduced the motion, which was seconded by Mr. Howard Smith. The motion carried unanimously, with nine members voting in favor and none opposed.

ITEM 6 Discuss Items for Future Agendas:

- Add a City Council Member

ITEM 7 Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 2:42p.m. This meeting was recorded, and all comments are on file with the City Parks and Recreation Department.

ATTEST:

Ms. Ashley Guerrero, Board Secretary

Ms. Tiffany Podzemny, Board Chair



Ms. Ashley Guerrero, Board Secretary



Mr. Robert Altman, Board Vice Chair