

MINUTES

On September 10th , 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	19	18
Mr. Ronnie Walker	YES	19	16
Mr. Robert Altman	YES	65	60
Ms. Tiffany Podzemny	YES	55	51
Mr. Rodney Hill	NO	19	16
Mr. Thomas Riney	YES	19	17
Mr. Ronny Head	YES	19	19
Mr. Shelby Massey	NO	36	33
Mrs. Skylar Gallop	NO	25	15
Mr. Alan Cox	YES	8	6
Mr. Jeremy Pekar	NO	6	5

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
CARRIE RUSHING	ZOO VISITOR SERVICE SPECIALIST
CINDY PEREZ	BEAUTIFICATION/ARTS
LANDON MILLERS	WARFORD ACTIVITY CENTER SUPERVISOR
ASHLEY GUERRERO	RECORDING SECRETARY

ITEM 1

Call to Order

Vice Chairman, Mr. Robert Altman established a quorum and called the regular scheduled meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to order at 1:33p.m.

ITEM 2

Public Comments

Mr. Lawton Wilkerson inquired about the recent demolition of Highland Village Park. In response, Mr. Michael Kashuba clarified that the City of Amarillo does not own the land where the park was located; rather, the property is owned by Amarillo College. Mr. Kashuba advised Mr. Wilkerson to contact Amarillo College directly to discuss the future of the site and determine potential next steps for the Highland Village community.

ITEM 3

Discuss and Consider Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Thomas Riney said motion seconded by Mr. Howard Smith, voting aye were 7 members, voting no were none, carried to approve meeting minutes from August 13th, 2025.

ITEM 4A

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

- Administration:** Mr. Michael Kashuba reported that golf fee increases have been approved, including a \$2 per round increase and a \$5 monthly membership increase, driven by cost recovery requirements. He also informed the board of proposed legislative changes that could significantly impact the City’s budgeting process. Specifically, Senate Bill 10 may lower the allowable city tax increase limit from 3.5% to 1%, which would necessitate the development of more income-producing programs across all city facilities. Additionally, Mr. Kashuba noted that discussions are ongoing within the City Council regarding the potential addition of a new council member to the Park Board, with appointments for positions scheduled to take place in November.

2. **Amarillo Zoo:** Mrs. Berkley Hillard informed the board that zoo programs ran from May 1st through August 31st and reported a 5% overall increase in attendance for Summer 2025 compared to 2024. Attendance breakdown included a 5.7% increase in adult visitors, 8% increase in children, and 5.8% increase in seniors. Due to strategic scheduling, the zoo gift shop experienced a 38% increase in sales. To boost weekday attendance, visitor service specialist, Carrie Rushing helped launch themed event series including "Make It Mondays," "Tortoise Tuesdays," "Wacky and Wild Wednesdays," and "Trading Thursdays," all included with regular admission. Special events also performed well, with Endangered Species Day drawing 241 adults, 90 children, and 24 seniors, generating \$570 in gift shop revenue and featuring a \$2 camel feeding activity. International Cat Day attracted 200 adults, 86 children, and 23 seniors, with \$440 in gift shop revenue. An upcoming event, Minecraft Celebration Day, is scheduled for September 20th and will include a custom-made Minecraft parrot display. Summer camp attendance remained mostly stable, though the Zookeeper Training Camp experienced a 50% drop, likely due to its August timing overlapping with back-to-school preparations.

3. **Beautification and Public Arts:** Mrs. Cindy Perez presented the board with the second art pad completed by the park maintenance team. The structure is set to debut at the Hoodoo Mural Festival on September 27th at Arts in the Sunset. Guest artist Raela Ornelas, part of the Beautification initiative, will be painting on hockey glass that will be incorporated into the structure. However, it was noted that the lighting within the art pad created an unintended shadow, and alternative solutions will be explored. The first art pad is already on display at Arts in the Sunset.

Additionally, the three mural projects—*Paso*, *No Boundaries*, and *Cactus Cove*—have initiated the reimbursement process through the Mural Grant Program. A new website has also been developed to showcase and inform the community about the murals. This site will be featured on both the Parks and Recreation and City of Amarillo websites, though it has not yet been launched.

4. **Athletics:** Mr. James Stow shared with the board that fall leagues have started, with football taking place at multiple locations and soccer utilizing every available complex. Additionally, 120 volleyball teams and 100 softball teams have registered for the season. He also noted that the Bomb Fest tournament, originally scheduled at the Southwest Complex, has been relocated to the Southeast Complex for September 20–21 due to parking and construction challenges at the original site.

5. **Aquatics:** Mrs. Becki Dryer stated that the pool season has officially ended, with September 1st marking the final day of operations. An Intro to Kayaking class was held at the Southwest pool, and 43 participants attended swim lesson sessions. Adult swim lessons were introduced this season and filled quickly. With the outdoor season concluded, lifeguards are now being reassigned to the Warford Activity Center to support ongoing programs. The department's focus is now shifting to Warford, where there is a full aquatic fitness schedule, along with continued swim lessons and numerous pool parties.

6. **Capital Projects:** Mr. James Stow reported that the City Council has approved new pump stations for all four golf courses. Installation will begin at Mustang–Comanche Trail—on October 13th, with work at the remaining courses scheduled approximately 2–3 weeks apart through Christmas.

Mr. Michael Kashuba shared that Parks and Recreation is collaborating with Community Development on the Thompson Inclusive Playground, a \$2 million (approximately) Community Development Block Grant project. Pour-in-place surfacing is scheduled to begin on September 13th, with an estimated completion time of 15–20 days, and a ribbon-cutting ceremony targeted for mid-October. Due to the park's two distinct grade levels, park maintenance is applying shotcrete to stabilize the transition between the upper and lower areas. The anticipated handmade elephant structure has now been installed, standing approximately 10 feet tall. Additionally, park maintenance has successfully rerouted gas and water lines at the zoo, allowing for isolated system management between the zoo and the surrounding park in case of future issues.

At John Stiff Park, the south parking lots are nearing completion, with work soon shifting to the north side. Rick Klein Park's parking lots are also being completed, with an estimated total of 450 parking spaces. Construction on John Stiff Road has begun, connecting to Bell Street and

requiring valve relocations with the help of the city's hydro vac equipment. Lighting improvements at John Stiff are progressing rapidly, with concrete bases completed and light pole delivery expected by mid-September. Once the poles arrive, crews will begin pulling wiring in preparation for installation. The Parks team aims to complete all ongoing projects by winter.

7. **Golf Operations:** Mr. George Priolo reported that 48 events have been hosted so far this year across the two golf courses, with 32 more scheduled through the remainder of the year. He reminded the board that snack and beer prices were increased earlier in the spring, and noted that a recent \$2 per round fee increase and \$5 monthly membership increase have also been implemented. Mr. Priolo added that, pending city management approval, the "Explore the Four" promotional campaign will return this year, with sales running from Black Friday through December 31st for use during the 2026 season. Golf performance has been exceptional, with a year-to-date increase of 6,300 rounds played. Revenue for the month was up \$108,000 compared to the same period last year—\$60,000 from Comanche and \$48,000 from Ross—bringing the total revenue increase to \$501,000. Combined annual revenue across both courses now stands at approximately \$4.8 million.
8. **Park Maintenance:** Mr. James Stow reported that park maintenance is actively working on daily tasks, including draining ditches, making repairs around the complexes, and other routine responsibilities. The team has also assisted with utility relocations and provided support at the Thompson Inclusive Playground. Additionally, Mr. Stow noted that there is a significant amount of work planned for the winter, particularly related to athletic fields, including foul netting installation, infield leveling, and other field maintenance projects.
9. **Recreation and Special Events:** Mrs. Becki Dryer announced that the Fall Park Guide is now available at all Parks and Recreation facilities and on the department's website. The guide features all programs, events, and activities taking place from September 1st through the end of December. She also informed the board that all individual City Park Facebook pages have been consolidated into a single Amarillo Parks and Recreation page to streamline communication. Sarah, the department's marketing coordinator, is transitioning from Meta Business Suite to Hootsuite for social media scheduling. While the public will not notice any changes, it has required additional effort as she learns the new platform. Mrs. Dryer also shared that a website revamp project is underway, with a targeted completion date of March 2026.

Recent community engagement events included a Pop-up Park Party at Paramount with 75 attendees, and a Camping Experience event that introduced outdoor education to 6 families (26 participants). Parks and Recreation also held the final session of the *Hooked-on Fishing* program with 55 participants. Additionally, the *Homeschool Fit and Play* program is now fully operated by Parks and Recreation, with 27 children enrolled in the semester-long program running from September through December. Although the department previously received a grant from Texas Parks and Wildlife, equipment donations for future programs are still welcomed and appreciated.

10. **Senior Services:** Senior Services currently has an average of 200 active senior members and continues to offer a wide variety of weekly activities. The free lunch program remains ongoing, and averages 13 to 14 meals served per day. Mrs. Becki Dryer noted that the program has been successful in bringing new participants to the Warford Activity Center. In addition, Kari, a Warford staff member, recently facilitated a Driver and Pedestrian Safety Workshop in partnership with Texas A&M Transportation. The event included expert-led discussions on safe driving practices and pedestrian safety, followed by lunch and an opportunity for attendees to engage with the presenters.
11. **Tennis Operations:** Mr. James Stow reported that the search is currently underway for a new Tennis Center Manager. The Juniors After-School Program is starting back up, and the two newly added padel courts are now open for public use, receiving significant attention and positive feedback. He also mentioned several upcoming private events and a few pickleball events

scheduled within the next couple of weekends. Additionally, a Halloween-themed tennis tournament is being considered.

Mr. Michael Kashuba provided further insight into the Tennis Center's operations, explaining that the facility is managed by one full-time employee responsible for daily operations, with part-time staff assisting primarily at the front desk. In the past, programming—such as tournaments, lessons, and junior programs—has been handled by an independent contractor. That existing agreement is set to expire at the end of the month, and discussions are currently taking place with the Alex O'Brien Tennis Foundation to identify a new contractor. The goal is to strengthen and expand programming across all three sports: tennis, pickleball, and padel, including tournaments, and instructional offerings.

12. **Warford Activity Center:** Mrs. Becki Dryer informed the board that the fall fitness schedules began in September and announced that several new fitness and aquatic programs will be launching soon. A new magnetized glass door is currently in progress, which will help prevent young children from entering the cardio room for safety reasons. The plan is to close the original door and use only the glass door to improve visibility from the front desk. Additionally, a new Smith machine has been installed at Warford, and members have responded positively. Mrs. Dryer also reported that the Warford pool experienced some issues, but they were resolved quickly. The Warford Activity Center remains busy, averaging 15 to 16 rentals per week.

ITEM 5 Discuss Items for Future Agendas

- Cost recovery for athletics

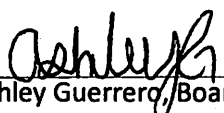
ITEM 6 Adjournment

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 2:41p.m. This meeting was recorded, and all comments are on file with the City Parks and Recreation Department.

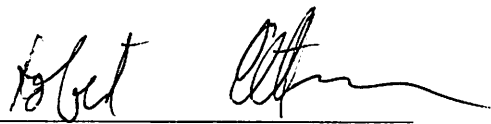
ATTEST:

Ms. Ashley Guerrero, Board Secretary

Ms. Tiffany Podzemny, Board Chair



Ms. Ashley Guerrero, Board Secretary



Mr. Robert Altman, Board Vice Chair