

City of Pierre
Park and Recreation Board
Meeting Minutes
2-19-26

4:00 PM – Convene at City Hall Training Room

- **Determination of quorum.** Members: Templeton__x_ Vacant ___
Hanig_x_ Buscher__x_ Potter_x_ DeMers_x_
Ex-officio member: Williams __ _ Commissioner Reitzel__x_
Staff members: Peitz __x_Jensen __x_ Schultz__x_ Tipton__x_ Bible_x_

- **Motion to approve minutes of the January 2026 meeting. Motion by Potter, seconded by Templeton.**

- **Any additions to the agenda, motion to approve the agenda. Motion by Potter, seconded by DeMers**

Reports:

- **YMCA – Rachel Williams –**

YMCA and Aquatic Center Updates: Cody relayed Rachel's update on YMCA activities, including the community feedback flyer, swim team schedules, summer hours for the Aquatic Center, and adjustments to lap swim times to better accommodate community needs.

- o **Community Feedback and Strategic Planning:** Rachel distributed a flyer and survey to gather community input for the YMCA's strategic plan, with Cody ensuring board members receiving the materials.
 - o **Swim Team and Aquatic Center Scheduling:** The last swim team practice for children under 13 was noted, with older kids continuing for a few more weeks, and summer hours for the Aquatic Center were published in the recreation booklet.
 - o **Lap Swim Time Adjustments:** Lap swim times were shifted from 4:00–6:00 PM to 4:30–7:30 PM on weekdays, and two hours were added on Sundays to address previous complaints and better serve working adults.
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- **Rec Dept. – Cody Peitz**

Seasonal Hiring and Registration Updates: Cody provided a comprehensive update on the opening of program registrations, the ongoing process of hiring over 100 seasonal staff, and the status of returning employees, with Bryan and other board members discussing age requirements and hiring logistics.

- **Program Registration Status:** Cody reported that registrations for basketball, preschool swimming, safety town, and nine sessions of swimming lessons opened on Monday at 6:00 AM, coinciding with a holiday, and that all sessions are filling up quickly, indicating strong community interest.
- **Aquatic Center Summer Rec Booklet Distribution:** Cody will pick up the completed summer rec booklets from JC Printing and send them out to the elementary school for distribution to students.
- **Seasonal Staff Hiring Process:** Cody outlined the need to hire approximately 101 seasonal employees, including lifeguards, concession staff, front desk, summer recreation, pool managers, a CPO, and an intern, and described efforts to contact returning staff and manage new applications.
- **Returning Employee Numbers:** In response to DeMers question, Cody estimated that about 25 of 55 lifeguards, two concession/front desk staff, and around seven summer recreation staff are returning, with the remainder to be filled from new applicants.
- **Age Requirements and Policy Discussion:** Bryan and Cody discussed the minimum age for employment, confirming it is set at 15 for most positions, with some roles requiring 16 or 18 due to equipment operation and liability.

- **Parks Dept. – Jay Jensen**

Parks Maintenance and Improvement Projects: Jay and Nick discussed ongoing parks maintenance, including staff hiring, tree trimming, facility repairs, and preparations for the upcoming baseball season, with updates on emergency routes, curb-and-gutter trees, and community feedback.

- **Seasonal Staff and Task Assignments:** Jensen reported hiring six returning seasonal staff out of a typical 14, with uncertainty about additional returning college students, and described current staff focusing on mowing, tree work, and facility maintenance.
- **Tree Trimming and Emergency Routes:** Nick and Jay detailed the completion of 160 blocks of tree trimming, prioritizing emergency routes, and outlined plans to finish Harrison and move to Jefferson, noting the use of city staff rather than contractors.
- **Facility Repairs and Upgrades:** Jay mentioned ongoing repainting of bathrooms and the amphitheater, as well as the renovation of a bathroom at the barge, with plans to shift staff to these projects as weather permits.
- **Community Communication and Complaints:** Bryan recounted a resident's complaint about tree trimming and lack of notification, clarifying that signage is multi-use and does not specify tree trimming, and described efforts to address concerns through direct communication.

Pickleball and Baseball Lighting Projects: Bryan provided updates on the installation and funding of pickleball court lights, insurance handling of fence damage, and plans for new baseball field lighting, including challenges with installation costs and contractor negotiations.

- **Pickleball Court Lighting Funding:** Bryan explained that the Pickleball Association (CAPA) and Matt Judson raised funds for the court lights.
- **Installation Cost Challenges:** Bryan described an unexpected increase in installation costs from the original contractor, due to deeper footing requirements, leading to a switch to H5 from Iowa, which offered a more reasonable price.
- **Baseball Field Lighting Plans:** Plans for new lights at Griffin Field were discussed, with the electric department set to reinstall a blown-over pole and H5 potentially handling future installations, informed by lessons learned from the pickleball project.
- **Insurance and Damage Repairs:** Bryan noted that insurance will cover repairs to the pickleball court fence damaged by a vehicle, and that the responsible party was identified and cited.

Old Business -

- **Trail Project Updates:**
- **Trail Naming and Grant Funding Discussion:** Bryan led a discussion on finalizing the name for a new multipurpose trail, reviewing historical naming practices, grant funding sources, and compliance with park policies and land use requirements.
 - **Naming Options and Historical Context:** The board considered naming the trail after Bernadette Prentice, who sold the land to the city in 1884, and discussed the city's policy on naming parks and trails, including the use of donor or historical names.
 - **Grant Funding and Land Use:** Bryan explained that the Department of Health provided grant funding for trail design and materials and clarified that the trail does not meet the acreage requirements for certain land conservation programs.

- **Wheelchair ramp:**

Downs Marina Handicap Ramp Project: Josh Bible updated the board on the Downs Marina handicap ramp, detailing the decision to cut ties with the original designer, new partnerships with GFP, plans for a new engineer, funding status, and grant applications.

- **Change of Designer and New Partnerships:** Josh explained that after receiving no response from Wheelchairs and Walleyes, the team decided to end the partnership and began working with GFP and Jason Jungworth to develop new plans.

- **Engineering and Contractor Quotes:** Efforts are underway to secure a new engineer for a fresh set of plans and to obtain contractor quotes for budgeting, ensuring the project does not rely on proprietary designs.
- **Funding and Grant Applications:** Josh reported that sufficient private funding is secured for at least two ramps, with additional grant applications in progress and the city potentially providing the concrete pad.
- **Project Timeline and Expansion:** The goal is to break ground by April or May, with discussions already considering future ramps at other locations if the project is successful.

New Business

- **Dog Park Shade Structures and Amenities:** Bryan and board members discussed options for shade structures and amenities at the dog park, comparing costs, durability, and installation methods, and considering donations and partnerships for funding.
 - **Shade Structure Options and Costs:** Bryan presented low-cost fiberglass shade structures as an alternative to traditional iron ones, noting their durability, hurricane resistance, and significantly lower prices, with examples from Florida and other cities.
 - **Donations and Funding:** Darrell Hawkins and Cheryl contributed funds toward the project, and the board discussed the need for additional amenities and the potential for further donations or partnerships.
 - **Tree Planting and Maintenance Challenges:** The group reviewed the challenges of establishing trees in dog parks due to dog urine and past transplant issues, concluding that shade structures may be more viable than trees for providing shade.
 - **Installation and Maintenance Considerations:** Discussion covered installation requirements, such as concrete pads and footings, and the ease of removing or maintaining the fiberglass structures compared to traditional options.

Facility Maintenance and Playground Equipment: Bryan and the board discussed replacing aging playground equipment and nets at various parks, considering costs, installation logistics, and the potential to reuse old equipment for dog park amenities.

- **Playground Equipment Replacement:** Jay identified three playgrounds in need of equipment replacement, including Brandt Pond and two softball fields, and noted the high cost of new nets and the challenges of maintaining existing structures.
- **Reuse of Old Equipment:** The board considered repurposing old playground components for dog park use, weighing the risks and liabilities associated with such adaptations.

- 5:00 PM – Adjourn. Motion by Templeton, seconded by Potter. The board's Next meeting is on March 19th at 4:00 PM at City Hall