



Parks and Recreation Commission

Regular Meeting

~ Minutes ~

1408 Lake Street South
Forest Lake, MN 55025
www.ci.forest-lake.mn.us

Wednesday, March 19, 2025

5:30 PM

City Center - Council Chambers

1. Swearing In Parks and Recreation Commissioners – Kyle Young

a. Karen Morehead

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young administered the oath to Karen Morehead.

b. Sandra Madsen

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young administered the oath to Sandra Madsen.

c. Sue Herdina

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young administered the oath to Sue Herdina.

d. Aaron Eckert

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young administered the oath to Aaron Eckert.

e. Don Theisen

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young administered the oath to Don Theisen.

f. Tim Garry

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young administered the oath to Tim Garry.

g. Melissa Lundmark

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young administered the oath to Melissa Lundmark.

2. Call to Order

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young called the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting to order.

3. Roll Call

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Don Theisen	Chair	Present	
Karen Morehead	Vice-Chair	Present	
Aaron Eckert	Commissioner	Present	
Tim Garry	Commissioner	Present	
Sue Herdina	Commissioner	Present	
Melissa Lundmark	Commissioner	Present	
Sandra Madsen	Commissioner	Present	

4. Approve the Agenda

Motion: Commissioner Garry made a Motion to Approve the Agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Commissioner Lundmark. Motion carried 7-0.



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5. Introduction of Commissioners and Staff

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young stated he was excited to work and live in Forest Lake.

Public Works Director Adams commented that the Parks and Recreation Department was under Public Works.

City Clerk Chaika introduced herself and explained she would work with the Parks and Recreation Commission when there were vacancies.

Commissioner Theisen expressed excitement about serving on the Parks and Recreation Commission and said he previously worked for Public Works for Washington County.

Commissioner Morehead expressed excitement about serving on the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Commissioner Madsen expressed excitement about serving on the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Commissioner Lundmark introduced herself and said she was interested in how the parks ran.

Commissioner Herdina said she was a lifelong Forest Lake resident and expressed excitement for parks.

Commissioner Garry introduced himself.

Commissioner Eckert introduced himself and said his kids actively used the parks in Forest Lake.

Forest Lake Area Athletic Association Representatives Cindy Weise and Kristine introduced themselves.

Forest Lake Area High School Activities Director Mike Hennen introduced himself.

Mayor Roberts commented on the importance of the Parks and Recreation Commission. He thanked them for their service and said he was available by phone or email if they had questions. He took a picture of the Park and Recreation Commission.

Councilmember Valento voiced excitement for the Parks and Recreation Commission.

6. Election of Officers – Jolleen Chaika

City Clerk Chaika explained the approved ordinance for the Parks and Recreation Commission which required the nomination of the chair and the vice chair. She explained the role of the chair and the role of the vice chair.

a. Chair



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Motion: Commissioner Morehead made a Motion to Nominate Commissioner Theisen as the Chair. Motion seconded by Commissioner Eckert. Motion carried 7-0.

b. Vice Chair

Motion: Commissioner Eckert made a Motion to Nominate Commissioner Morehead as the Vice Chair.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Herdina. Motion carried 7-0.

7. Open Forum – Citizen Petitions, Requests, and Concerns

The Open Forum is available for residents to express personal opinions for any item of business. Please limit your comments to three (3) minutes.

None.

8. Parks and Recreation Overview – Kyle Young & Dave Adams

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young reviewed the purpose of the Parks and Recreation Commission from the City Code. He summarized the City Organization, including the City Council and other advisory boards, and the City staff, including the City Administrator, Public Works staff, and the Parks and Recreation staff.

Public Works Director Adams clarified the different responsibilities of Public Works staff.

Commissioner Morehead asked about the role of the park rangers. Public Works Director Adams answered that the park rangers run Lakeside Park and the warming house staff work at the ice rink. He explained that Parks and Recreation previously was under administration and community development but was moved under the Public Works Department since they worked closely together.

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young reviewed the guiding documents, including the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, the City Codes, Master Plans, and Park Policies.

Public Works Director Adams said that the Parks Master Plan would be an important document to finalize. He said they would want to create a final plan throughout the year to guide developers. He said that they needed to clean up the policies and ordinances.

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young stated that policies would need to be continually analyzed, and it would be a process to lay a good foundation. He explained the importance of strategically working through the policies and the ordinances.

Public Works Director Adams explained that policies can change over time. Ordinances should guide the policies.



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City Clerk Chaika explained that the advisory commissions provided the work to propose ordinance amendments and policy changes. She said that the City Council sets the policy, while the Parks and Recreation Commission provides recommendations.

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young said that the representatives from the school district help provide guidance since they recently redid their policies. He reviewed the process for the Parks and Recreation Commission meetings.

Public Works Director Adams said that they would bring detailed information with options to receive recommendations.

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young reviewed the communication process for the Parks and Recreation Commission, public interactions, and general questions. He provided an overview of the different parks, trails, open spaces, and lakes.

Public Works Director Adams said that there was a fishing pier and additional land at Shields Lake that they would discuss in the future.

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young reviewed the different partnerships with different organizations in the community. He explained the different ways that the organizations provide benefits to the community. He reviewed the different City events, including Arts in the Park and Hometown Holiday. He reviewed the different events in the City hosted by different organizations that the City helps to assist with.

Public Works Director Adams said that the goal was to continue to expand options to provide additional events in Forest Lake. He stated that it would be a task for the Parks and Recreation Commission. He explained how the general levy was utilized to fund Public Works activities, including Park Maintenance and Parks Programming, which was comprised of playgrounds, mowing, tree trimming, and park bathrooms. He reviewed how the Parks were funded through the Capital Improvement Plans, Park Dedication, Park Capital Fund, bonding, grants, donations, partnerships, and sponsorships.

Commissioner Theisen asked how park dedication decisions worked with the Planning Commission. Public Works Director Adams answered that the Planning Commission and staff would work on it, but the Parks and Recreation Commission would need to review each development and provide a recommendation to the City Council for each developer.

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young commented that a developer would attend the meeting and present information. The Parks and Recreation Commission can ask questions.

Public Works Director Adams said that City staff would provide a recommendation, and the project developer will provide a recommendation.



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Commissioner Garry asked if the Parks and Recreation Commission had a budget. Public Works Director Adams answered that the Parks and Recreation Commission did not have a budget, since they were an advisory board to provide guidance on how to spend finance budgeted to the City.

Commissioner Garry asked if they provided suggestions to the City Council on how the developers would act. Public Works Director Adams responded that the Parks and Recreation Commission would provide a suggestion, which would be presented to the City Council.

Commissioner Garry asked if all new developments had park dedication responsibilities. Public Works Director Adams answered that the commercial would not be a discussion, but they would be providing cash. He said that they would focus on residential development.

Commissioner Garry asked if they found a way to charge mini storage. Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young said he could investigate this information.

Public Works Director Adams said that staff would be available to answer questions and present information, so that decisions could be made. He said that the City had a ten-year Capital Improvement Plan. He said that general current infrastructure improvement was to be funded through park dedication or general levy dollars. He said bigger redevelopment projects would be funded through bonding.

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young said that grants come through good partnerships and planning. He said that grant dollars could be used for facility improvement. He explained the value of donations, partnerships, and sponsorships. He defined park development, capital replacements, and capital reconstruction.

Public Works Director Adams said that Fenway Park and Beltz Park were examples of capital reconstruction.

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young encouraged the commission members to look at the information on the thumb drive and to review information on the agenda and come to the meetings with questions.

Commissioner Lundmark said she would be traveling for the next meeting. She asked if she could review the agenda and provide questions ahead of time. Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young said that she could send input for the meeting to the chair to explain on her behalf.

City Clerk Chaika encouraged comments from commissioners to be sent to the City staff to be conscientious of violating open meeting law statutes.

Chair Theisen said it would be a safe bet to use Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young as the point person.

9. Special Olympics – Kyle Young



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Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young said a group of people contacted him who wanted to use the ball fields to utilize a Special Olympics team. They wanted to have six to eight practices at Schilling Park and then would have a game. They requested to waive the fee for the field rental. Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young asked for comments about waiving the fee.

Commissioner Morehead said it would be good publicity to support the Special Olympics. She said it would be good to have a written policy so they would not have to make that decision every time.

Commissioner Lundmark suggested providing a certain dollar amount waived rather than completely waiving the fee.

Commissioner Garry said he was in favor of a reduced fee because of field prep.

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young said they were looking for a reserved space. They could technically walk out to a field and use it without a reservation. He said that there would be no additional work for the Parks and Recreation Department.

Commissioner Garry asked if the big game was in Forest Lake. Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young said the game would be hosted in Blaine.

Commissioner Morehead asked about maintenance after groups utilized the fields if there was any destruction. She asked if there was any commitment on behalf of the group to leave a field in good condition.

Commissioner Garry asked about trash removal at Schilling Park. Public Works Director Adams said that trash was removed daily from the park in the summer regardless.

Commissioner Eckert asked about the impact on City sports if the Special Olympics reserved a field at Schilling Park. Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young explained that baseball did not use Schilling Park, but that softball sometimes used as overflow fields. He said that Schilling Park was not often utilized for youth-sponsored programs.

Chair Theisen said it would be helpful to have a policy to provide a criterion, but it sounded like the process had been done before and it did not add to the Public Works Department workload. Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young confirmed that it was a low-impact action.

Commissioner Garry asked about setting a precedent for waiving fees for non-profits. Public Work Director Adams said that it was important to create more orderly policies for future decisions.

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young said that the school district did not charge a rental fee for teams that wanted to practice on their fields. He said that fees were often charged for games since they needed to complete additional maintenance. He commented that he was working on a classification fee for a future policy.



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Commissioner Eckert said that the field was not often utilized, so it was positive it would be used. He asked if they could make it contingent that the field was left in good condition when they left.

Motion: Commissioner Eckert made a Motion to Recommend that the City Council waive any fees associated with field usage for the Special Olympics for their 2025 activity in Forest Lake contingent upon the fact that they leave the field in good condition.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Herdina. Motion carried 7-0.

Public Works Director Adams said that the staff report often provided the language for the motion.

10. NLA/LILA Baseball – Kyle Young

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young said that NLA/LILA baseball would have six to eight games. They requested to waive the fees except for any costs incurred with field preparation. He commented that the Forest Lake Area Athletic Association managed field preparation. He said that charter high schools do not generate revenue to cover the costs of fields used.

Commissioner Morehead asked if they had done this before and there had not been a problem. She asked if they had ever left the fields in disrepair since the Fenway Fields were premier fields. Park and Recreation Coordinator Young said that if extensive damage were done, he believed the work would be covered by NLA/LILA baseball. He said if it were general maintenance, the City could help. He said that the coach tried to provide clear communication.

Forest Lake Area Athletic Association Representative Weise said that there were no problems if they knew were the bill was sent.

Commissioner Garry asked about the language in the introduction and the staff recommendation. Park and Recreation Coordinator Young said that the recommendation had to do with the City fees. They had no recommendation for City preparation fees since the Forest Lake Area Athletic Association completes those.

Commissioner Morehead asked about recommended fees during the games. Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young responded that a field preparation fee was common for high school or youth association sports, and it covered field rental. He said they would pay for additional time to prepare the field for the game, but the rental fee would be waived.

Commissioner Morehead clarified that the rental fee would go to the Forest Lake Area Athletic Association. Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young explained that the Forest Lake Area Athletic Association paid for field preparation but would not add on rental fees since they were youth in Forest Lake utilizing the fields.

Motion: Commissioner Morehead made a Motion to Recommend that the City Council waive any fees associated with field usage for the 2025 NLA/LILA baseball high school season.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Lundmark. Motion carried 7-0.



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Chair Theisen asked about the dollar value of the waiver and what it would add up to, so that the City Council can show the community how they are supporting youth sports. He suggested considering a damage deposit when they waive the fees.

11. Agenda Format – Kyle Young

a. Open Forum

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young said that an open forum was not required, but asked if they would like to host an open forum.

Commissioner Morehead supported holding open forums.

Commissioner Garry supported holding open forums.

Commissioner Eckert supported holding open forums. He asked if there were other ways to garner community input. Public Works Director Adams said that people can send emails that they request to be read at an open forum.

b. Pledge of Allegiance

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young asked if they would like to do the Pledge of Allegiance at every meeting.

Commissioner Morehead voiced support for reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

c. Staff and Commissioner Updates

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young explained the role of commissioner updates to express concerns about park facilities in the community.

Commissioner Morehead provided an example of how nice the basketball courts were.

12. Staff Updates

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young said he had thumb drives for the Parks and Recreation Commission. He said it was for them to take home so they would have access to information. He requested that they bring the thumb drive with each meeting so he can provide documents to review. He requested that they could create a shared folder in the thumb drive if they have information, they were working on sharing with other Parks and Recreation Commissioners. He said the goal was to not have 500 pages of printouts every meeting. Chair Theisen asked if the thumb drives were encrypted.

City Clerk Chaika said that the flash drives were brand new, and she did not have concerns about utilizing the thumb drives right now. She said they would review how to share information moving forward. She did not believe that the Parks and Recreation Commissioners had access to One Drive. The City Staff will figure out the best way to safely share information.

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young said he will revisit how to share information accessibly.



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Public Works Director Adams said that Beltz Park's bid for the site work came in \$50,000 below the estimate. He said that Beltz Park had three separate phases, the court rehabilitation, the site work for pedestrian facilities, and the playground equipment replacement. He said that the flash drive had artist renderings and construction plans for the phases.

Commissioner Garry asked about the ball fields. Public Works Director Adams responded that it was not a part of the plan.

Commissioner Lundmark asked about the volleyball court. Public Works Director Adams said that the volleyball courts will be tentatively moved to where the ice rink is and be flooded in the winter to make space for ADA-accessible walkways.

Public Works Director Adams said that the Manor Park rehabilitation was planned for 2025. He encouraged them to drive by Manor Park so they could see what it looked like and provide recommendations to the City Council.

Commissioner Morehead said that there were twenty-three parks. She asked if there could be information placed online that shows where all the parks are in Forest Lake.

Public Works Director Adams said that the Parks and Recreation Commission meetings needed to follow the agenda. They could make that suggestion as an agenda topic for the next meeting so that they can provide feedback and staff can be prepared.

13. Park and Recreation Commissioner Updates

Commissioner Morehead expressed a sense of relief about the communication between the Parks and Recreation Commission and the City staff.

City Clerk Chaika requested that they sign off on the oaths and return them to her to become a part of the permanent record.

14. Adjourn

Motion: Commissioner Morehead made a Motion to Adjourn the regularly scheduled Parks and Recreation Commission meeting at 7:19 p.m.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Garry. Motion carried 7-0.