

Recreation & Parks Commission Commission Meeting Minutes Synopsis

September 8, 2026 – 8:30 a.m.

Jerry Hammond Building, 1111 E. Broad St., Columbus, OH 43205

I. Call To Order

Meeting called to order at 8:36 a.m.

II. Roll Call

Commissioners: Letha Pugh, Terrie TerMeer, Monica Cerrezuela, Robert Love and Alvis Moore

Absent: Gregg Dodd

Staff: Bernita Reese, Aniko Williams, Nicole Smith, Jason Nicholson, Mike Musser, Dawn Turnage, Kerry Francis Rarey, Kasey Kaschak, Corinne Taylor, Shannon Prince, Nikki Van Dine, Dareyl Hamlet, Angela DiCocco, Geoff Martin, Mary Grace Palmer, Siobhan Thompson, Alex Passas, Malik Willoughby, Manney Clarke, Adam Wheeler, Lyrik Easley, Tavares Dishmon, Kyra G. Jones, Antonio Combs, Jr., Julie Pruett Bishop, Scott Ulrich, Michael R. Robinson

Jacob Dilley, City Council
Keiana Mitchell, CRP Foundation

Guests: Debbie Tavenner, Friends of Goodale Park

III. Acceptance of Previous Minutes

No corrections to the August meeting minutes. The August minutes were approved as distributed.

IV. New Business

A. Remarks

Jacob Dilley, City Council

- Back from recess and back to regular meetings.
- This year marks 9-11 25th anniversary. This year will partner with 9-11 Day of service and remembrance. On 9/11, volunteers will distribute meals through Mid-Ohio Food Collective. Setting up nooks at 8-10 community centers throughout the month of September.

- Will be announcing the date of CM Day-Achauer youth summit in November. Will bring together non-profits to talk about how to fill gaps and get youth involved in Rec & Parks youth programming and the second half will be training. Will make sure all commissioners get date and link.

B. Remarks

Office of Mayor's Deputy Chief of Staff

- Not present

C. Consent Agenda

No legislation

D. Administration Agenda

No legislation

E. Arts, Rentals & Events Agenda

1. Winter Lighting 2026 (2459-2026)

Title: To authorize the Director of Recreation and Parks Department to enter into an agreement with Columbus Downtown Development Corporation (dba Downtown Columbus Inc.) for the annual tradition of winter lighting in Bicentennial Park and the Promenade. (\$0.00)

- Jason Nicholson presented
- No questions

On a motion made by Commissioner Moore and seconded by Commissioner Love, the commission approved the Arts, Rentals and Events Agenda.

F. Capital Agenda

1. Recreation and Parks CIP Equipment 2026-2027 (2460-2026)

Title: To authorize and direct the City Auditor to set up a certificate in the amount of \$790,750.00 for the purchase of equipment for the Recreation and Parks Department; to authorize and direct the Director of Finance and Management to enter into various contracts for the purchase of equipment on behalf of the Recreation and Parks Department; to authorize the transfer of \$600,000.00 between the General Fund Income Tax Set Aside Subfund and the Recreation and Parks Bond Fund; to authorize the appropriation of \$600,000.00 in the Income Tax Set Aside Subfund, Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund, and Recreation and Parks Permanent Improvement Fund; to authorize the appropriation of \$190,750.00 within the Recreation and Parks Permanent Improvement Fund; to authorize the transfer of \$190,750.00 within the Recreation and Parks Permanent Improvement

Fund; to authorize the amendment of the 2025 Capital Improvements Budget; to authorize the expenditure of \$790,750.00 from the Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund and Permanent Improvement Fund; and to declare an emergency. (\$790,750.00)

- Adam Wheeler presented
- No questions

2. Storm Damage – August 2026 – Mayor’s Emergency Letter – Funding Correction (2461-2026)

Title: To authorize the various fiscal actions needed as a result of emergency expenditures authorized for the remediation of storm damage at Barack Community Center, Busch Park, Berliner Park, and the Fran Ryan Center; to authorize the appropriation of \$500,000.00 within the Recreation and Parks Permanent Improvement Fund; to authorize the transfer of \$2,500,000.00 within the Recreation and Parks Permanent Improvement Fund and Voted Bond Fund; to authorize the amendment of the 2025 Capital Improvements Budget; and to declare an emergency. (\$2,500,000.00)

- Adam Wheeler presented
- President Pugh asked if this is in addition to any insurance funds we received. Adam responded yes, but we have not received any funds yet.
- Commissioner Cerrezuela thanked staff for all of their hard work cleaning the parks.

3. General Design, Engineering, Construction, and Planning Services AC 2026-2028 (2462-2026)

Title: To authorize and direct the City Auditor to establish an auditor’s certificate in the amount of \$500,000.00 for various expenditures for professional services in conjunction with park, trail, and facility capital improvement projects; to waive the competitive bidding provisions of the Columbus City Code, allowing the Recreation and Parks Department to enter into multiple future contracts on behalf of the City for the professional services mentioned herein up to the amount of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000.00); to authorize the Director of the Recreation and Parks Department to enter into multiple future professional service contracts; to authorize the transfer of \$500,000.00 between the General Fund Income Tax Set Aside Subfund and the Recreation and Parks Bond Fund; to authorize the appropriation of \$500,000.00 in the Income Tax Set Aside Subfund and Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund; and to authorize the expenditure of \$500,000.00 from the Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund. (\$500,000.00)

- Chris Scannell presented

- No questions

4. Willow Creek Park Improvements (2463-2026)

Title: To authorize the Director of the Recreation and Parks Department to enter into contract with Ironsite, Inc. for the Willow Creek Park Improvements Project; to authorize the transfer of \$3,083,826.68 between the General Fund Income Tax Set Aside Subfund and the Recreation and Parks Bond Fund; to authorize the appropriation of \$3,083,826.68 in the Income Tax Set Aside Subfund and Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund; and to authorize the expenditure of \$3,083,826.68 from the Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund. (\$3,083,826.68)

- Scott Ulrich presented
- No questions

5. Hoover Amenities Project – CWP Expenditure Correction (2464-2026)

Title: To authorize an expenditure correction of \$270,113.97 from the Recreation and Parks Voted Bond Fund to the Water Bond Fund to be applied towards the costs of the Hoover Amenities Project; to authorize the transfer of cash and appropriation within the Water Bond Fund; to authorize an amendment to the 2025 Capital Improvement Budget; and to authorize the expenditure of \$270,113.97 from the Water Bond Fund. (\$270,113.97)

- Adam Wheeler presented
- No questions

On a motion made by Commissioner Moore and seconded by Vice President TerMeer, the commission approved the Capital Agenda.

G. Community Centers Agenda

No legislation

H. Operations & Maintenance Agenda

1. CAC Elevator Repair (2490-2026)

Title: To authorize the Director of Recreation and Parks to enter into contract with Otis Elevator Company for elevator repair services, to authorize the expenditure of \$135,540.00 from the Recreation and Parks Operating Fund; and to declare an emergency. (\$135,540.00)

- Mike Musser presented
- President Pugh asked how old is the elevator. Mike responded that he is not sure.
- President Pugh asked how much would it cost to replace it. Mike responded that this repair will eventually replace

everything except for the structure.

On a motion made by Commissioner Love and seconded by Commissioner Cerrezuela, the commission approved the Operations and Maintenance Agenda.

I. Recreation Services Agenda

No legislation

J. Youth Development Agenda

No legislation

V. Department & Project Update

R.I. S. E. update – Geoff Martin

- Several committee members attended the Opportunities for Ohio with Disabilities annual conference at OSU.
 - Really informative, got resources and really enjoyed it.
 - Encourages others to attend – free conference
- Goals are focused on language accessibility and physical accessibility
 - One action steps is to maintain a practice of translating department communications informed by ongoing analysis to meet the community need. Trying to understand how to get information from the sources to inform those decisions.
 - Also trying to draft guidance on when to use translation services.
 - Next meeting is October 8th virtually and Angie Wise will join to talk about digital accessibility. Anyone who wants to join is welcome.

VI. CRP Foundation Update

- Working through 4th quarter events and into next year.
- Champions for P.L.A.Y. Top Golf event will be on Friday, April 9th which is also the Friday of the Masters Tournament.
- Still working out a date for the traditional Champions for P.L.A.Y. Golf Outing. Will share once they have date.
- Great opportunity for a tree planting in late October with donor. Will share date.
- More info to come for a special event also coming in October.
- Full steam ahead for Adopt-A-Center program. Kicking off fundraising efforts. Last year, served over 6,500 meals across 30 different sites and served over 7,000 residents.
 - Need all community support

- President Pugh asked if a volunteer link can be sent out. Keiana mentioned it will be posted in the foundation website.
- Sort day is the first Friday in December and Columbia Gas is the corporate sponsor.

VII. Director's Comments

- Thank you to staff and everyone jumping in to help with the storm clean up.
- Thank you to our Special Events team. Four individuals carried out the CBUS Soul event. Thank you for all you do.
 - There are 6 people that handle the races, walks, parades and all of the special events around the city.
- There are 10 people in Forestry that clear trees for the entire city. Thank you to all of them.
- Hats off to the sports section for pulling off the MAGA World Series. Over 5,000 people in the city attended.
- Happy Birthday to Dawn.
- Thank you to Commission. Appreciate all you do for us.

VIII. Public Comments

- Debbie Tavenner with the Friends of Goodale spoke about asking the department to consider adding flushing toilets in Goodale Park. Hoping that the department will make this a priority.
 - President Pugh says this will take some time. Will look more into it.
 - Director Reese mentioned that they will try to accommodate as much as we can. It takes all of us to work together. There is a lot that goes into this.

IX. Commission Comments

- Vice President TerMeer thanked Director Reese for everything she does. None of this would be possible without great leadership. Doing a good job for the department.
- President Pugh added that there is a lot of behind the scenes work to bring staff together and get things done.

X. Adjournment

The September meeting adjourned at 9:17a.m.