

DRAFT

**MINUTES
PARKS, ARTS & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2025 - 8:00 A.M.
ACADEMY ROOM – CITY HALL**

Members Present: Julie Jelen, Janine Kopff, Adam Leiferman, Maria Onnen, Council Liaison Charlotte Gabler, Danielle Murdoff, Stephen Peterka

Staff Present: Tom Pawelk, Beth Green, Josh Berthiaume, Erica Witzmann

1. General Business

- A. Call to Order: Chair Jelen called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m.
- B. Approval of Agenda – *Items may be added for discussion purposes or approval.*
 - Add: Appoint PARC rep to serve on the Bertram Chain of Lakes Advisory Council to the Regular Agenda as Item B.
 - Schedule joint meeting to review Park Dedication Ordinance.
 - COMMISSIONER ONNEN MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA WITH THE ADDED ITEMS. MOTINO SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER KOPFF. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.
- C. Approval of Meeting Minutes
 - Regular Meeting October 23, 2025, COMMISSIONER MURDOFF MOVED TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 23, 2025. MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER KOPFF. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.
- D. Citizen requests and comments.

Director Tom Pawelk reported receiving an email request for an RC car crawler park featuring varied terrain (rocks, hills, etc.), which would require limited space and generate less noise than a racetrack. If PARC wishes to proceed, Director Pawelk will meet with the requestor to gather additional details and evaluate potential locations, with consideration given to a community park with a parking lot. Councilmember Gabler expressed a preference for a location within city limits to improve accessibility for youth. Commissioner Leiferman noted the benefit of having an electric power source available for battery charging. PARC reached consensus to gather more information, and Director Pawelk will report back at a future meeting.

2. Regular Agenda

A. Consideration of commission renewals.

- Julie Jelen: 2026-2028
- Steve Peterka: 2026-2028
- Adam Leiferman: 2026-2028

COMMISSIONER KOPFF MOVED TO RECOMMEND APPOINTMENT RENEWALS FOR PARC COMMISSIONERS JELEN, PETERKA AND LEIFERMAN FOR A 3-YEAR TERM FROM JANUARY 1, 2026 – DECEMBER 31, 2028. MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER ONNEN. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

B. Consideration of appointing a PARC member to serve on the Bertram Chain of Lakes Advisory Council.

COMMISSIONER ONNEN MOVED TO RECOMMEND THE APPOINTMENT OF COMMISSIONER LEIFERMAN TO SERVE ON THE BERTRAM CHAIN OF LAKES ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR A ONE-YEAR TERM. MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER PETERKA. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

C. Election of officers for 2026.

COMMISSIONER LEIFERMAN MOVED TO RECOMMEND THE APPOINTMENT OF COMMISSIONER JELEN AS THE PARC CHAIR AND COMMISSIONER KOPFF AS VICE-CHAIR. MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER ONNEN. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

D. Consideration of recommending approval for the Joint Powers Agreement with Wright County for the Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Park.

Director Pawelk presented the amended and restated Joint Powers Agreement, which establishes the legal and operational framework for shared governance of the Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Park between the City of Monticello and Wright County. The agreement outlines responsibilities, guiding principles, and collaborative processes to ensure long-term cooperation, resource protection, and enhanced recreational opportunities.

The proposed amendments, highlighted in red, formalize current practices, including the shared maintenance facility, operational roles, insurance

responsibilities, and communication processes to ensure continuity over time. The agreement clarifies that the City will maintain the active use area (Bertram Chain of Lakes Athletic Park), while the County will maintain the passive use areas of the regional park.

COMMISSIONER ONNEN MOVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT WITH WRIGHT COUNTY FOR THE BETRAM CHAIN OF LAKES REGIONAL PARK. MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEIFERMAN. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

- E. Consideration of recommending approval for the Bertram Chain of Lakes Operation and Maintenance Agreement.

Director Pawelk noted that the Operation and Maintenance Agreement between the City of Monticello and Wright County provides a framework for governance, decision-making, and maintenance responsibilities for the Bertram Chain of Lakes- Regional Park. The summary of changes to the agreement is as follows:

- Clarifies responsibility split: City manages active recreation areas; County manages passive/natural areas.
- Establishes a shared maintenance facility for efficiency.
- Adds criteria for improvements including safety, staffing, noise, traffic, and natural resource protection.
- Strengthens guiding principles by distinguishing outdoor vs. active recreation and emphasizing inclusivity.
- Requires mutual review of building, utility, and construction plans by both agencies.
- Provides flexibility for concept development plan revisions with formal approval processes.
- Ensures consultation on remodeling/removal of improvements to avoid disruption.

COMMISSIONER ONNEN MOVED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT WITH WRIGHT COUNTY FOR THE BETRAM CHAIN OF LAKES REGIONAL PARK. MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER KOPFF. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. Discussion of Added Items

- The joint meeting with City Council, Planning Commission and PARC will take place in January. Staff will send out an email survey for

commissioners to choose the meeting date/time that works best for them. This is for the park dedication ordinance review.

- Disc Golf at Pioneer Park: Commissioner Leiferman inquired about the status of installing disc golf at Pioneer Park. Parks Superintendent Josh Berthiaume said that he has met with the company to lay out the course and Pioneer Park is still the planned location. However, at this time there are too many budget constraints so staff will need to look at future grants or other forms of alternative financing before moving forward with it.
- Data Center Talk: Commissioner Leiferman asked about how data centers may affect park dedication in the future. It is noted that the ordinance review for how park dedication is calculated will be discussed at the upcoming Special Joint Meeting and that it will be covered at that time.

4. Updates

- A. Director's Update (TP) Tom said this is the leanest budget he's ever worked with. It's where we are at. To maintain what we have this is what we need to do.
 - Budget constraints. MCC will see a bigger increase this year in building costs, maintenance, and utility costs. Fee adjustment from 12% to 25%. Reality and recreational trends are changing. Really is unfortunate but we still will be cheaper than private industry. Will also be reducing the hours to the facility.
 - Cemetery: 30% increase in contract cost for excavation. That is a pass-through cost through the funeral home/families.
 - Increased shelter and facility rental rates: 10-20% and athletic fields 30%.
- B. MCC Update (SC)
- C. Park Maintenance Update (JB)
- D. Shade Tree Update (TP): Submitted grants to state for \$1M. trees marked on east side will start removing this winter. Downtown is part of the grant so will wait to hear on that in February for funding.
- E. MontiArts Update (EW): GlowFest 2/28 received a grant, fire dancers, DJ, puppet company to help with lanterns. Gearing up should be fun. Art sale going on right now.

5. Schedule for the Next Meeting

- Next Regular Meeting: January 22, 2026, at 8 a.m. will be held at City Hall.

6. Adjournment

COMMISSIONER LEIFERMAN MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 9:29 A.M.
MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MURDOFF. MOTION CARRIED.

RECORDED BY: Beth Green

DATE APPROVED:

ATTEST: Tom Pawelk