



**City of Warsaw Parks & Recreation Board
Regular Meeting – Council Chambers
Tuesday, July 15, 2025 at 5:15 PM**

Meeting Minutes

Attendance: Steve Haines, Park Board President Larry Ladd, Park Board Vice President
 Mayor Jeff Grose Jill Beehler, Board Member Michelle Boxell, Board Member
 Noemi Ponce, Board Member Juergen Voss, City Council Representative
 Larry Plummer, Parks Superintendent Shaun Gardner, Maintenance Director
 Stephanie Schaefer, Recreation Director Suzanne Stokes, Recording Secretary

I. Call to Order

Park Board Vice President Larry Ladd called the meeting to order at 5:15 PM.

II. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the June 17, 2025 meeting were approved.

(1) A motion was made by Board member Noemi Ponce and seconded by Board member Michelle Boxell, and it passed unanimously.

III. Unfinished Business

a) Update on Kiddieland Equipment

- Parks Superintendent Larry Plummer made a quick update to the Board after speaking with the vendor that the new Kiddieland equipment was purchased from. The vendor informed Plummer earlier in the afternoon that he could expect a call from the trucking company bringing the new piece early next week. If all goes well the new piece should be received and installed within the next couple weeks.

IV. New Business

a) Visitors Bureau Request – Cori Humes

- Cori Humes, the Executive Director of the Kosciusko County Convention and Visitors Bureau, came to request permission from the Board to use a drone over the country concert during the event on Friday evening. Humes said she wants to capture the number of visitors for the usage of KCCVB and pictures as well as videos would be then supplied to the Parks Department for their use, too. Dream On Studios will be running the drone itself; it will not fly directly over crowds but on the peripheral to have the aerial perspective without crowd faces. Ideally the drone will be launched remotely from the Center Lake beach area and will fly above 100 ft. but no higher than 400 ft.

Currently the KCCVB is using older images for promotional materials so Humes would like to update that. She is particularly wanting to use the images in the 2026 Visitors Guide. Plummer added that both bands performing Friday night have been reached out to about the use of the drone and have given their okay so it would not be in violation of their contract with the Parks



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Department. Boxell made a motion to grant permission for the drone and Ponce seconded; it passed unanimously.

b) 2026 Budgets

- Plummer presented the 2204, 2211, and 4403 budgets for 2026 to the Board for their approval.
 - (1) **2204 Budget:** Plummer started by saying he'd been advised to budget \$1600.00 per full-time employee for the upcoming year. Ladd asked if that was in lieu of a percentage raise and Plummer said yes because the committee had decided it was a more even spread amongst employees as opposed to those with a higher wage getting a higher raise with a percentage. There is a 0% increase in the budget on operating supplies & replacement supplies. For professional services there is a 31% increase over 2025. The reason for the increase is the inclusion of the cost for an engineering survey to look at expanding Pike Lake Campground to the north of the Firemen's fence. There is a 0% increase for communication, postage, print, and advertising services. A 12% increase was advised for insurance and Workman's Compensation coverage. Plummer included a 3% increase in utilities because even though changes are constantly being made to keep things efficient, costs are still increasing. For repairs and contract work, there is a 30% decrease from 2025. An increase of 10% for rentals of uniforms, rags, and rugs is included to be able to continue to provide uniforms to staff. There is a 0% increase in other services; the \$90,000 for summer entertainment will remain the same.

Capital outlays for improvements other than buildings includes \$230,00 for the proposed construction of the new Mantis Skate Park at Richardson-Dubois Park. Machinery upgrades included in the budget are: replacement of a 2016 truck per the 10-year replacement plan; replacement of the Bobcat per the two-year replacement plan; trading in the 2009 tractor/loader and purchasing a new one; replacement of a riding lawn mower per the four-year replacement plan; and replacing weed eaters and push mowers as needed. This would be a 20% increase in the budget over 2025, with 78% of the increase due to the skate park. Ladd asked about receiving grants for the skate park and Plummer said whatever grants are awarded, they must match at least the \$230,000 budgeted for the project to go forth.

In total the 2204 budget for 2026 is proposed at \$3,443,800 – a 6% increase from 2025. Boxell made a motion to approve the 2204 budget as proposed and Ponce seconded.

- (2) **2211 Budget:** The non-reverting Recreation budget covers supplies for all programs and events as well as printing and advertising. Plummer explained that non-reverting means any fees collected go right back into the budget for the next fiscal year. The total budget proposed is \$27,350 split between \$15,250 for supplies and \$12,100 for other services. As of June 3,



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2025 the total in the fund was \$51,325.05 and Plummer explained his goal is always to spend no more than 50% in the budget and keep at least 50% in the fund. Ponce motioned to accept the 2211 budget as proposed and Boxell seconded.

- (3) **4403 Budget:** The 4403 is a non-reverting capital fund that encompasses the Nye Youth Cabin, the Firemen’s Building, and the rental kiosks in the parks. Plummer presented that the \$45,000 budget is split between \$30,000 for contractual work in case something goes wrong and \$15,000 for replacements like parts or appliances. The proposed budget is a 19% reduction from 2025. As of June 3, 2025 the fund had \$126,815 in it and Plummer’s 2026 budget is only roughly 33% of that amount. Ponce motioned to accept the 4403 budget as proposed and Boxell seconded.

Plummer thanked the Board and stated he would likely be presenting the proposed budgets to the City Council in September. Ladd asked if the City will come back and reduce the budget, to which Plummer answered it was hard to tell what would happen but that he’d been frugal with his numbers so he hoped it would go through as proposed.

c) Maintenance Report

- Maintenance Director Shaun Gardner spoke about his team helping to set up and tear down the rock concert on Friday, June 20. He mentioned they have helped with both Wipe Out events, too. Bigger events see Maintenance and Recreation working hand in hand to help get everything around and have it go off smoothly. The merry-go-round spinner at Kiddieland is installed and they are just currently waiting on the other structure to complete the new play area. Gardner said the new play piece slides into four holes in the ground and is set with concrete, so it should be an easy installation. After that, they will just be waiting on the poured in place surfacing.

At the east end of Fribley Field, millings have been laid and rolled to add to the parking area available for the field as Young Tiger Football starts soon. The staff has also been cutting back the overgrowth on the south end of the park and trying to get into the wetlands to get the weeds cut back there, too. Street Department poured concrete around the concession stand to replace what the Parks Department removed. Gardner said their department is better equipped to handle a large job like that and appreciated their help.

The roof was replaced on cabin 4 at Lucerne Park and now work is being done to replace the roofs on the Central Park shelters. Once those are complete, all shelters and cabins will have metal roofs installed by the carpenters on staff. The Parks electrician has been at City Hall running new lines for outlets and has installed new outlets at the Street Department as well. Other than that there has been continued maintenance in the parks alongside mowing and



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staying very busy with cleaning rental buildings. With the heat and weather, it has shown where the irrigation system in the parks is lacking so Gardner said they are working to remedy the problems.

d) Recreation Report

- Recreation Director Stephanie Schaefer opened by saying that the past month has been super busy for her staff. She estimated 4500 people were in attendance for the rock concert featuring Steven Adler of Guns ‘n Roses.

For the Wipe Out events, 262 people participated on Wednesday, June 5 with an estimated 500-600 people in the park at Pike Lake Beach. For the Wipe Out on Thursday, July 10, it was smaller with 134 participants. She did note that many families thanked her for offering something free during fair week. A new piece was added to the obstacle course; it is a stand-alone trampoline so it allowed two lines to be going at the same time during the event. News channel ABC 57 was on site to both try the course and cover the event for that evening’s broadcast.

Picnic in the Park was a new event this year that Schaefer said was successful and wants to continue next year. Warsaw Missionary Church provided free hotdogs, while the Parks department had free yard games and 250 bags of free popcorn during the family movie in the amphitheater at Lucerne Park. Schaefer was excited that almost 50% of the participants playing the games were teenagers.

Science Camp began on July 14 and the rec staff has put a lot of work into making it even better this year. There have been 19 out of 20 spots filled for every session. Upcoming events include Mark’s Ark Animal Show at the Lucerne Amphitheater on July 24 and the Family Carnival in Central Park on August 1. Schaefer’s staff will be leaving in about 4 weeks already and she said she’s been very happy with the group she’s had this year.

V. Other Matters That May Come Before the Board

a) June Team Member of the Month

- The June award was given to Isaiah Owens after a peer vote. Owens worked for the Parks Department previously as a summer laborer then came back as part-time before accepting a full-time position this spring. Plummer said Owens is a great team member who is an overachiever willing to do anything who has been a great addition to the team.



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VI. Meeting Review

VII. Adjournment

With no other matters brought before the Board, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Boxell and seconded by Ponce. The meeting was adjourned at 5:59 PM.

Minutes taken by:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S. Stokes". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

*Suzanne Stokes
Park Board Recording Secretary*