

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
November 20, 2025

- 1) **Meeting called to order** by Taylor Hildenbrand at 4:04 p.m. at the MAC, Parks and Recreation Administration, 2733 Marilyn Williams Drive, Edmond, Oklahoma. The agenda for this meeting was posted in City Hall on November 17, 2025, at 9:55 a.m. Parks & Recreation Advisory Board members present: Taylor Hildenbrand, Gary Bartley, Saundra Naifeh, Earl London, Rick Smith, Anthony Rose, and Ashley Bradley. City staff present: Sean Wallace. Parks and Recreation staff present: Brad Raney, Frank Hale, Amanda Thomas, Zach Paty, Aaron Cain, Emily Young, and Cheryl Tettleton.
Absent: Laura Robertson, Jerel Cowan, Gena Money, and Chris Anderson
- 2) **Consideration of Approval of Meeting Minutes – October 16, 2025.** Ashley Bradley motioned to approve the minutes; Saundra Naifeh seconded the motion. **Motion carried as follows:**
AYES: Taylor Hildenbrand, Gary Bartley, Saundra Naifeh, Earl London, Rick Smith, Anthony Rose, and Ashley Bradley
NAYS: None
- 3) **Presentation and Consideration of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Oklahoma Monarch Society Regarding the Receipt of Grant Funds.** Introduced by Brad Raney and Amanda Thomas. Edmond was approached by the Oklahoma Monarch Society because of the work we already do to support pollinators. Katie Hawk, Stafanie Leland, and Dr. Patrick Bell were present to speak for the Monarch Society. Katie Hawk said the organization had been operating for nine years, commonly known as Okies for Monarchs. Monarchs serve as the “canary in the coal mine” for pollinators, and the U.S. Dept. of Fish and Wildlife is considering adding monarchs to the endangered species list. The OK Monarch Society received a grant from the Kirkpatrick Foundation, and they will use those funds to partner with two municipalities to enhance their existing pollinator programs and then use them as showcases for other communities. Edmond is first and Norman will likely be second. The grant provides up to \$11,000 in supplies and materials to support installing new pollinator habitat with educational signage, an 8-foot monarch-themed mural painted by local artist Rick Sinnett (who also designed Oklahoma’s monarch license plate), and community engagement activities. Saundra questioned the impact on pollinators from golf courses and their pesticides. The USGA has a program, “Monarchs in the Rough”, to improve this. Amanda is working with the Visual Arts Commission regarding placement of the mural, and Aaron Cain (parks maintenance) is developing a detailed plan for the new habitat. Aaron stated that Mitch Park and all of the city’s west-side gardens are pollinator-supporting gardens. They remove invasive trees to support these areas. When an area is brush-hogged, the seed heads go right back into the soil to promote new growth. The parks department is looking at a site near Whispering Heights Park for installation of the new garden. It has tall grass prairie around it. The budget in the MOU document is conceptual. Municipalities will set their own budget. The I-35 corridor is roughly the main path for migration. The butterflies will travel from areas to the east to get to this corridor before heading south. There are 26 types of milkweeds for Oklahoma. Saundra suggested hosting informational meetings for nurseries and lawn companies. Patrick Bell stated that native plants serve as the best fuel source. Amanda mentioned the need for pollinators to have access to a variety of plants to support their need for a kitchen (food source), a nursery (lay eggs), and a living room (resting place). Rick Smith

motioned to support the MOU; Gary Bartley seconded the motion. **Motion carried as follows:**

AYES: Taylor Hildenbrand, Gary Bartley, Saundra Naifeh, Earl London, Rick Smith, Anthony Rose, and Ashley Bradley

NAYS: None

- 4) **Presentation and Consideration of Recommended Bicycle Trail Names.** Presented by Sean Wallace of the city's Planning Department and representative of the Edmond Bicycle Committee. A committee was formed to simplify the trail names around the city. Currently, trail segments are given a nickname during development and construction (e.g., Creek Bend or Northwest Connector). The committee included representatives from Parks, Engineering, Planning, Visit Edmond, and the Bicycle Committee. Groups of trail segments would be renamed to reflect the broader location of the trail. Some examples: The trail segments around Arcadia Lake would collectively be called the Arcadia Lake Trail, including the current Route 66 Trail, the Northwest Connector, and other future segments planned to complete the loop. The planned Post to Pops/Westminster trail would take the Route 66 Trail name. The Spring Creek Trail would run from Spring Creek Park to Hafer Park when complete. The Crosstown Trail would run from Hafer Park to Covell at Broadway. Some trails include a combination of side paths, shared lanes, bike lanes, and trails. The new trail names are part of an integrated long-term plan, combining the Bicycle Master Plan and the Edmond Shift mobility plan. There was discussion about using medallions on the trails rather than signs to identify trail names/location markers. There are currently medallions on the Spring Creek Trail. Gary Bartley motioned to support the trail names as presented; Ashley Bradley seconded the motion.

Motion failed as follows:

AYES: Gary Bartley, Anthony Rose, and Ashley Bradley

NAYS: Earl London, Rick Smith, Saundra Naifeh

ABSTAIN: Taylor Hildenbrand

Saundra Naifeh motioned to continue this item to the next meeting; Gary Bartley seconded the motion. **Motion carried as follows:**

AYES: Taylor Hildenbrand, Gary Bartley, Saundra Naifeh, Earl London, Rick Smith, Anthony Rose, and Ashley Bradley

NAYS: None

Sean Wallace agreed to return for continuation of the discussion at the next meeting. Saundra also requested that Amanda Thomas attend, as she was the parks representative on the committee.

- 5) **Presentation and Consideration of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board's Strategic Planning Goals.** Taylor Hildenbrand presented. Two separate work groups met in recent weeks to discuss ideas. The document provided to the board contains the priorities determined by each group. Gary stated that the board's previous goals (developed in 2022) were presented to Council, and he felt it was important to do that again. Some discussion about how and when to do it. Council will meet on December 2 and 3 to develop their strategic goals. It was decided it would be best to provide a draft of the board's goals to Council prior to their planning meetings and then arrange a workshop with them in January or February for more in-depth conversation. Items included on the board's goals were completion of the Lamb Nature Preserve, park maintenance, developing and implementing park improvement/master plans, developing additional funding sources, and supporting sports fields as well as open and natural

spaces. There was a lot of overlap in priorities developed by each group. Taylor went through them with the board and will create a single list of five or six priorities for presentation to Council. Sandra Naifeh motioned to support the updated draft of the strategic planning goals; Earl London seconded the motion. **Motion carried as follows:**

AYES: Taylor Hildenbrand, Gary Bartley, Sandra Naifeh, Earl London, Rick Smith, Anthony Rose, and Ashley Bradley

NAYS: None

6) Updates and Discussion of Parks & Recreation Activity Reports and Projects, including:

Presented by Brad Raney and Frank Hale.

- **A.C. Caplinger** – Moving along well. A small issue in the discovery of an unknown sewer line from Vista Lane trailer park behind the park maintenance building where a pond is to be installed. Synthetic turf installation is expected around Christmas.
- **Pelican Bay** – Moving along. Meeting tomorrow. Large change order on next Council agenda regarding items that were suspected but not known until ripping up the decking, like electrical components encased in the concrete. The change order will add about 30 days to the contract but should not negatively impact the planned Memorial Day weekend opening date.
- **Chitwood Park & Barnett Field** – No update.
- **Westborough Park** – Playground equipment colors have been selected and equipment ordered, with installation expected this winter.
- **Mitch Park Master Plan** – Went from about 90 survey responses to over 1,000 after social media promotion and the offer of a gift card prize. The designers will bring a couple of concepts to Luminance to get attendee input.
- **Hafer Park Projects** – Pavilion and deck design is in process and developing cost estimates, which are looking favorable. The passive lounge area design agreement was approved by Council. We are applying for a TSET grant to fund the project. The city has done a lot of work to make us eligible for TSET funds. An item was on the last Council agenda to complete our eligibility. We are also applying for a TSET planning grant for a park/recreation/open space plan for our whole system. Prescribed maintenance as per the Urban Forestry parks tree inventory is ongoing. Some large volunteer trees were removed, which caused concern for some area neighbors. Parks and Urban Forestry staff have a meeting planned near the old Shakespeare stage area with a citizen on Dec. 5 at 10:30 a.m. to discuss the maintenance. Anyone else interested may attend.
- **Lamb Nature Preserve** – The cultural resource survey associated with our grant funding is currently underway. A path will be cleared in the next couple of weeks to facilitate access for the geotechnical survey equipment. The cleared area will overlap with the planned trail alignment to minimize impact. A lot of time has been spent on designing the trail alignment for tree preservation. The overall project is moving at the speed of the grant. The \$800K grant is a 50/50 matching grant and was based on a \$1.6 million budget. If costs come in higher, we can request additional grant funds. Our hope is that the funds will not only help us to build it, but also to take care of it forever.
- **KickingBird Pickleball** – Still working.
- **Edmond Trail Projects** – Northwest Connector groundbreaking scheduled to take place on Dec. 4. Construction is expected to begin on Jan. 19.

- **Luminance** – Kicks off tomorrow night at 4:00 p.m. with entertainment, food trucks, mayor & Council members. A drone show will begin at dark. The second event night will be Saturday, Dec. 13.
- **Liaison Reports** –
 - Golf Advisory – Ashley reported that Brian had a meeting with the Finance and Budget Reform Committee about how to use restricted reserve funds, and that they are looking at renegotiating the contract with The Lookout (Hole in One Food & Bev.) due to a substantial increase in restaurant revenue.
 - Arcadia Lake – Rick was unable to attend the meeting but noted that there are three new members on the lake commission.
 - Park Conservancy – Sandra said the Uncommon Ground project is progressing, with new sculptures, and some of the artwork is lighted. They continue to raise funds. A foundation is in place to provide funds to assist the city with maintenance of this park.

7) Citizen Comments.

- Jackie de los Santos lives near Hafer Park, was involved in advocating for acquisition of the Preserve land and has participated in the ELC meetings. She was concerned about “development” of the park and said the citizens and ELC want the paths and education area to be rustic. The group mantra was “nature first, people second”. Frank noted that he communicates regularly with Derek and Barrett of ELC. Design plans are at about 65% and support the group’s vision of minimal impact. There is no concrete.
- Sharon Gregory was also part of the Preserve group but is present tonight due to concerns about the amount of tree work occurring at Hafer Park. She stated that people love the park because of its natural, less manicured, look.
- Taylor Wilson encouraged staff to remember to budget for maintenance of amenities and to also consider that cost when reviewing the concepts for the Mitch Park master plan. He mentioned the iNaturalist app in relation to the Monarch item. He was also supportive of trail medallions vs. signs and confirmed the existence of a long-term trail plan.

8) Comments from the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Chair and Members. Rick is a member of the Edmond AMBUCS. They have established a committee to look at designs and funding for replacing the Mitch Park AMBUCS playground, which is 25 years old. Sandra is also participating in the committee. They will be going to Kingfisher tomorrow to look at their AMBUCS playground. Zach recommended Joe Scamman as a good staff member to consult.

9) Adjournment. Rick Smith motioned for adjournment of the meeting at 5:45 p.m.; Sandra Naifeh seconded the motion. **Motion carried as follows:**

AYES: Taylor Hildenbrand, Gary Bartley, Sandra Naifeh, Earl London, Rick Smith, Anthony Rose, and Ashley Bradley

NAYS: None



 Chair, Taylor Hildenbrand
 or Vice Chair, Gary Bartley