

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
March 26, 2026

- 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 March 23, 2026, at 9:31 a.m. Parks & Recreation Advisory Board members present: Taylor Hildenbrand, Gary Bartley, Saundra Naifeh, Earl London, Rick Smith, Chris Anderson, Ashley Bradley, Laura Robertson, and Gena Money. Parks and Recreation staff present: Brad Raney, Frank Hale, Zach Paty, and Cheryl Tettleton. **Absent:** Anthony Rose, and Nick Nicoll
- 2) **Consideration of Approval of Meeting Minutes – February 19, 2026.** Saundra asked for an amendment to the Mitch Park Master Plan section to include her request for additional picnic tables to be installed throughout the park. Gary Bartley motioned to approve the minutes as amended; Saundra Naifeh seconded the motion. **Motion carried as follows:**
AYES: Taylor Hildenbrand, Gary Bartley, Saundra Naifeh, Earl London, Rick Smith, Chris Anderson, Ashley Bradley, Laura Robertson, and Gena Money
NAYS: None
- 3) **Introduction of New Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Member.** Nick Nicoll was not in attendance and will be introduced next month.
- 4) **Presentation and Discussion of the Draft Parks Department Budget for Fiscal Year 2027.** Presented by Brad Raney. He reviewed the presentation he made to Council on Monday. A goal this year is to make the budget more easily understood by the public. The presentation started with some graphs from the annual National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) report which shows Edmond provides a larger than average number of park acres per population and manages those parks with lower-than-average expenditures per acre. This is due in large part to Arcadia Lake. Our cost recovery is also very good, primarily due to the golf course. In the budget, Parks and Recreation includes park maintenance, recreation, Pelican Bay, special events, streetscape, and admin. Other budgets managed by the Parks department include the park tax, cemetery, Festival Marketplace, Senior Center, Arcadia Lake, and KickingBird Golf. Park maintenance east of Broadway comes from the general fund and west of Broadway (includes Mitch Park, soccer, tennis, and the competition pool) from the park tax. Brad noted that capital outlay from the park tax budget will be significantly lower in the coming year. We have been spending \$1-2 million on capital projects each of the last couple of years due to a large reserves fund balance. Our spending will now track more directly to the funds we bring in for the year and will facilitate maintaining an appropriate fund balance. The Interfund Transfer Out of the park tax is the projected amount needed to supplement the lake budget to meet costs. It assumes a worst-case scenario. Although it is generally not this high, it will impact our ability to fund projects. The cemetery is mostly funded by the general fund. Festival Marketplace funding also comes from the general fund, but they do bring in about \$34,000 in vendor fees annually. They also contribute about \$60,000 in sales tax revenue. The Senior Center is primarily funded by the general fund, but they do receive a small amount of restricted-use donations. The Interfund Transfers Out shown in all the general fund budgets is the amount used to cover city support like HR, finance, and city management. Arcadia Lake is mostly self-funded, but any shortfall is covered by the park tax budget. The indirect cost of city support is what puts them out of balance. KickingBird Golf is profitable and will not need to use reserves or transfer in funds to meet their expenses.

They will be able to use their revenue to invest in the course. Debt service for the renovation comes from CIP funds. The final page of the presentation is the expense summary, which shows the sources of funding. The Hafer Special Tax Fund is for the Lamb Preserve property. Some correction to the budget was made after the presentation was created, which puts this budget closer to \$1.4 million. The most recent estimate for completion of the bridge and park improvements at the Preserve is about \$1.6 million. The LWCF grant (\$800,000) will help fund these and leave us with reserve funds for ongoing maintenance. Note that the Park Tax falls categorically in the budget under Capital Project funds, but about \$2 million of that budget is used for operations, not capital expenditures. The CIP fund reflects projected trail projects (part of the transportation network and receives ODOT funds) and two restroom replacements at the lake. The CIP committee is currently in the process of creating their five-year budget plan. The ½ cent 2017 CIP tax provided quite a bit of funding for parks, which ends with the 2027 renewal being earmarked for streets. Some funds could still come from the 2000 CIP tax. Members discussed whether the parks budget would be “made whole.” Brad indicated that parks spending has been particularly high the last few years, but that level of spending will not be likely for the near future. Large projects like the Stephenson Park renovation will not be possible. Funds will be used for playground equipment replacement and major repairs at the competition pool. Combining grant money with our funds will facilitate replacement of the Hafer pond deck/pavilion and a nearby playground. All city departments were asked to provide a flat budget.

- 5) **Update and Discussion Regarding the Arcadia Lake / Deep Fork River Trash Interception Feasibility Study.** Presented by Brad Raney and Frank Hale. Members were reminded of a presentation by a UCO student a couple of years ago (www.DFRneedshelp.org) which rejuvenated the search for a solution to minimize floatable trash coming into Arcadia Lake. The study looked at different types of trash interception systems, as well as locations at which to deploy them for best results. The trash interception systems include trash booms, trash traps, and litter fence booms. Booms guide the trash into a collection area for removal. The subsurface litter fence would help to capture non-floating debris. The locations considered for placement went from behind Penn Square Mall all the way to the lake. The top three recommendations were: 1) south of I-44/east of Sooner Rd; 2) south of Hefner Rd; and 3) east of I-35/south of 63rd St. Watershed interception rates are estimated at 84%, 82%, and 43%, respectively. Impacting the site choice is the ability to capture trash without impeding river use and available access to remove the collected trash. The Arcadia Lake lease covers the headwaters, but we must partner with Oklahoma City to implement the solution as it must be located within their city limits. They were resistant at first, but they are now on board and included funding for it on their most recent bond renewal. We need to work out who will service it, where to take the trash, and what equipment will be needed to collect it. Spring Creek also feeds directly into the lake, but generally sediment rather than trash comes from there. The US Army Corps of Engineers, ODOT, and OTA are also involved in the process.
- 6) **Updates and Discussion of Parks & Recreation Activity Reports and Projects, including:** Presented by Brad Raney and Frank Hale.
- **Mitch Master Plan** – Draft presented to Council. They wanted to make sure there was space for rectangular fields. There is still time to make changes. The final plan will be presented to Council in April.
 - **A.C. Caplinger** – Moving along. Turf is in, fencing going up, sod going in, and they are pouring concrete (sidewalks, etc.).

- **Pelican Bay** – Additional leaks on the main drain have been found and addressed. The Myrtha pool liner/stainless steel system is going in. The pool contractor has brought in an additional crew to help get the project back on schedule. The manager of Sunbelt Pools is an Edmond resident, and their team feels it is important to complete the project on time. Days were added to the contract due to the additional drain leaks, but they are doing all they can to have the pool open by Memorial Day.
- **Hafer Park Projects** – In process of applying for a grant to help fund replacement of the pond deck/pavilion and the nearby playground (yellow one).
- **Lamb Nature Preserve** – No update.
- **KickingBird Pickleball** – Estimated ship date of the roof membrane is the end of April.
- **Westborough Park** – Installation is complete and playground is open.
- **Joint Use Library & YMCA** – Second floor is under construction. Pool contractor is filing for bankruptcy. Construction manager is working to find a replacement. Still looking at October/November for facility opening.
- **Edmond Trail Projects** – Spring Creek to Midwest Blvd connection is in progress. Applying for a grant for completion of Creek Bend.
- **Superlative Asset Valuation** – Draft report has been received. There are some opportunities possible. Naming rights are worth more than presenting sponsorships, but we are not likely to rename a park. However, naming the pickleball facility is an attractive possibility.
- **Staff & Park Highlights** – No staff highlight. Park highlight was David Penick Park near Fretz Ave. and Wayne St.
- **Liaison Reports** –
 - Park Conservancy/Uncommon Ground – Sandra reported there have been some minor changes, but still on track financially. Soft opening is expected toward the end of the year. The Fine Arts Institute (FAI) has decided not to construct a new building in the park, choosing instead to use their funds to expand their services. The glass house will be an event space and will accommodate some programming. Brad mentioned that the Parks Recreation department has been working with FAI to provide space for classes in The MAC building. Sandra mentioned that one of the current winners of the “If I was Mayor...” essay contest focused on their appreciation and use of several park locations and amenities. When asked, Sandra confirmed there is some interest in the restaurant sites adjacent to the Uncommon Ground.
 - Golf – Ashley reported discussion is currently regarding the water fund and water storage. The greens were being aerated this week. Saturday, April 4 will be the Easter Egg Hunt. Winterizing efforts on the greens seem to have been successful.
 - Arcadia Lake Comm. – Rick was unable to attend the meeting but reported from the minutes that they discussed the Beach Sprint event and Trash Feasibility study. He also noted a citizen request to increase enforcement around marijuana use. Rick has asked to be replaced as liaison due to schedule conflicts. This will be on next month’s agenda. Taylor has requested that the lake manager come to next month’s meeting to provide an update.
- **Other notes:**
 - The farmers market manager would like board members to attend opening day on April 11 between 8:30 & 9:30 a.m. You can tour the market, participate in some

community engagement, and maybe hand out some free totes. Council members are planning to do the same beginning at 9:30 a.m.

- Zach encouraged participation at the Urban Forestry Tree Planting event at Mitch Park this Saturday at 10:00 a.m.
- Rick reported on progress towards replacement of the 25-year-old AMBUCS playground at Mitch Park. He provided some statistics gathered regarding the disabled population in nearby areas. The statistics will be used to support grant applications for funding the replacement. AMBUCS hasn't yet made any formal recommendations, but the new playground would be for all abilities.
- Frank noted the "Wall That Heals" Vietnam Veterans Memorial will be hosted at Mitch Park May 14-17, likely to be located near the fields along KiteFest Lane.

7) **Citizen Comments.** Taylor Wilson expressed appreciation for the coordination evidenced by this board's liaisons to other boards. He commented on the importance of departments working together rather than in silos.

8) **Comments from the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Chair and Members.** Taylor requested reports from members on things they had heard (good & bad) about the parks. Laura reported hearing about problems with the Stephenson Park playground surface. Zach provided that maintenance staff have been patching it. In addition to damage from users, the park experiences a lot of runoff which negatively impacts the material's binder. Brad suggested the possibility that the surface would have to be covered or replaced with a different material in the future. Earl stated that his grandkids love the new equipment at Westborough Park. Taylor said a child told him there needed to be real lava added near the natural-style playground at Hafer to protect her base. (Haha!) He also has heard there is a need for additional policing at the parks around dusk. (Chris Andersdon left at 5:29p.m.) Saundra has recently heard multiple comments about how great the cemetery staff are. She noted they are described as knowledgeable, polite, and reverent.

9) **Adjournment.** Gena Money motioned for adjournment of the meeting at 5:31 p.m.; Gary Bartley seconded the motion. **Motion carried as follows:**

AYES: Taylor Hildenbrand, Gary Bartley, Saundra Naifeh, Earl London, Rick Smith, Ashley Bradley, Laura Robertson, and Gena Money

NAYS: None



Chair, Taylor Hildenbrand
or Vice Chair, Gary Bartley