

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

April 16, 2026

- 1) **Meeting called to order** by Saundra Naifeh at 4:01 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 April 13, 2026, at 10:40 a.m. Parks & Recreation Advisory Board members present: Taylor Hildenbrand (in later), Saundra Naifeh, Earl London, Rick Smith, Chris Anderson, Anthony Rose, Ashley Bradley, Laura Robertson, Gena Money (in later), and Nick Nicoll. Urban Forestry staff present: Ava Zrenda & Shain Armstrong. Parks and Recreation staff present: Brad Raney, Frank Hale, Zach Paty, and Cheryl Tettleton.
Absent: Gary Bartley
- 2) **Consideration of Approval of Meeting Minutes – March 26, 2026.** Rick Smith motioned to approve the minutes; Laura Robertson seconded the motion. **Motion carried as follows:**
AYES: Saundra Naifeh, Earl London, Rick Smith, Chris Anderson, Anthony Rose, Ashley Bradley, Laura Robertson, and Nick Nicoll
NAYS: None
- 3) **Introduction of New Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Member.** Nick Nicoll was introduced.
- 4) **Update and Discussion of Arcadia Lake Plans, Projects, and Events for the Upcoming Season.** Presented by Nicole Offutt. They have been preparing for the season. Hiring has begun for positions in concessions, maintenance, and fee collection, with nine of last year's seasonals returning. Staff have been working on maintenance activities like brush-hogging the mowing boundaries, tree trimming, beach improvements, and refurbishing signs and bulletin boards. Citizen Rita Miller donated several bald cypress trees, along with cages to protect them from deer, and staff have been planting them. Ms. Miller made a similar donation previously. Online reservations are available for campsites, and they are working to set up this option for pavilion rentals. Eventually they also hope to add day use passes to the online system. They are in process of updating the system's pin pads. (Taylor Hildenbrand in at 4:07) The new park ranger position is going well. Theresa Morris has previous experience in National Parks and the Dept. of Forestry. Her primary role is to educate lake visitors on things like their environmental impact or encroachment on others' ability to use and enjoy the lake. She was officially sworn in this morning and can now write citations on Title 9 violations. The police department will also continue to patrol the lake. All playgrounds have been converted from sand to rubber mulch. Staff member Caleb Carter recently completed playground safety certification and has been inspecting the playgrounds, which he finds are in good condition. Staff are updating signs. To keep costs low, they are installing vinyl overlays and painting the borders rather than fully replacing the signs. The current area of focus is the Spring Creek boat dock. They are also refreshing bulletin boards with new cork and enclosures. They have been adding concrete pads around hydrants. A grant from ODWC is providing them with about 28 new fish habitat structures, which are expected soon. New ones may be added in the future. These will replace the past practice of tying concrete blocks to cedar trees and dropping them into the lake near fishing areas. Funds for restroom replacements at the Scissortail campground should become available on July 1 in the FY27 fiscal budget. The police will be getting a new patrol building near the entrance of Edmond Park. Their current patrol office is in a building owned by the Corps. (Gena Money in at 4:14)

The annual Lake Sweep took place a couple of weeks ago. About 50 volunteers collected 60 bags of trash and other debris, like tires. That same weekend, the Persian New Year celebration took place at Edmond Park, with about 1,000-1,500 people in attendance. Coming in May are the BioBlitz and the Route 66 Festival Triathlon. The Kids Fishing Derby takes place in June. Participation is free. The deer management harvest drawing takes place in August, with the hunting season beginning October 1. A survey of the deer population is conducted annually, and the count is combined with a variety of data from last year's harvest to determine goals for the current year. The goal is to keep the population healthy. Also in August will be the Beach Sprint Rowing Festival.

Nicole has been with the lake for 26 years, starting as a seasonal during her college years.

- 5) **Discussion and Consideration to Select a Board Member to Serve as a Non-voting Liaison to the Arcadia Lake Commission.** Presented by Taylor Hilenbrand. Rick Smith has asked to step down from this position due to other obligations. Saundra suggested Nick Nicoll take the position. Ashley encouraged him to try it for a few months, saying she would take over if he decided not to continue, so he agreed. Saundra Naifeh motioned to nominate Nick Nicoll to serve as liaison; Rick Smith seconded the motion. **Motion carried as follows:**
AYES: Taylor Hildenbrand, Saundra Naifeh, Earl London, Rick Smith, Chris Anderson, Anthony Rose, Ashley Bradley, Laura Robertson, Gena Money, and Nick Nicoll
NAYS: None

- 6) **Updates and Discussion of Parks & Recreation Activity Reports and Projects, including:** Presented by Brad Raney and Frank Hale.

- **A.C. Caplinger** – Field turf is installed; sod and concrete work is in progress. Estimated opening is in June. Brad will be onsite tomorrow at 9:00, and board members are welcome to come and tour.
- **Pelican Bay** – Target opening date is July 1. Substantial completion is expected in mid-June and will allow the management company and staff to learn the new pool systems prior to opening. A change order will be going to Council regarding the additional repairs that were needed for the main drain, and which have been completed. The project is still within budget. A large grand opening event is not likely – maybe something like an employee appreciation event one evening.
- **Mitch Master Plan** – Finalizing feedback. Consideration of the final plan expected at next month's meeting.
- **Hafer Park Projects** – Have applied for an LWCF grant for the pond deck/pavilion and playground renovation. Funds have been set aside within the park tax. Final designs will come back to this board for approval. Chris asked about erosion mitigation at the pond in the meantime. He showed a photo of an area of concern. Zach said he would inspect it and see what park maintenance could do.
- **Lamb Nature Preserve** – Waiting for the grant agreement. Boring for the bridge soon.
- **KickingBird Pickleball** – Outer membrane expected to ship at the beginning of May.
- **Joint Use Library & YMCA** – Trending towards a November opening. The pool contractor filed for bankruptcy. Construction bonds will allow us to get another one. This pool will be smaller than the one at Mitch.
- **Trail Projects** – Have finished clearing for the northwest connector and have resolved the utility conflict. City has applied for a TAP grant to complete the Creek Bend trail.

Trail construction starts in the Planning Dept., moves to Engineering, then is handed to Parks to maintain once completed.

- **Superlative Asset Valuation** – The final draft has been received and will go to Council for review. A draft policy to guide the use of sponsorships and naming rights was also provided. The city will need to create and implement a policy prior to using this as a fundraising source.
- **Staff & Park Highlights** – Frank highlighted the MAC's front desk attendant Cynthia Romano, who assists with booking pavilions and special events as part of her responsibilities. He complimented her helpfulness, sparkling personality, and how well she represents the department. Zach selected Fink Park, named after Gottlob Fink, a German-born 89er who served in many ways during Edmond's early days. The 7-acre park is located south of Second Street across from UCO. The meandering creek, sandstone outcroppings, and Chinquapin Oaks were highlighted. The Rt. 66 Shield will be located on the north side of the park along Second St. Sandra mentioned that a photograph of her dog taken at this park appears in a Dogs of the World book. Taylor and Zach both had fun childhood memories of the park.
- **Liaison Reports** – No updates available.
- **Other notes:**
 - Have been awarded two TSET grants – one for building the passive lounge space in Hafer Park that would replace the stage and one for a parks and recreation master plan for the whole system (the last one was in 2013).
 - The Farmers Market opened for the summer season. It was a very successful opening weekend, with high revenues and attendance estimated at 7,000.
 - Gena mentioned that it is Earth Month and talked about her business having a goal of collecting 1,000 pounds of soft plastics this year to be recycled into a park bench by NexTrex, which would then be donated to Uncommon Ground.
 - It was noted that the good weather we've been experiencing is leading to good revenues for golf and the lake.
 - Earl asked whether the road in Hafer leading to the upper parking area was scheduled for replacement as part of the Caplinger remodel. Brad said it was not included due to budget but is noted in the city road plan as needing replacement.

- 7) **Citizen Comments.** Mike Sharrer commented on the city being ranked #11 in the top 100 livable cities in the nation. He suggested our parks and trails system contributed to that. He wanted an update on the Lamb Preserve (trails, signage) and was able to speak to staff after the meeting. He also commented on a presentation he saw at the Urban Forestry Commission meeting which included a focus on preserving tree canopy as east Edmond is developed. He suggested it would be an opportunity for the parks and Parks Board to plan for parks there. Brad said the TSET grant mentioned earlier in the meeting would help to meet that purpose. Taylor Wilson mentioned the city was working on a long-range financial plan which includes maintaining assets. Taylor stated that this aligns with the Parks Board strategic goals. Ava Gardner noted that they have just finished Arbor Week and are about to plant 58 trees on the Boulevard medians. The ReLeaf program will be planting trees at Ida Freeman and Northern Hills elementary schools. Zach said some citizens are creating a volunteer group to help with land maintenance in the undeveloped areas at Hafer Park. Riley Coy of the Oklahoma Forestry Services will help to create a management plan.

- 8) **Comments from the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Chair and Members.** Taylor reported hearing a citizen request for more police presence at Arcadia Lake. The park ranger should help with this.
- 9) **Adjournment.** Sandra Naifeh motioned for adjournment of the meeting at 5:10 p.m.; Gena Money seconded the motion. **Motion carried as follows:**
AYES: Taylor Hildenbrand, Sandra Naifeh, Earl London, Rick Smith, Chris Anderson, Anthony Rose, Ashley Bradley, Laura Robertson, Gena Money, and Nick Nicoll
NAYS: None



Chair, Taylor Hildenbrand
or Vice Chair, Gary Bartley