

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

May 21, 2026

- 1) **Meeting called to order** by Taylor Hildenbrand at 4:00 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 May 18, 2026, at 2:17 p.m. Parks & Recreation Advisory Board members present: Taylor Hildenbrand, Gary Bartley, Saundra Naifeh, Earl London, Rick Smith, Chris Anderson, Anthony Rose, Ashley Bradley, Gena Money, and Nick Nicoll. Cinda Covell of Art Edmond / Park Conservancy Trust was present. The city's grant administration coordinator, Julianna McCullough, was present. Parks and Recreation staff present: Frank Hale, Zach Paty, and Cheryl Tettleton.
Absent: Laura Robertson,
- 2) **Moment of Silence.** Taylor requested a moment of silence to honor Avianna Smith-Gray, who lost her life in a shooting incident at Arcadia Lake earlier this month.
- 3) **Consideration of Approval of Meeting Minutes – April 16, 2026.** Gena Money motioned to approve the minutes; Nick Nicoll seconded the motion. **Motion carried as follows:**
AYES: Taylor Hildenbrand, Gary Bartley, Saundra Naifeh, Earl London, Rick Smith, Chris Anderson, Anthony Rose, Ashley Bradley, Gena Money, and Nick Nicoll
NAYS: None
- 4) **Discussion of Safety at Arcadia Lake.** Taylor acknowledged that parks director Brad Raney has moved on to another opportunity, introduced Frank Hale as the interim director, and then asked him to lead the discussion. The city would like to receive feedback and thoughts from the community. Nick indicated that attendees at the Arcadia Lake Commission meeting suggested things such as improved signage and cameras at entrances, and they commented on seeing problems with marijuana use, glass containers (breaking), and loud parties late in the evening. Frank added they also thought visitors might not be aware the lake is federal property, where marijuana use is illegal, and thought informative signage should be posted. Posting the information could also aid enforcement efforts. There is only one park ranger, who is limited to enforcing the lake's rules (Title 9 ordinances). Police patrol year-round, but their presence is larger in the summer when school resource officers move to lake patrol duties. Using social media to help inform the public of lake regulations and guidelines was suggested. Discontinuing the honor system at unattended entrances in favor of more secure access, and possibly increasing fees to pay for these improvements, was suggested. Saundra reminded everyone of the city's social host law, which holds adults accountable when they permit minors to consume alcohol. Taylor said it is important to reinforce the message that the lake is safe to visit. He also indicated a need to better utilize social media monitoring tools to help head off this type of event in the future. The parks do have hours and seasonal access, but the camping areas do not currently restrict exit/entrance after hours. Adding hard barriers at all entrances/exits and possibly one-way tire spikes was suggested. Chris is on the committee for the Beach Sprint Row event. With national news coverage of the incident, he said there was a negative impact on the event, but at this time, it will still go on as planned. The Corps is participating in the event planning. Creation of a task force was suggested.
- 5) **Consideration of Approval of the Edmond Route 66 Shield to be Installed at Fink Park.** Presented by Cinda Covell. Item has been approved. This is an update only. Shield design and

placement were reviewed. To facilitate using electricity to light the sign (instead of solar), the shield will be installed closer to the pavilion than previously indicated, which will alleviate the need to run power under the paved park entrance. The foundation is 48" deep; the above grade base and sign totals 60". Park maintenance staff will handle installation. The foundation is expected to be installed at the beginning of June.

- 6) **Discussion and Consideration to Recommend Acceptance of the Mitch Park Master Plan.** Presented by Vance Hall of TSW. There was a lot of community response and participation in the plan design. Nature and the trail system are the park's most appreciated features. Improving pedestrian safety, parking, accessibility, restrooms, and playgrounds were top priorities. The most popular elements across both concepts were an inclusive playground, a kayak/fishing dock, and a splash pad. Development preference for the northwest corner of the park was about a 50/50 split between passive space or sports destination, leaning more toward passive – but sports development could be phased in. Rethinking the 5K loop would improve safety by reducing contact with busy traffic areas, would highlight features like the amphitheater, pond, bombing memorial, and inclusive playground, and would create an exact 5K distance. Altering the parking lot and drive configuration by the baseball fields would improve pedestrian safety. Drainage improvements were recommended. Updating the disc golf area with additional baskets and adding youth/beginner lanes was indicated. The current AMBUCS playground would be replaced with improved inclusive features and surfaces. Adjacent to this area would be a shared activity lawn, nature education stations, and pickleball courts. Improving the aesthetics and security of the maintenance area is recommended. Rehabilitating the skate park, introducing shade and seating, adjusting the 5K trail alignment, and possibly adding dog park areas were suggested as ways to improve the skate park zone. Finally, community feedback and interest indicated a park stewardship program could be successfully implemented. Certification training and volunteer workdays would allow citizens to provide meaningful support for park maintenance. Board members were highly supportive of the plan but indicated they would like to see tennis court(s) added and expressed some concern about the trail running close to the off-leash dog area. Assurance was made that tennis could be addressed through striping on the basketball and/or pickleball courts and the off-leash area would be fenced and wouldn't have direct interference with the trail. Gary Bartley motioned to recommend acceptance of the presented plan; Earl London seconded the motion.

Motion carried as follows:

AYES: Taylor Hildenbrand, Gary Bartley, Saundra Naifeh, Earl London, Rick Smith, Chris Anderson, Anthony Rose, Ashley Bradley, Gena Money, and Nick Nicoll

NAYS: None

Due to the length of the meeting thus far, Taylor motioned to suspend meeting sequence to allow Citizen Comments at this time so visitors would have time to express their concerns and then attend a citizen connection meeting at City Hall. Ashley Bradley seconded the motion.

Motion carried as follows:

AYES: Taylor Hildenbrand, Gary Bartley, Saundra Naifeh, Earl London, Rick Smith, Chris Anderson, Anthony Rose, Ashley Bradley, Gena Money, and Nick Nicoll

NAYS: None

Juliana Overmier lives near Arcadia Lake in the Fox Lake subdivision. Speaking about trails first, she would like a light installed on the Spring Creek Trail's I-35 underpass, suggests providing working potable water refill stations along trails to help eliminate single-use

plastics, and increasing tree cover along the multi-use trail on the north side of the lake. Regarding safety improvements, she has spoken to police and various city staff about her concerns after the May 3 incident at the lake. She stated that signage and barriers keep honest people honest. The lake needs another ranger and law enforcement 24/7 to rebuild public trust. Concrete and visible reactions to the incident need to be seen. She recommends installing signage of “See something, say something” with QR/contact info to aid community policing. The public needs to see consequences for bad actions.

Taylor Wilson suggests the city should not waste the Arcadia Lake and Mitch Park master plans. Force people to see the cost of the improvements they want – like roads getting all funding at the expense of the things they want at parks, etc.

- 7) **Update and Discussion Regarding Oklahoma City Disc Golf Association Activities.** Presented by Dylan Kuehni and Jon Finder. The association (OKCDGA) was formed in 2010 and became a non-profit in 2023. They manage several courses in the metro and run five local tournaments each year. They recently held the 18th Annual Tye F. Cunningham Memorial Tournament. It was their largest one, requiring use of two courses to accommodate play (Mitch Park and a private course in Guthrie). Participants come from throughout the region. OKCDGA is advocating for the installation of a second course in Edmond. The two courses at Arcadia Lake are small and designed for leisure-level skills rather than competitive, and they are also behind a \$10 gate entry fee. They propose adding a second course on the north side of Mitch Park, adding a professional style course at Arcadia Lake, or redesigning the existing courses at Arcadia Lake into a competitive layout. Competitive courses work through the trees, not take them down. A small 18-hole course requires at least 22 acres; 40-50 acres would provide a championship level “super complex”.
- 8) **Presentation and Consideration to Select a Concept for a Passive Lounge Area at Hafer Park to be Funded with a TSET Matching Grant.** Presented by Frank Hale, Zach Paty, Julianna McCullough and James Hazzard of Freese and Nichols. Twelve horseshoe pits used for leisure and tournaments were eliminated during the renovation of the AC Caplinger ball complex. When it became apparent that the existing stage at Hafer Park was beyond repair and needed to be removed, it seemed like a good opportunity to reimagine that space for passive use and to include some horseshoe pits in the design. In August 2025, the Parks board approved a project understanding for development of a passive lounge concept. Freese and Nichols was engaged to develop concepts, and the city applied for a TSET grant to fund the project. The city has been awarded the grant. Three concepts were presented for the board to consider. The concepts each contained at least six horseshoe lanes, seating and picnic tables, low-lumen overhead lighting, landscaping with large boulders and planting beds, and yard games such as cornhole, ladder toss, or gaga ball. Improving accessibility and minimizing impacts to tree cover are important. There was discussion about loss of the stage. Concerts were moved to Stephenson Park a few years ago, and the stage can no longer be rented due to its poor condition. Installation of a new stage does not meet the TSET Healthy Incentive Grant requirements. A new stage at Hafer Park could be built in the future, possibly locating it where the Shakespeare in the Park stage used to be. Julianna suggested there are grants we could apply for to fund that type of project. Gary Bartley motioned to select Concept 1, which includes a hammock area and a gaga ball pit, but wanted to include corn hole instead of ladder ball; Chris Anderson seconded the motion. **Motion carried as follows:**
AYES: Gary Bartley, Sandra Naifeh, Earl London, Rick Smith, Chris Anderson, Anthony Rose, Gena Money, and Nick Nicoll

NAYS: Ashley Bradley
ABSTAIN: Taylor Hildenbrand
Anthony Rose left the meeting at 6:25 p.m.

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

Presented by Frank Hale and Zach Paty.

- **A.C. Caplinger** – Planning for opening in early July.
- **Pelican Bay** – CO#3 is on the next Council agenda. Expected to open in July.
- **Hafer Park Projects** – See Item 8.
- **Lamb Nature Preserve** – No update.
- **KickingBird Pickleball** – Currently expect delivery of the outer membrane in early August.
- **Joint Use Library & YMCA** – No update.
- **Trail Projects** – No update.
- **Staff & Park Highlights** – No staff highlight. Stephenson Park was highlighted. The land was given to the city in 1892, named South Park, and remained mostly natural until 1934. At that time, it was renamed after city manager Fred M. Stephenson and developed to include tennis, croquet, plantings, and the WPA gates and bridge. The park has continued to evolve, with the most recent renovation opening in 2023. It is one of the city's busiest parks.
- **Liaison Reports** –
 - Arcadia Lake – See Nick's comments in Item 4.
 - KickingBird Golf – Board didn't meet.
 - Park Conservancy – Sixty-one pieces of art have been approved/purchased. Saundra indicated that Cinda Covell offered to tour interested board members on June 6.

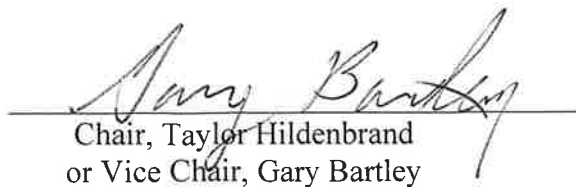
10) Citizen Comments. Moved to follow Item 6.

11) Comments from the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Chair and Members. Earl complimented Brad Raney's tenure as Parks Director, stating he got things moving that needed to be moved, and he will be missed.

12) Adjournment. Gary Bartley motioned for adjournment of the meeting at 6:36 p.m.; Nick Nicoll seconded the motion. **Motion carried as follows:**

AYES: Taylor Hildenbrand, Gary Bartley, Saundra Naifeh, Earl London, Rick Smith, Chris Anderson, Ashley Bradley, Gena Money, and Nick Nicoll

NAYS: None


Chair, Taylor Hildenbrand
or Vice Chair, Gary Bartley