

MINUTES

JOINT PARKS & RECREATION / OPEN SPACES COMMISSION
MONDAY
FEBRUARY 23, 2026

HYBRID MEETING
FLAGSTAFF AQUAPLEX
AND [MICROSOFT TEAMS](#)
1702 N FOURTH STREET
4:00 P.M.

1. Call to Order

Open Spaces Commission Chair Thomas called the meeting to order at 4:04 PM.

2. Roll Call

NOTE: One or more Commissioners may be in attendance through other technological means.

OPEN SPACES

Chair Jacqueline Thomas, present
Co-Chair Bruce Fox, present
Commissioner Mary Norton (P&Z Liaison), present
Commissioner Molly Joyce, present
Commissioner Lina Wallen, present
Commissioner Nat White, present
Commissioner William Kluwin, present
Councilmember Rep. David Spence, present

PARKS AND REC

Chair Stephen Parsons, present
Co-Chair Austin Kerr, present
Commissioner Neil Frazier, absent
Commissioner Camile Diab, absent
Commissioner Lisa Lamberson, present
Commissioner Jill Christensen, present
Commissioner Josh Stackhouse, absent
Councilmember Rep. Anthony Garcia, absent

Staff present: Rebecca Sayers (PROSE Director), Amy Hagin (Assistant PROSE Director), Robert Wallace (Open Space Manager), Haley Reynolds (Events and Marketing Manager), Tyrone Johnson (Recreation Manager), Gino Leoni (Parks Manager), Lori Reynolds (Administrative Specialist), Sarah Holditch (Events and Marketing Coordinator), Sylvia Struss (Open Space Coordinator), Ashlee Fliney (Open Space Education Coordinator)
Open Space Interns: Aryelle Reynolds, George Wilson, and Grace Harris.

3. Land Acknowledgment

The Flagstaff Parks and Recreation Commission and the Open Spaces Commission humbly acknowledge the ancestral homelands of this area's Indigenous nations and original stewards. These lands, still inhabited by Native descendants, border mountains sacred to Indigenous peoples. We honor them, their legacies, their traditions, and their continued contributions. We celebrate their past, present, and future generations who will forever know this place as home.

Read by Chair Thomas.

4. Approval of Minutes

Parks & Recreation Commission: [December 2025 Minutes](#)

- For the Parks and Recreation Commission's last minutes on December 15, 2025, Commissioner Parsons motioned to approve the minutes. Commissioner Lamberson seconded the motion. All Parks and Recreation Commissioners present approved the motion.

Open Spaces Commission: [January 2026 Minutes](#)

- For the Open Spaces Commission's last minutes on January 26, 2026, Commissioner Fox motioned to approve the minutes. Commissioners Norton and Joyce seconded the motion. All Open Spaces Commissioners approved the motion.

5. Public Comment

At this time, any member of the public may address the Commissions on any subject that is not scheduled before the Commissions on this day. The Arizona Open Meeting Law prohibits the Commissions from discussing or taking action on an item which is not listed on the prepared agenda. Commission members may, however, respond to criticism made by those addressing the Commissions, ask staff to review a matter, or ask that a matter be placed on a future agenda. To address the Commissions on an item that is on the agenda, please wait for the Chair to call for Public Comment at the time the item is heard.

Read by Chair Thomas. No comments or questions were received.

6. Business Items

A. Parks, Recreation, and Open Space 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan review and approval

Rebecca Sayers shared with Commissioners an overview of the 5-Year Capital Improvement plan and why the Commissions are responsible for reviewing and approving the plan annually. This is a part of the City of Flagstaff's annual budgeting process, giving PROSE staff an opportunity to share with the City's budget team that both Commissions had reviewed and approved the plan. Referencing the [PROSE 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan's spreadsheet on the screen](#), Rebecca noted that the estimated revenue over the next five years is lower than last year's estimates. Budget Section staff adjusted their revenue projections based on actual revenues received to date during the current fiscal year.

Amy Hagin provided updates on various Parks and Recreation projects including:

- Sports Courts (Bushmaster Park)
 - Project is substantially complete, any remaining work to be completed will be done by the end of this fiscal year (June 30, 2026).
- Highland Mesa Park
 - The project is still in the design stage and the overall completion of the park will be carried forward into the next fiscal year.
- Heritage Square Restroom
 - Concept design is complete. It is being moved to construction design and then will go out to bid, moving further work on the restroom into the next fiscal year.
- Ponderosa Park Reconstruction
 - Currently waiting for the stormwater project to wrap up before park reconstruction can begin and is funded beginning in fiscal year 2026-27.
- Thorpe Park Annex (former public works yard buildings)
 - Working on repurposing the large stone building (former Fleet facility) into the future Indigenous Cultural Community Center.
- Cheshire Park Expansion
 - The project is currently funded this fiscal year. Some of that has been spent on a topographic survey and a soils report for the proposed eight (8) acres north of the existing Cheshire Park.
 - Seeking to apply for a one-million-dollar match from the Land Water Conservation Fund grant in this upcoming fiscal year.
- Continental Park Expansion
 - In fiscal years 2026/27 to 2027/28, the team will be working on the design of the park's expansion that would extend from the existing Continental Park up towards I-40.
- Hal Jensen Recreation Center HVAC in Gym -- Project work and installation remain ongoing

Open Space project updates from Robert Wallace:

- City Council has approved for Open Space to receive an allocation of the BBB funds.
 - This upcoming fiscal year, they will receive their first allocation, which will go towards the McMillan Mesa Natural Area (MMNA) trail rehab project. Open Space staff are also working on a grant for a new signage project at MMNA, installing kiosks and interpretive signs.
- Open Space future land acquisition
 - Brief overview of funds that are allocated towards potential land acquisition; easements,

trail connections, property purchase that complements existing PROSE managed areas to implement the Open Space System.

- Picture Canyon Natural and Cultural Preserve (PCN&CP) restroom
 - Costs for a restroom will be a more expensive project than originally anticipated. The Open Spaces Commissioners decided those funds should be reallocated to another priority. Staff moved the funds to support the Open Space system (land acquisition)
- Observatory Mesa Natural Preserve Trail Plan
 - The plan has been completed and approved by City Council and the State Parks board. Open Space staff are currently having the trails mapped within a 30-meter corridor. This is part of four phases taking place across multiple fiscal years.
 - They are eligible to apply for a motorized grant for Observatory Mesa because of an existing Forest Service easement that passes through their property. If successfully awarded the grant, Open Space staff could use the funds to address restoration issues, fencing projects, and signage.

Councilmember Spence requested that budget items refer to the full names of the Open Space areas that the Open Spaces Commission has spent time working on changing, including using their full names in general discussion.

- McMillan Mesa Natural Area
- Picture Canyon Natural and Cultural Preserve
- Observatory Mesa Natural Preserve

Commissioner Thomas requested the Commissions provide a motion for approval of the 5-year plan as presented. Commissioner Fox motioned for the approval of the 5-year plan. Commissioner Wallen seconded the motion. All Commissioners present approved the motion.

B. PROSE Master Plan Update

Rebecca informed Commissioners that a contractor for the PROSE master plan had been selected. If Commissioners are interested in viewing the proposed contract, it will be available in the March 3, 2026 City Council agenda.

Following potential approval on March 3rd, the contractor will be routed for signatures, which may take up to three weeks, then staff will have a kick-off meeting with the contractor. Rebecca added that the contractor understands that they will also be working with two commissions and have included in their budget time to meet with both.

Robert updated Open Space Commissioners on the request from the previous month's meeting for them to review other city master plans for open spaces. This discussion item will be moved to their March meeting. In reviewing other master plans, Commissioners were asked to see if there was something specific that they would like included in the Open Space portion of the master plan.

C. FUTS Discussion on Operational Maintenance, Development

Amy shared with Commissioners general information regarding the Flagstaff Urban Trail Systems (FUTS) and explained a few operational concerns. FUTS has been a frequent topic for both Commissions, especially when it comes to the operational maintenance of existing trails and the addition of future trails. She acknowledged that while FUTS is a great asset, PROSE staff are not necessarily involved in the development and decision-making related to new trails. They are, though, responsible for maintaining any new trail and the existing trails, too. Another concern mentioned was that FUTS trail types have not been fully defined. For example, commuter versus recreational paths.

Carlton Johnson (City of Flagstaff Transportation Planner) provided insight, echoing similar concerns. From a developer's point of view, trails are secondary when they build. However, Carlton agrees that the sentiment of the community is that the urban trails system is an asset that began with the first step of recreational trails connecting all areas of the city, but that also functions as a transportation element between neighborhoods, not just one side of the city to the other.

Rebecca added that for this asset to the community, PROSE needs to figure a way to put more operation and maintenance funds into FUTS. The city's transportation division has completed a five-year maintenance plan for asphalt trails, but there is no plan in place for concrete and aggregate trails other than routine maintenance that is currently done by Parks staff.

Commissioners discussed the need for better defined trail definitions and emphasized that the FUTS, as an asset, makes Flagstaff a more desirable place to live.

7. City Council Liaison Reports

Councilmember David Spence, liaison for the Open Spaces Commission, recognized the work that Martin Ince put into FUTS and the loss of a great asset when he retired, as well as the need for additional FUTS connections. Commissioner Norton asked if when new development plans come across City Council's desk, are the locations of FUTS trail segments taken into consideration. Councilmember Spence replied that by the time those plans get to City Council, they are nearly a done deal when they have already taken into consideration items such as climate action, affordable housing, trails, and meeting city codes for sidewalks and storm drainage.

8. Reports -- Monthly highlights of Parks and Recreation, Open Space, and Events

A. PROSE Monthly Newsletter: [January 2026](#)

There were no questions on the monthly newsletter.

9. Informational items to and from Commissioners and Staff

Commissioner Norton shared that on the upcoming Wednesday the Planning and Zoning Commission would be hearing a rezoning case for Mill Town. This development focuses on the land across from the junction of University Dr. and S. Milton Rd, the location of a former ADOT building.

10. Potential Future Agenda Items

Commission meetings in March:

- Both Commissions:
 - Work on definitions for FUTS
 - Decide whether they would like to meet with the master plan contractor in a joint meeting or separately.
- Open Spaces Commissioners:
 - May research and share specific action items related to open spaces that they would like to see in the master plan.

11. Adjournment

Chair Thomas requested a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:19 pm. Commissioner Lamberson motioned to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Joyce seconded the motion.