

Parks and Recreation Board

City of Huber Heights

November 20, 2025

I. Call Meeting to Order

Chair Casey Taylor called the meeting to order at 6:34pm

II. Roll Call

Present at the meeting: Bryan Detty, Andy Hill, Michelle Fischer, Casey Taylor, Justus Bonnoront, Richard Moore, Alexander Black, Dennis Snider, and Racheal Aikens

Members Absent: Ron Eifert

Staff Present: Sarah Forsythe

III. Opening Remarks

The meeting began with the swearing-in of the new board appointee, Michelle Fisher. Ms. Fisher took the oath of office, affirming to uphold the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the State of Ohio, and the Charter and Ordinances of the City of Huber Heights, and to faithfully discharge the duties of her office to the best of her ability.

IV. Citizen's Comments

One citizen asked how board members are nominated and how positions are filled. It was explained that members complete an application, participate in an interview process, and appointments are approved by City Council if recommended. The citizen also asked whether board members are assigned to maintain specific parks or if responsibilities are shared. It was clarified that the board works collectively.

V. Old Business

a. YMCA Update

The YMCA hosted a Veterans Recognition Luncheon on November 12th in partnership with the Senior Center, with 140 veterans and guests in attendance. The ribbon cutting and dedication for the YMCA expansion was held on November 14th. During the annual Trunk or Treat event in October, approximately 4,500 people attended. The YMCA plans to offer more open pickleball and open volleyball opportunities for adults beginning in December with the addition of the new gymnasium.

b. City Update

Sarah Forsythe provided upcoming reminders and updates. A meeting regarding Dial Park is scheduled for December 3rd, and residents are invited to attend. The consultant will review survey results and facilitate activities to go input on park features. The annual Tree Lighting event will take place on Saturday, December 6th at the new Government Center. A parade will run from 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm, followed by the Tree Lighting event starting at 4:00 pm, with the tree lighting anticipated at 5:15 pm and a drone show at 6:00 pm.

An update was provided on the Mayor's Monarch Pledge. The city met three standards, largely due to pollinator bed work. Recognition is expected soon. City Council will hold the second reading of the tree ordinance at its next meeting. The ordinance assigns shared responsibility for city trees to the Public Works Director and Parks Manager and establishes a two-year timeline to develop a Tree Master Plan with assistance from this board. Passage of the ordinance will make the city eligible to apply for Tree City USA recognition, and staff intends to apply once the ordinance is approved.

VI. New Business

a. Review Annual Topics List

Staff presented an annual schedule outlining key discussion topics for each month, including officer elections, tree giveaway planning, council updates, secret shopper discussions, summer program reviews, Arbor Day and Earth Day activities, capital improvement planning, tree board updates, policy reviews, program brainstorming, voting on future initiatives, and meeting schedule reviews. Board members discussed the Capital Improvement Plan timing and clarified that review in May would primarily focus on projects planned for the following year, with the opportunity to discuss longer-term priorities as needed.

b. Review Meeting Dates for 2026

Meeting dates were reviewed, with clarification that the board meets on the third Thursday of each month. March's meeting was passed to get moved to Wednesday, March 18th.

c. Grant Update: NatureWorks, Urban Tree Grant, & EPA Mini Grant

Sarah Forsythe also announced receipt of a \$100,000 NatureWorks Grant to assist in acquiring nine acres adjacent to Cloud Park. The land, currently a cornfield, is planned for restoration into a passive area with native grasses, walking paths, and interpretive signage. The city also received a \$100,000 Urban Tree Canopy Grant to support the removal of Bradford pear trees on public property south of Taylorsville Road. A forester will work closely with staff to ensure best practices for removal and replanting. Staff proposed applying for an EPA grant of approximately \$5,000 to enhance interpretive signage at existing pollinator beds and support a seed collection program. The board discussed incorporating seed collection as a board-sponsored program. The motion was approved.

d. Tree Board Update

The board is serving as the city's Tree Board on a temporary basis to assist in development of the Tree Master Plan over the next two years. The structure may be reevaluated in the future. Tree species recommended by the landscape architect for the Cloud Park project were presented. Board members discussed the use of native versus non-invasive species, with consensus leaning toward prioritizing native trees while allowing some flexibility where appropriate. Staff will research which proposed species are native and return with additional information for further discussion.

e. Parks Upcoming Leave Plans

An overview of roles and responsibilities during the Parks Manager's upcoming family leave was shared. Board-sponsored programs and assigned board champions were reviewed. A board member volunteered to serve as champion for the Pollinator Pathways program. Staff noted coordination with Public Works will be necessary for implementation of the Bradford Pear Tree Removal Program.

VII. **Additional Business and Announcements**

A board member recognized Molly for her work on recent events, including a craft-related event that experienced strong attendance and positive foot traffic throughout the day.

VIII. **Approval of Minutes**

October 12, 2025 Meeting Minutes

It was noted that one board member was not in attendance at the October meeting, then Minutes were approved.

IX. **Upcoming Meetings**

January 15, 2026

X. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:05 pm.