

**PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
CITY OF RAMSEY
ANOKA COUNTY
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

The Ramsey Park and Recreation Commission conducted a regular meeting on August 14, 2025, at Riverdale Park, 6860 Riverdale Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Commission Members Present: Chair Megan Ealain
 Vice Chair Nathan Barten
 Commissioner Garth Anderson
 Commissioner Todd Arts
 Commissioner Shane Bennett
 Commissioner Dean Olson
 Commissioner Brandon Sis

Commission Members Absent:

Also Present: City Council Liaison Kirsten Buscher
 Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Mark Riverblood

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ealain called the Park and Recreation Commission meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

2. CITIZEN INPUT

None.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Commissioner Sis, seconded by Commissioner Barten, to approve the Park and Recreation Commission meeting agenda as presented.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chair Ealain; Commissioners Sis, Barten, Anderson, Arts, Bennett, and Olson. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve Park and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Bennett, seconded by Commissioner Arts, to approve the following Park and Recreation Commission Regular Meeting Minutes:

- Park and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes dated July 10, 2025

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chair Ealain; Commissioners Bennett, Arts, Anderson, Barten, and Olson. Voting No: None. Absent: None. Abstained: Commissioner Sis.

5. COMMISSION BUSINESS

5.01: Resident Request to Remove Neighborhood Trail Connection

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood provided background information, details of the request, and a summary of the discussion that occurred at the last meeting. He noted that the issue had been tabled to allow Commissioners to visit the site and for additional background/research to be completed.

Commissioner Bennett asked for clarification on the location of the trail within the easement.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood replied that the trail is fully within the easement and the easement fully lies within one property.

Jeff Lammert, 7494 159th Avenue, stated that his property line actually falls four feet past the trail onto what they had previously believed to be the neighbor's property.

Commissioner Bennett commented that it is an unfortunate placement for the trail, but he believes the trail should remain in place. He did not believe it would be advantageous to remove the trail.

Commissioner Sis stated that after reviewing the minutes from the previous meeting and the information in the case, he would agree that the trail should remain. He asked if the City would consider making an offer to purchase the strip of land where the easement is, so the boundary would lie on the other side of the trail.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood stated that while that could be done, there would not be a purpose for the City to purchase the land, as the only use for the land is the trail, and that is accommodated by the easement.

Commissioner Bennett stated that perhaps in the future, if the trail were aged and deteriorated to the point where it is no longer viable, it could then be determined whether the trail should be replaced or removed.

Councilmember Buscher asked if there had been consideration of the resident placing a fence on the inside of the trail, as it could be considered abandonment of the remainder of his property.

Commissioner Sis stated that perhaps there could be a memorandum of understanding with the City that the placement of the fence would not be considered abandonment of the remainder of the property.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood commented that he is not aware of any action related to the placement of fencing that would trigger abandonment of property. He stated that the property lines and easement were identified in the original plat for the development.

Commissioner Barten stated that he did a lot of research on this, and there are a lot of additional trails done in this same manner, not just in Ramsey, but throughout the country. He stated that, regardless of the usefulness of the trail, there would be an issue of precedent; removing a trail on an easement would set precedent for others to do the same, and that would be counteractive to the desire for connectivity.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood stated that there has been discussion of developing Traprock Park as a community garden, and the trail connection would then provide a benefit to more residents, including in The Woodlands neighborhood, most of which have tiny yards, many with shade.

Commissioner Bennett stated that he has two neighbors who would make a similar request to remove a trail that terminates at their driveway if this request were approved.

Mr. Lammert asked why it would be bad to remove something that residents do not like. He stated that he should have looked at a survey before purchasing the property to determine where his property line is, but he has now discovered that ten percent of his property is essentially unusable.

Commissioner Bennett commented that Mr. Lammert is asking for consideration for his property, which existed in this manner when he purchased it, and in addition to putting that burden on other Ramsey taxpayers to remove the trail and add other connections to take that place. He stated that the Commission is charged with making the best decision overall. He had empathy for the resident but also understood that he purchased the property in the manner it exists.

Mr. Lammert commented that he would be willing to contribute to the cost of removal of the trail.

Commissioner Bennett asked about the cost to make a connection to Traprock along Variolite Street to Alpine Drive.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood commented that the trail connection would have a cost of about \$500,000.

Commissioner Bennett commented that the issue is not just the trail on the easement but the broader ramifications.

Mr. Lammert stated that it seems like a shortcut the City chose to save money, in having the developer create this trail rather than the City paying for the extension and connection of trails.

Commissioner Bennett agreed that this was probably a poorly thought-out choice at the time of development.

Commissioner Arts commented that the situation should have been disclosed to the homeowner at the time of purchase, noting that he had a similar situation with an easement on his property. He recognized that it is not an ideal situation, but noted that he has used the trail connection himself.

Motion by Commissioner Barten, seconded by Commissioner Sis, to leave the trail as is with no changes.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chair Ealain; Commissioners Barten, Sis, Anderson, Arts, Bennett, and Olson. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

Mr. Lammert asked where he could place a fence.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood commented that he could supply a letter approving the placement of a fence 12 to 18 inches from the trail.

Councilmember Buscher stated that the resident is also welcome to bring this issue forward to the City Council if desired.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood commented that if the City were going to vacate real property and public improvements, there would be more impacts than just the property owner, and therefore, there would need to be public notice and a public hearing.

Mr. Lammert asked who he should speak with about how taxes are assessed for his property and how he could recoup any charges he has been assessed for that property.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood suggested that Mr. Lammert follow up with the County Assessor.

5.02: Water Play Development at The Waterfront – Progress Report

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood provided an update on the development of the design for the water play feature at The Waterfront, including estimated costs and lead times to obtain the materials. He asked that the Commission consider recommending the purchase of the building and sewer, and water main to keep the project moving forward on schedule.

Commissioner Sis asked if the restrooms would be proposed to be open year-round.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood commented that would not be anticipated at this time because of the additional cost that would be required for heating.

Commissioner Bennett commented that once the main building is completed, that would include indoor restrooms that would be accessible year-round.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood commented on the restrooms that are also presently available at nearby retailers.

Councilmember Buscher asked if the restrooms would just be male/female or whether there would be a family restroom.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood commented that is something that can be considered, but because of the additional cost that would be associated with these may just be

male/female restrooms. He noted that this would help to further develop the community park and provide an amenity that the community does not yet have.

Motion by Commissioner Sis, seconded by Commissioner Bennett, to recommend to City Council that the prefab restroom and support building, as well as the underground utility work for The Waterfront Park Improvement Project, be placed on the subsequent City Council Consent Agenda for formal approvals.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chair Ealain; Commissioners Sis, Bennett, Anderson, Arts, Barten, and Olson. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

6. COMMISSION/STAFF INPUT

6.01: Consider Park and Recreation Commission Presence at the 2025 Happy Days Festival

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood stated that this is the annual request for Commission presence at the Happy Days Festival. He noted that there are also other volunteer opportunities beyond the Commission booth for those who are interested and available.

Councilmember Buscher asked if the volunteer opportunities would be available for families.

Commissioner Sis noted that his son has volunteered with him at the event.

6.02: Recreation Program Updates - August

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood noted the monthly recreation program update included in the Commission packet.

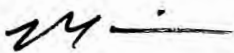
7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Bennett, seconded by Commissioner Sis, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chair Ealain; Commissioners Bennett, Sis, Anderson, Arts, Barten, and Olson. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

The Park and Recreation Commission meeting adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Mark Riverblood
Parks & Assistant Public Works Director

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.