

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

The Ramsey Park and Recreation Commission conducted a regular meeting on November 13, 2025, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

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

Commission Members Absent: Commissioner Dean Olson

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 6:30 p.m.

2. CITIZEN INPUT

None.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

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

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

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve Park and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes

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

- Park and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes dated September 11, 2025

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

5. COMMISSION BUSINESS

5.01: Recommend the 2026 - 2035 Parks Capital Improvement Plan

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood provided background information on the ten-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). He explained that the projects in the coming years are more certain, where things further out in the plan are often more flexible and may even be more of a placeholder. He presented the park projects included in the CIP for 2026, including trail connections, The Waterfront waterplay project and related amenities, Lake Itasca trail extension, amphitheater lighting, aeration of Sunfish Lake, River's Bend shelter replacement, playground replacement, park building stabilization, outdoor hockey rinks, and reroof of park shelter/warming house. He noted that each of those projects would still come before the Commission for review and recommendation.

Councilmember Buscher referenced the outdoor hockey rink and asked if there would be interest in doing refrigeration under to create a new rink with a nicer warming house that could include skate rental. She noted that would extend the skating season and not make it dependent upon the weather.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood noted that type of project was originally planned for Alpine Park with other features such as snowshoe rental, but acknowledged the high cost that project would have. He stated that since that time, they have reduced the number of areas where outdoor skating has been offered and have not received any complaints from residents, which leads them to believe the trend is declining towards outdoor skating and more people are using indoor sheets of ice for skating. He noted that the project could be added back into the CIP, but the cost for a refrigerated sheet of ice may be over \$1,000,000.

Councilmember Buscher stated that, as someone who has played hockey, she would appreciate that type of amenity in the community and stated that perhaps that would increase the interest from the community in outdoor skating.

Commissioner Bennett recognized that the outdoor skating numbers have continued to decrease, but perhaps that project would be something they could think about for the future. He stated that he does like the idea of an asphalt layer under the ice, as that could also provide a smoother opportunity under the ice and an opportunity for summer use with rollerblades, or even overflow parking.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood commented that the project could be added to the CIP for a future year as more of a placeholder concept. He stated that they will be looking to pave one or both rinks as the paving would assist in the creation of the ice and provide an additional use in the summer months. He noted that the warmer falls and earlier springs have shortened the outdoor rink usability, as have occasionally warm days that have happened, which have melted the ice in January. He commented that refrigeration of a sheet of ice would assist in a full season of outdoor ice.

Commissioner Barten commented that he would not be interested in adding the Alpine Park facility back to the list at this time because of the significant drop in skaters they have seen in the seven years he has been on the Commission. He stated that there would be valid points in exploring some options that could extend the outdoor skating season, such as the use of asphalt and perhaps gaining more information on the potential cost for refrigeration of a sheet of ice.

Commissioner Bennett asked for more information on the year the hockey rinks were earmarked for within the CIP.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood replied that the project is identified for 2026, but recognized that would not necessarily mean the project would be completed in time for the 2026-27 season. He stated that a statement could be added to the project already within the CIP to state that there will be an exploration of the cost for refrigeration of a sheet of ice.

Commissioner Bennett agreed with that approach, noting that the Commission can then discuss the feasibility and cost at a future time, which will help guide that project.

Motion by Commissioner Bennett, seconded by Commissioner Barten, to recommend adoption of the 2026 – 2035 Parks Capital Improvement Plan with the additional language as discussed relating to the outdoor sheet of ice project.

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

6. COMMISSION/STAFF INPUT

6.01: Recreation Update

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood encouraged residents and Commission members to sign up for the parks and recreation monthly newsletter. He highlighted the upcoming community tree lighting event and noted other events and programming opportunities can be found within the newsletter.

Commissioner Arts asked if there was a recap available from the Happy Days event. He noted that he participated in the 5K, which was well attended, and volunteered at other events during the day.

Parks & Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood commented that staff provided that update to the City Council earlier this week, and the recording from that meeting can be found on the website. He confirmed that there had been increased participation in the event.

7. ADJOURNMENT

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

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

The Park and Recreation Commission meeting adjourned at 7:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Mark Riverblood
Parks & Assistant Public Works Director

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.