

CITY OF COLUMBUS
PARK BOARD MEETING
INTERACTIVE MEETING FORMAT
STATUTES SECTION 13D.021
01-21-2025

The 01-21-2025 Park Board meeting for the City of Columbus was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chair Brad Norling at the City of Columbus City Hall. Present were Board members Kris King, Andrea Messina, and Bob Bodene.

City Council Liaison Mayor Ron Hanegraaf, City Administrator Jack Davis, Assistant Planner Eleanor Hahn, Public Works Director Jim Windingstad were also present.

Absent: Steven Ray

Also Present: Lea Genosky, FLAFA President and Jessie Messina

2025 CHAIR/VICE CHAIR APPOINTMENTS:

King nominated Norling as chair.

Motion by King to appoint Norling as chair of the park board.

Second by Bodene.

Roll call vote: King – aye, Messina – aye; Norling – aye; Bodene – aye. All in favor, motion carried.

Norling nominated Messina as vice-chair.

Motion by Norling to appoint Messina as vice-chair of the park board.

Second by King

Roll call vote: King – aye; Norling – aye; Messina – aye; Norling – aye; Bodene – aye. All in favor, motion carried.

AGENDA APPROVAL:

Motion by Norling to approve Park Board agenda for 01-21-2025 meeting as presented.

Second by King.

Roll call vote: King – aye, Messina-aye; Bodene – aye, and Norling – aye.

All in favor, motion carried.

APPROVAL OF PARK BOARD MINUTES:

Motion by Norling to approve the minutes of the 11-19-2024 Park Board meeting.

Second by Bodene.

Roll call vote: King – abstain; Messina – aye; Bodene – aye; Norling – aye.

All in favor, motion carried.

PUBLIC OPEN FORUM:

No-one present for open forum.

DISCUSSION:

FLAFA: Lea Genosky, President of Forest Lake Area Fastpitch Association (FLAFA), was present to discuss dug out and field discussion. Norling commented that last fall board members attended fields in Forest Lake to review the different designs of dugout covers. The board came to a

consensus on a design that they felt was best for the Columbus fields. Windingstad presented quotes from Century Fence. The \$15,565.00 quote is for 2 - 30 feet length, 10 feet deep with 2 openings to the field and one swing gate into the dugout, which includes installation. Windingstad stated the additional cost of construction for the metal roofs is approximately \$1,550.00 as well as an additional \$2,000.00 for concrete work. The total for 2 dugout covers for 1 field would be approximately \$19,115.00. The roof/concrete expenses do not include labor.

Norling informed Lea from FLAFA that their organization utilizes about 95% of the fields and would greatly benefit from this addition, however, it is a budgetary concern for Columbus and would require a partnership in this project. Genosky updated the board that the City of Forest Lake would like to see their existing fields be improved as well as additional fields built to accommodate more internal use, therefore, they are requesting FLAFA organization to offer funds for these improvements. She added that Forest Lake does not have the field capacity to accommodate all FLAFAs' needs and if Forest Lake increases the field rental rates, they cannot increase their payor rates as they have already submitted those rates in October. This would result in losing money that could potentially allow for funding for additional projects like dugout covers.

Norling added that FLAFA's monetary help would accelerate this project, and he would like to see continued energy and felt that if only one field could be accommodated in the near future would be progress and then would like to see the other two completed within 3 years as the City has a finite amount of money. Norling added that if FLAFA is unable to use the field then there would be no sense to go forward as currently they are the only users of the fields and would benefit from the expense. King inquired if they would know more at their next meeting if FLAFA will be forced to use only Forest Lake fields. Genosky confirmed that they will have more information to share with us at the next park board meeting in March but confirmed they have reserved fields for 2025 at Columbus.

Tree Removal:

Jesse Messina discussed the process of removing the existing dead trees. There are 34 diseased ash trees on the main park side that he would be able to use a crane to reach the trees to take down and clean up the residue and additionally there were many dead and fallen trees on the tennis court park side along the creek area that a loader would be brought in on frozen ground to remove. Messina noted there are a few oak stumps that need to be ground that are in open areas that will be taken care of, however the stumps that are in the marsh area on Notre Dame side will remain. Windingstad handed out 2 quotes from tree companies and the board went over each. He presented the bids as east side and west side to clarify each area. Bodene commented that the east side would be a priority starting point and Norling agreed adding the east side has more risk areas but added his concern of any trees falling on the fence on the west side. The consensus of the board was to make a motion of up to \$15,000 to remove the dead trees to get this project started and done before the ground thaws.

Motion by Norling to authorize up to \$15,000.00 to spend on clearing diseased dead trees in the park in 2025.

Second by Bodene.

Roll call vote: King – aye; Messina – abstain; Bodene – aye; Norling – aye.

All in favor, motion carried.

Park Maintenance

Windingstad informed the board that Ryan Stark from RVS has given his notice and will no longer provide park maintenance and mowing services for the City of Columbus. Windingstad and Ryan discussed the services that were provided on the mowing and park maintenance contracts and updated any needed information for Windingstad to go out for bids. He added when seeking bids, he would like to receive bids for both or none as then it can be comparative. Norling commented that he was disappointed to hear the news as he stated Ryan did a great job and always went above and beyond making the park look great and would hate to see sacrifices made to meet the monetary amount RVS was charging. Windingstad commented that some services may need to be picked up by city staff. RVS has been providing services for the City since 2008 and the board commended his great services put forth to the residents of Columbus. Windingstad reported he has three potential names and Bodene stated he has another contact that he will reach out to see if there is interest in submitting their name to be considered.

Park Master Plan Update:

Norling shared with the board that the subcommittee met last week and went over materials from previous planners and chose some ideas to continue with. Assistant Planner Hahn stated that there has been a lot of time working on the priorities list of ongoing, short term, midterm, and long-term goals.

Items that have to be considered and budgeted for are in the first two categories and those capital improvement plans going out 12 years are considered midterm and long-term goals. She added that basing the master plan around that given timeline the City Park and potential trails would be priority. Hahn noted that another subcommittee meeting is scheduled for February 19th and those available are invited to attend. At this meeting it is hoped to create a preliminary draft to present at the March Park board meeting. Norling commented Hidden Park always comes up during Master Plan discussion and the thought of continuing it to present itself as green space may be the answer now that we are looking at new lawn mowing contracts.

PARK BOARD MEMBERS OPEN DISCUSSION:

Norling would like to discuss the tennis court project at the next meeting. He referenced the park at Rock Creek as they have basketball, pickleball, and tennis courts and it is well done. King inquired if we were going forward with the tennis court project this year as it was budgeted for 2025. The proposed plan is to replace the existing courts using the same footprint with new lines applied.

Hanegraaf commended the park board for the work they are doing and appreciated Messina and Ray for their reappointment. Mayor Hanegraaf added that he was reappointed as City Council Park Board liaison for 2025.

NEXT MEETING:

The next scheduled park board meeting is Tuesday, March 25, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.

ADJORN:

Motion made by Norling to adjourn.

Second by Bodene.

Roll call vote: King – aye; Norling – aye; Bodene – aye; Messina - aye.

All in favor. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Lorie Spangler, Deputy Clerk