

CITY OF COLUMBUS  
PARK BOARD MEETING  
INTERACTIVE MEETING FORMAT  
STATUTES SECTION 13D.021  
05-20-2025

The 05-20-2025 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, Steven Ray, Kris King, 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: Andrea Messina

Also Present: FLAAA President, Lea Genosky, FLAAA Board members Matt Rivard, Kodi Young, and Jessica Paschke.

AGENDA APPROVAL:

**Motion** by Norling to approve Park Board agenda for 05-20-2025 meeting as presented.

**Second** by Bodene.

Roll call vote: Ray – aye; King – 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 03-25-2025 Park Board meeting.

**Second** by Ray.

Roll call vote: Ray – aye; King – abstain; 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 Athletic Association (FLAAA), along with additional board members were present to further discuss donations for the dugout covers for the Columbus fields. Genosky informed the park board that at the last FLAAA board meeting, the decision was to donate \$10,000 this year and an additional \$10,000 next year to be put towards the construction of dugout covers for the columbus fields. Davis commented that at a previous council workshop the suggestion to extend exclusivity rights to use of the fields if a donation was to be made would be considered. Genosky stated that additionally, FLAAA would like to request consideration of a rental fee price lock. Norling commented that the term for the price lock could be through the completion of the second dugout, which could be through 2027 season depending on when they could start.

There was discussion amongst the FLAAA board members and park board members regarding the process of construction, this will be further determined once a decision to proceed with this project

has been made. FLAAA board members Matt Rivard stated that he and fellow members would be willing to volunteer to help with the construction. Norling stated the next step is to get a firm price and determine the city's share after the \$10,000 donation from FLAAA, adding that the park board is in a better position to add this expense to the upcoming 2026 budget. This discussion will continue at the July 15<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **Tennis Court Update:**

Davis gave an update on the tennis court project. Bolton & Menk Engineers are working on the bid specs and advertisements. The bidding will be open for approximately three weeks beginning the first part of June. The bids will be presented to the council and if approved it will be brought back to the Park Board for approval and the project could start the first week in September and be completed by the end of October. Davis added the concern is the difference of the bid prices and what the budget provides for. Norling commented that currently there is \$130,000 in the budget for the court project. Davis provided a handout of the plans/options: 1) Base bid (same footprint) with 2 tennis courts with a pickleball court overlay on each tennis court, 2) 1 dedicated tennis court and 1 tennis court with 2 pickleball courts overlay, 3) 1 dedicated tennis court and 2 dedicated pickleball courts.

### **Park Maintenance:**

Davis reported on the status of the park maintenance which the public works department has taken over. The Public Works Director Windingstad informed Davis that as of date they have put in 70 hours mowing, dragging, and chalking fields. It is suggested to keep track of the hours and break each activity out to see where the time is spent and to have a better idea of what the costs are going forward for next year. Davis mentioned that a future discussion would be the possibility of shifting the parks maintenance budget to public works budget since the parks are a public facility and the residents' pay taxes for it, just like city hall maintenance and streets.

### **Park Master Plan Update:**

Assistant Planner Hahn provided a redlined draft of the Parks and Trails Master Plan for the board to review. This revision included edits mainly in the survey section to eliminate redundancies. Hahn commented that the main content of goals and policies are complete and continued stating that to move forward the next discussion will be long range budget plans. The Council will start holding their budget discussions late June therefore, this area will not be able to be finalized until August. Bolton & Menk, the City's engineering firm, has been working on the graphics of the existing park so at the next meeting in July, the board will be able to determine the placement of park goals.

The primary discussion in the past has been the City Park Implementation Strategy, which outlines the desires of short, mid and long-term needs. These specific considerations along with the cost estimates are outlined in the draft Park Master Plan. The board discussed how this document is a living breathing document and as priorities and goals change, this document will follow to represent those changes. Hahn stated she will bring back a clean version to the next meeting to review along with a map of the park from Bolton & Menk.

HIDDEN PARK INFORMATION: Davis informed the Board that he received new information regarding the status of Hidden Park that disputes original information. He stated that this piece of property was not

acquired through land dedication, but the property was acquired through tax forfeiture. With the tax forfeiture, it can be sold after the city possesses it for 30 years. Though, in this case it's called a conditional use need and there's a listing that it must be a park. However, now after the 30-year timing has passed, the City is inquiring with Met Council to see if they can sell it, because in the comp plan it is listed as a park and that will need to be changed. Davis added that he is somewhat hopeful that we can do that and potentially sell that property and stated they are diligently working on this and hoping it works out in our favor.

PARK BOARD MEMBERS OPEN DISCUSSION:

Norling informed the board that one of the maple trees that were planted 3 years ago on the north side of Kettle River, has been removed as it was damaged from high winds. Norling suggested replacing this tree as soon as possible to blend in with the other trees for growth purposes. Additionally, there is a crab apple tree close to the playground equipment that is struggling, however the board discussed not replacing that one. Norling added that he felt more garbage cans essential to be placed around the park. He mentioned replacing the barrels with the previously bought receptacle. Davis will consult with Windingstad regarding this.

Bodene reported that the newly planted trees from last fall have canes placed alongside each tree for support with a twisty tie for reinforcement. However, these ties are growing into the trunk. Bodene continued saying that he and his wife removed them to deter any future damage and added that the cages that were placed around each of the trees to deter the tree need to be removed as branches are growing through the cages. Bodene offered to remove the cages at the park and at Hidden Park if public works did not have the time to do so.

Mayor Hanegraaf informed the members that currently there is an opening on the Planning Commission if anyone is interested and to pass the information to neighbors. Mayor Hanegraaf inquired if the board would be meeting with the Council in a joint meeting to continue annual meetings discussing budget and financial needs. King felt it was important to have annual communications meetings with the council so everyone is on the same page and the Council can hear the boards concerns firsthand.

NEXT MEETING:

The next scheduled park board meeting is Tuesday, July 15, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.

ADJORN:

**Motion** made by Norling to adjourn.

**Second** by Bodene.

Roll call vote: Ray – aye; King – aye; Bodene – aye; Norling – aye.

All in favor, motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

*Lorie A. Spangler*

Respectfully submitted: Lorie Spangler, Deputy City Clerk