



Parks & Recreation Advisory Board

Regular Meeting Minutes

September 17, 2025 at 5:30 PM

City Hall Commission Chambers
401 S. Park Avenue

Present

Leah J. Bonich, Thomas Sims, Ginny Enstad, Ellen Wolfson, Lisa Tinker Marsh

Absent

Lawrence Lyman, Anne Mooney

Staff Present

Parks and Recreation Director Jason Seeley, Assistant Director Cathleen Daus (virtual), Recreation Coordinator Laura Halsey, Recreation & Family Services Manager John Clarke

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by chairperson, Leah Bonich, at 5:30 pm.

2. Consent Agenda

- a. Approve the minutes of August 20, 2025

Motion made by Thomas Sims, seconded by Ellen Wolfson, to approve the August 20, 2025, minutes.

Motion passes 5-0

3. Public Comments (for items not on the agenda): Three minutes allowed for each speaker

Ashley Fraebel, newly appointed Executive Director of Mead Gardens, introduced herself and provided a brief summary of the tasks they are working on at Mead Gardens. She also invited the board members to join them at the National Public Lands Day at Mead Gardens on September 27, 2025, where they will be hosting free yoga and tai chi classes, self-guided nature tours, along with the Audubon Birds of Prey, and a free tree giveaway provided by the City of Winter Park's Urban Forestry division.

4. Action Items

a. Howell Branch Preserve Park Grant Project

Jason Seeley, Director of Parks & Recreation, provided background information on the FDRAP grant project. A concept package to expand the trail around the storm pond was presented. He informed the board that a community meeting would be held at the Community Center. The conceptual drawings showcased the tentative plans for the

improvements should the project move forward.

The board inquired about plans for the sidewalk and the canoe drop-off. Mr. Seeley stated that the improvements would have to be implemented based on the order the grant funding is received.

**Motion made by Thomas Sims, seconded by Lisa Tinker Marsh, to approve moving forward with the grant funding process.
Motion passes 5-0.**

b. Phelps Park Green Space Use Policy

Mr. Seeley provided the board with background on the issue concerning the use of green space at Phelps Park. The main question under consideration, is whether the area should be designated for organized athletic use. He noted that the space is located near residential homes and is not equipped with lighting, which may naturally limit its use once the seasonal time change takes effect. If the green space is formally converted into an athletic field, it would be subject to the same reservation process and rental fees as other facilities. To better understand community sentiment, Mr. Seeley recommended conducting a resident survey.

Mr. Sims emphasized the need for more open green space where children can freely run and play, and argued that residents living near the park should expect community use of the space and not view it as an extension of their backyard. He suggested allowing informal team practices at the park, provided guidelines and reservation requirements are established, though he acknowledged that parking has long been a challenge in the area. Mrs. Bonich observed that the city's website does not currently state that athletic use of the park is prohibited. Mrs. Wolfson expressed support for a community survey, noting that broader resident input would help the board members and city staff make a more balanced decision.

**Motion made by Ellen Wolfson, seconded by Thomas Sims, to extend the use of the park.
Motion passes 5-0.**

c. Addition of Fee Based, Automated Dog Washing Station at Lake Baldwin Park

Mr. Seeley presented a proposal from a company offering to install fee-based, automated dog washing stations at Lake Baldwin. He explained that the project would not require a competitive bid, as there are few vendors in this niche market, and suggested starting with a single station on a trial basis.

Mr. Edwin Elbary, representing Scrub-A-Pup, provided additional details about the service. As a frequent visitor to the dog park, he noted that he has spoken with other

patrons who expressed interest in the convenience of such stations and indicated a willingness to pay for their use. He highlighted the primary benefit of the stations as the ability to wash and dry dogs before placing them in vehicles. Mr. Elbary clarified that his company is not selling any additional products or services; the stations themselves would simply be available for patron use.

Board members asked questions regarding how wastewater would be managed and whether the city would receive a portion of the revenue to offset costs. Mr. Elbary confirmed that he had proposed an 80/20 revenue split with the city and that his company would be responsible for all maintenance. Mr. Sims raised concerns about the potential for chemical runoff into the lakes and surrounding waterways. In response, Mr. Elbary stated he had obtained ingredient information from the manufacturer and verified that all products used in the stations are natural and environmentally safe.

Motion made by Leah Bonich, seconded by Ellen Wolfson, to move forward with a pilot contract for one station at Lake Baldwin Dog Park. Motion passes 4-1, with Thomas Sims being opposed.

5. Non-Action Items

6. Staff Updates

7. Board Comments

8. Upcoming Agenda Items

- a. Fall Meeting Schedule
 - October - Regular Meeting; followed by Work Session
 - November - Regular Meeting
 - December - 12/17/25 - No Meeting
 - January - Regular Meeting

Mr. Seeley stated there are no action items for the October meeting, but a work session can be held in lieu of the regular meeting on the 15th.

He explained the meeting conflict between PRAB and WPYCC, and asked the board about another date that would work for everyone.

All five board members voted to deny accommodating the WPYCC meeting schedule and keeping the original PRAB meeting schedule on the third Wednesday of the month.

Meeting schedule:

October— A work session will be held only on the 15th to discuss each board member's goals. This will assist staff in being proactive rather than reactive to ensure progress is

made before any board member changes that may occur in the upcoming appointment process.

November 19th, 2025 — Regular Meeting

December 17th, 2025 — No meeting

January 21st, 2026 — Regular meeting

The board asked Mr. Seeley to send an email with a set deadline for board members to submit their topics of interest so he has time to prepare for the work session.

9. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:07 pm

Approved by the Board on November 19, 2025.
/s/ Laura Halsey, Recreation Coordinator