

PARKS & RECREATION
ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

October 20, 2025 6 pm
City Arena

Members Present:

Steve Ball
Kent Rahn
Therese Salazar
Whitney Sauer
Jason Howland, Ex-Officio

Members Absent:

Amy Leach
Wende Taylor
Tony Segura

Staff in Attendance:

Cathy Malakowsky, Community Engagement and Enrichment Director
Bob Furland, Recreation Manager
Afton Wacholz, Recreation Office Manager

Others in Attendance:

none

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Steve Ball at 6:05pm.

Adopt Agenda:

Therese Salazar made the motion to approve the agenda for tonight's meeting and Kent Rahn seconded the motion. The board voted in favor of said motion 4-0. Motion declared passed.

Approval of the Minutes:

Kent Rahn made the motion to approve the minutes from the September 15, 2025 meeting and Therese Salazar seconded the motion. The board voted in favor of said motion 4-0. Motion declared passed.

Public Items:

None

Old Business Items:

Rec facilities project update and tour –

- Provided the board with an update on the Rec facilities projects at the City Arena, Aquatic Center and Marion Ross Theater.

- Reviewed the update that was provided to the City recently by InBylt. The update revealed another delay in the completion of the Colstrup rink to early February, 2026. Nystrom rink is currently up and running with use of a temporary chiller as of October 19.

New Business Items:

Park on Adams Ave Discussion –

The City inherited this property at 620 Adams Ave through tax forfeiture and would now like to apply for a \$1.25 million federal grant to help remove hazardous buildings and their contents. The City is looking for public support for a few different options that the site could be utilized as.

1. Mini park: remove all buildings and make into a park with greenspace and parking.
2. Mixed use area: remove hazardous buildings and leave the three structurally sound buildings and look to sell to a private business for reuse. The City would develop the rest of the area into greenspace with parking and perhaps other amenities.
3. Full trailhead: Remove all buildings and develop full trailhead with parking, a shelter, restrooms and other amenities. This option could also include leaving the three structurally sound buildings and sell to a private business.

The City is seeking community feedback through a survey.

The Park and Recreation Board has chosen to hold off on making any recommendations to the City Council and would like to have more information at a future meeting on the results of the community survey.

Staff Report Discussion:

None

Staff Updates:

Recreation: Report provided by Bob Furland and Dani Bakken;

- Young Athletes, which is an inclusion program through special Olympics, started on Monday October 7. There are 15 kids registered between the ages of 4-6.
- Fitness classes with Annie began on Monday, October 13. She is offering weight training and Pilates. There are 23 registered for weight training and 17 registered for Pilates
- Oktoberween Kids Carnival
 - The Kids Carnival will be held the following days:
 - Thursday, October 23 from 5-7p.m.
 - Crafts, bounce house, yard games
 - Friday, October 24 from 5-7 p.m.
 - Crafts, bounce house, yard games, kids' bingo
 - Saturday, October 25 from 3-7 p.m.
 - Train rides, crafts, bounce house, face painting, yard games
 - Sunday, October 26 12-4 p.m.- free admission
 - Trunk or treat, kid friendly haunted house, music by Brett Feis, Dales train rides and a costume contest
- Working with Glenville schools to offer a fall volleyball league
- The Recreation Office will be moving back to the City Arena on Thursday, October 16. The office will be closed to the public on October 16 and 17 to allow staff time to move and organize their new space. The Rec Office will reopen to the public at the City Arena on Monday, October 20 with office hours of 7:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Parks: Report provided by Ryan Hajek and Ben Bangert;

- Beginning seasonal maintenance; water shut offs, leaf mulching, Hayek Field turf preparations.
- Electric Vehicle Ford F-150 is set up at Edgewater Park for maintenance duties. Electric services will be installed by A.L Electric.
- Fall tree planting: 70 Blvd./park trees. 16 spade/transplant 5ft white pines from Bancroft Bay Park to Water treatment Facility windbreak.
- 15 Christmas tree pole decorations getting a makeover. New lights/ garland etc.... Small steps for large project.
- Splash Pad Bathroom construction remaining steps; insulation in roof, interior wall finishing, install amenities/partitions, floor coating.
- Two new dog waste stations installed.

City Arena: Report provided by Bob Furland/Josh Heilman;

- Facility updates –
 - See Facilities Project Update below
- Events -
 - None
- Other events –
 - First skate on Nystrom will be Sunday, October 19 for Albert Lea Youth Hockey and High School Girls captain's practice.

Aquatic Center: Report provided by Bob Furland/Dani Bakken;

- None

Senior Center: Report provided by Bob Furland;

- Trips -
 - Treasure Island casino trip is scheduled for November 6
- Programs/Events –
 - A Mahjong group started meeting on Thursdays
 - Halloween party with themed bingo on October 31
 - 80's brunch will be held on Friday, October 24 at 11 a.m.

Marion Ross Theater: Report provided by Bob Furland;

- **Facility Updates** –
 - See Rec facilities update below.
- **Upcoming events** –
 - On Golden Pond finished up this weekend at the Marion Ross Theater.
 - October 25th, The Vee Gees – Tribute band to the Bee Gees. A great tribute to the music of the Bee Gees. Saturday night fever and all the hits.

Other: Report provided by Cathy Malakowsky;

- Songbird Trail: The City of Albert Lea is applying for an EPA grant to clean out the hazardous materials from the former Merrick buildings on Adams Avenue and remove the buildings. The long-term plan for the site is a trailhead for the Songbird Trail that will go from Front Street to Hartland. Freeborn County is applying for regional designation of the trail to qualify for additional grants to develop the trail.
- Blue Zones: Annie Olson, local fitness instructor, is leading walking moais on Sunday evenings at United Preschool and Thursday evenings at the Blazing Star Trail, starting at Frank Hall Park. Both start at 6 p.m. and are open to the public.

Referendum Project Updates

Lobby/Office Areas

- Punch list walk-through complete for lobby and office area
- Doors completed
- Rubber flooring is being installed in the lobby, the refs room, and the skate office area
- Cleaners work to dust and clean to open the Recreation Department at the Arena on Monday, October 20
- Epoxy flooring installed in the refs shower area

Ice Arena

- New compressors and chillers delivered
- New electric service for ice arena refrigeration equipment installed
- Exterior front doors installed
- Interior doors and glass installed
- Installing hot water boilers for ice-making water
- Finishing front doors
- Electric updates continue for the facility
- Front sidewalk poured

Aquatic Center

- Finishing concrete work
- Crew will be starting block on ticket building

Marion Ross Theater

- Front doors are installed. Crews will be back on October 20th to start windows and install the drop ceiling and electric ADA door opener.

**** Top 5 Project Updates:**

Restrooms by Splash Pad –

- Update under Parks updates

Develop the Union Pacific rail to trail –

- Update under Cathy Malakowsky's updates

Develop an off-season field house –

- Status of the non-city group working on this idea?

Upgrade Snyder Fields –

- No new update

Update aging facilities, including the City Arena and Aquatic Center –

- See update under Referendum Project Updates

Board Member Items:

None

Adjournment: Therese Salazar made a motion to adjourn the Park Board meeting and Kent Rahn seconded the motion. The board voted in favor of said motion 4-0. Motion declared passed. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Afton Wacholz
Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Secretary

Approved:

Amy Leach
Park & Recreation Advisory Board Co-Chair