

August Parks and Recreation Department Updates from Staff

Recreation: Report provided by Bob Furland and Dani Bakken;

- Participated in the last Wind Down Wednesday on Wednesday, August 13. Recreation staff provided a craft, the bounce house and yard games.
- Neighborhood parks closed on July 24 for the season. The final participation numbers are:
 - Academy: 117
 - Lakeview: 331
 - Troy-Hammer: 72
 - Sondergaard: 202
 - Hawthorne: 157
 - Hayek: 98
 - Valley: 279
- The last Movie in the Park was on Friday, August 8. There were roughly 40 people who attended the movie "Under the Boardwalk".
- Adult summer sand volleyball will play their end of the year tournament on Monday, August 18. There were 11 co-ed teams who participated this season.
- The Fall Guide was sent to the printer on August 12 and should be hitting mailboxes at the end of August.

Parks: Report provided by Ryan Hajek and Ben Bangert;

- Wind events caused quite a bit of tree and branch damage. Usually two crews cutting or picking up the debris for several days.
- Ginkel Park playground construction is basically complete. Minor soil leveling and seeding/erosion control to take place.
- Continual maintenance of mowing, weed eating, and trash clean up.
- Continued painting in Edgewater Cottage. Working on second coat to main walls, very progressive.
- Alex Bledsoe promoted to Sr. Park Maintenance. He will continue to lead the still forming tree crew.
- Ski Show at Edgewater Park events canceled due to high water. Several compliments to Waseca for stepping in to help.

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

- Facility updates –
 - See Facilities Project Update below
- Events -
 - None
- Other events –
 - None

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

- Session 3 swim lessons ended on August 1. There were 60 participants. The total participation numbers for all 3 sessions was 429 individual registrations.
- This summer there were 67 registered for water aerobics.
- Family and individual memberships sold this season:
 - Family of 8 – 1
 - Family of 7 – 3
 - Family of 5 – 14
 - Family of 4 – 77
 - Caretaker – 10
 - Individual 3-9 years old - 5
 - Individual 10-15 years old – 46
 - Individual 16 and older - 9
- The Aquatic Center closed for the season on Sunday, August 11. The total attendance for the 2025 summer season was 17,332 visitors.
- The pool managers continue working season end clean up and preparing the facility for the start of fall construction.

Senior Center: Report provided by Bob Furland;

- Trips -
 - Sept. 24 - "A Fall Day to Remember" day trip to Cracker Barrel, Fergusons Orchard, and Minnesota's Largest Candy Store.
- Programs/Events –
 - Aug. 25 at 11:00 a.m. - End of Summer BBQ at the Senior Center

Marion Ross Theater: Report provided by Bob Furland;

- Facility Updates –
 - No new updates
- Upcoming events –
 - Auditions for On Golden Pond will be held on Sunday, Aug. 24, and Monday, Aug. 25, at 7 p.m. Auditions are held at the Marion Ross Performing Arts Center.
 - DC Drifters with Todd Utpadel Aug. 30 at 7:30 p.m. - DC Drifters bring their rock n roll show to the theatre, this time with Todd Utpadel, to benefit Musicians Against Cancer. Consider attending this special concert and hear some great Rock n Roll music.

Other: Report provided by Cathy Malakowsky;

City Council

- The major topic recently has been registering cannabis retailers. At its Aug. 11 meeting, the Albert Lea City Council approved two of three cannabis retailer registrations on its agenda. One is Matchbox Farms of New Mexico, which will open shop on Hendrickson Road. The second is Black Husky of Washington state, which will open shop on Ekko Avenue. Both meet all setbacks and the applicants passed background checks. The council declined to reconsider a registration

for a local applicant because of concerns over the applicant's criminal record, probation violations and recent actions.

- The council also discussed adding a background check beyond the state licensing process and raising the current limit of 2 non-tribal retailers.
- You can watch the video recording of the meeting on YouTube:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uyPmufa36iA&t=3s>.

Blue Zones:

- Annie Olson is leading 2 walking moais through August. One meets Thursdays at 4:45 p.m. at Eastgate Park to walk to the Thursdays on Fountain concert. The other meets Sundays at 6:30 p.m. at United Preschool. Starting Sept. 11, the Thursday group will meet at Frank Hall Park at 6 p.m. and the Sunday group will still meet at United Preschool but at 6 p.m. Feel free to join!

Senior Center:

- As part of a holistic evaluation of the Senior Center, the city issued a request for proposals (RFP) on July 30 for the Senior Center's long-term physical facility from the current landlord as well as other entities interested in hosting the Senior Center. See the full [RFP](#) for details. Proposals are due Sept. 26.

Albert Lea Police Citizens Academy:

- The ALPD invites you to participate in its upcoming [Citizens Academy program](#), offering an inside look into the daily operations of local law enforcement. Participants meet once a week over 8 weeks, learning in-depth information on the department's policies and procedures. Classes will be held on Monday evenings Sept. 8 through Nov. 10, from 6:30 - 9 p.m. Applications are due Aug. 29, and are available at the Finance Window on the top floor of City Hall, 221 E. Clark St., and the Law Enforcement Center lobby on College Street.

Referendum Project Updates

Lobby/Office Areas

- Windows are being installed in the new lobby.
- Sheet rocking will start on Tuesday, August 19 in the new lobby area.
- Staff are working with contractor on new lobby flooring decisions.
- Additional electrical work on lights, switches and outlets have been added to the lobby.
- Lobby, Rec office area and conference room expected completion date of mid-September.

Ice Arena

- Installation of new pipes for the snowmelt pit.
- Waiting for confirmation and pricing for temporary chillers to get Nystrom up and running as soon as possible.

Aquatic Center

- Work to start on the new entrance/ticket booth and locker room area in the next couple of weeks.

**** Top 5 Project Updates:**

Restrooms by Splash Pad –

- See update under Parks update

Develop the Union Pacific rail to trail –

- No new update

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