

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes

Regular Meeting – Sept 4, 2025

Meeting Location: Hospitality Suite

Roll Call

Board Members Present:

William Findlay
Kyle Gardner
Chandler Smith
Anna Stout
Nancy Strippel
Josh Travers
Lisa Whalin
Byron Wiehe

Board Members Absent: Cindy Enos-Martinez

City Staff Present: Ken Sherbenou, Director of Parks and Recreation
Emily Krause, Recreation Superintendent
Rob Davis, Parks Supervisor
Allison Little, Administrative Specialist

Meeting called to order by Nancy Strippel at 12:03 p.m.

Approve minutes from the August 2025 Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting

Kyle Gardner made a motion to approve the minutes of the August meeting. The motion was seconded by Josh Travers and carried unanimously.

Yes – 6 No – 0
(Chandler and Anna arrived just after the vote on the minutes.)

Supervisor Presentation - Rob Davis

Ken introduced Rob Davis and talked with the board about his time with Grand Junction Parks and Recreation. Rob shared with the board about the City's Forestry Board which was established in 1914. Originally the board was made up of Commissioners of Health and Civic Beauty, Public Affairs, and Roads. The second City ordinance created made it unlawful to damage trees. The City tree canopy is appraised at 238,034 trees worth \$1.1 billion.

Today the board is comprised of professionals, interested citizens and partners from the State Forest Service and CSU Extension office. The Forestry Board is responsible for licensing tree work contractors. This license is important because it is a highly dangerous profession with a high potential for private property damage. The fatality rate for a professional arborist is 30 times higher than the all-industry average.

Rob supervises the City Forestry staff, the Plant Health Care Team and Open Space staff. The City Forestry staff focus on maintaining street and park trees though maintenance activities are seasonally focused on planting in spring, pruning in summer, and removals and stumping in fall and winter. The street trees really function as an extension of the park system. Other division projects include Christmas Light installation, Watson Island renovation, Riverfront Trail corridor maintenance, and plant health care treatments. 21 percent of City canopy is ash trees. There is definitely a different feel on Grand Avenue and 7th street where many mature ash trees have been lost. The change in canopy cover changes the feel of a neighborhood.

The Forestry Division was awarded a two-year \$200,000- IRA Grant. Due to some uncertainty surrounding federal funding at the beginning of the year, grant activities started and late summer and have been focused on installing irrigation in right of way areas to support street trees, and then planting trees in newly irrigated space. Eight properties have had systems installed in preparation for 29 trees, making use of \$50,000 of the grant funding. The work will be completed by the end of September (end of Federal fiscal year). Rob noted that the calculated increase to a water bill would be about \$6 per month until a new tree gets established.

Outdoor Facilities Update

Ken Sherbenou advised the board that a Council Workshop next week will feature the plans for the Outdoor Facilities phase of the CRC. Staff are talking with a potential donor and additional funding would enable other amenities. Ken Sherbenou reminded the board that the water users association is requiring the current irrigation ditch be enclosed. For ideal development the line will also be relocated to the west. Those changes are about halfway funded at this time.

Organization Chart Review

This item was tabled until a future meeting.

For the Good of the Community

Bill Findlay shared that the Blackout Sports Fieldhouse had their Opening. It provides indoor turf and sports space.

Adjourn by acclamation at 1:16

Next Meeting – October 2, 2025

Respectfully submitted,
Ali Little, Administrative Specialist