

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes

Regular Meeting – March 5, 2026

Meeting Location: Lincoln Park, Hospitality Suite

Roll Call

Board Members Present: Cindy Enos-Martinez
William Findlay
Chandler Smith
Nancy Strippel
Josh Travers
Lisa Whalin
Bryon Wiehe
Anna Stout

Board Members Absent: Kyle Gardner

City Staff Present: Ken Sherbenou, Director of Parks and Recreation
Emily Krause, Recreation Superintendent
John Steuble, Parks Supervisor
Jennifer Howard, Senior Administrative Assistant

Meeting called to order by Nancy Strippel at 12:01 p.m.

Approve Minutes from the February 5, 2026 Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting

Lisa Whalin made a motion to approve the minutes of the February meeting noting a typo on page 2 that needs to be fixed (change Updat9 to Update). The motion was seconded by Josh Travers and carried unanimously.

Yes 7 No 0

Supervisor Presentation – John Steuble

Ken Sherbenou introduced John Steuble the Turf, Irrigation, and Cemetery Supervisor. John talked with the board about the turf team. The turf team handles everything from mowing and string trimming during the growing season to top dressing and fertilization, treatment for pest control, and even conversions from turf grass to more native grass combinations. The irrigation team handles all of the irrigation systems in all the parks and right of way areas, including audits, fixing breaks, repairing broken heads, and dredging ponds to ensure good flow. New under John's supervision this year is the Cemetery. John shared with the board some of the history of the Cemetery. The Orchard Mesa Cemetery was originally nine different cemeteries. Just down the hill from the Orchard Mesa Cemetery is the Mesa County Potters Field, the first internment is from 1881, John also talked with the Board about the history of Crown Point Cemetery.

2026 Projects

Ken talked with the board about projects the Department has planned and budgeted for 2026. Following irrigation improvements made last year are sidewalk and turf improvements at West Lake Park. Also following discussions with Council last year, the turf conversion at Lilac Park is planned. The irrigation pump house at Paradise Hills Park is currently shared with the HOA and is in need of replacement. Our risk management company would prefer a stand-alone facility not shared with another entity, so when this pump house is replaced it will be relocated to a separate site. Additionally, the Canyon View pumps and irrigation control will be upgraded.

Unbudgeted projects include turf conversions, updates to irrigation controls which the department works in as budget and priorities are available, Memorial Forest areas which offer alternatives to conventional memorial spaces. Additionally, though unbudgeted, staff continues to seek funding options for irrigation replacement at the Orchard Mesa Cemetery. Ken Sherbenou talked with the board about potential grant opportunities for the project. Board members wondered if a cemetery would be competitive for a grant. Given our watershed, staff believes we could offer a competitive grant proposal.

Board members asked about water concerns given the lack of moisture this winter and the dam at Purdy Mesa. John Steuble shared that staff are actively monitoring soil moisture levels. The tree canopy is the most valuable asset the Parks Department manages and the irrigation team may begin watering as early as next week.

Board members shared concerns about the aesthetics of the cemetery, the west side of the road looks better than the east side but often the grass is not mowed nicely or trimmed. John Steuble shared that while the cemetery staff works very diligently to regularly mow and trim all the areas of Cemetery, especially in older areas of the cemetery where there is little standardization in grave spacing, and headstone size and placement, these areas must be trimmed by hand.

Trail Naming at Matchett Park East

Ken Sherbenou advised the board that Council has received a request from a resident who spends time cleaning up trash in the trail system at Matchett to name a loop in the system after his dog. The trail is at the north end of the bike loop.

Board members discussed researching the process that other entities use to designate trail names noting that, from a first responder point of view, having named trails makes locating people much easier. Board members wondered about creating a simple application that could be submitted, perhaps using Engage GJ to gather public comment, and making sure there is a defined process for determining names.

2026 Capital Projects

Ken Sherbenou advised the board he will email the 2026 Capital Project presentation for the board to review.

Feedback for Council on PRAB Applicant Skills and Expertise

Ken Sherbenou reminded the board that applications are open for Parks and Recreation Advisory Board spaces. There is one vacancy and three board members whose terms are up this year and can be renewed. Board members shared feedback for Council on skills and expertise for applicants for the board. Potential Board members should:

- Have an interest in Parks, Trails, Outdoor things that are happening, neighborhood parks, sports for kids/students. Participate in activities that have to do with the community.
- Be diverse in terms of perspectives, user groups, demographics, etc.
- Have the ability to look beyond self-interest and consider the P&R program broadly.
- Be an ambassador for P&R and supportive of P&R initiatives.
- Have involvement and history in the community.
- Represent typically under-represented groups - special needs, lower economic status, etc.
- Champion equity access and inclusion into P&R

For the Good of the Community

The Board discussed the West Lake park playground which is in the poorest condition in the system. The playground is temporarily closed and currently the budget does not exist to repair or replace the components, though the structure could be removed. The swing would remain if the rest of the structure is removed. Additionally, the Hawthorne Park playground is being evaluated. Some platforms which had exposed metal have been resurfaced in an effort to prolong their life, but this playground is also in need of significant repair or replacement.

Ken Sherbenou talked with the board about the Barn agreement with Colorado Mesa University. The Barn is being leased to CMU for its exclusive use for the next 25 years. CMU will make improvements to the facility including building new locker rooms and football team area so that they can move practices and team meetings to Stocker. In exchange, CMU is contributing \$300,000/yr. This will free up City dollars for other uses. CMU commits to not changing the Barn usage (by groups such as Yoga, Tai Chi and Line Dance) until the CRC is open.

The agreement includes the provision that certain events such as School District 51 track, Special Olympics, Marching Band Competitions, High School Football Games, and other scheduled events will still be held on Stocker Field. CMU will also post open hours so that the community may continue to use the track as they do now.

Future Agenda Topics

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned by acclamation at 1:28pm.

Next meeting April 2, 2026

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Howard, Senior Administrative Assistant