

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Thursday, Sept. 18, 2025, 6:30 p.m.
ARC Meeting Room, 1701 W Ash

DRAFT MINUTES

Commission Present: Dan Devine, Ted Farnen, Chad Henry, Jason Patrie, Paul Morrison

Commission Absent (excused): Ellen Young, Brendon Steenbergen

Commission Absent (unexcused):

Staff Present: Gabe Huffington, Mitch Dooley, Cavelle Cole-Neal

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Dan Devine called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

AGENDA

Agenda was approved on motion by Farnen, seconded by Morrison. Motion passed 5-0.

MINUTES

Minutes approved on a motion by Farnen, seconded by Morrison. Motion passed 5-0.

MONTHLY REPORT

Park Services Manager Mitch Dooley shared park highlights and Recreation Services Manager Cavelle Cole-Neal shared recreation division highlights.

Monthly report was approved on a motion by Henry, seconded by Morrison. Motion passed 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS

CoMoGives campaign

Director Huffington provided an update about the Parks and Recreation Fund efforts for the December CoMo Gives campaign including revamping the event for 2025 to focus on raising funds for tree planting along the Perche Creek Trail in 2026. Multiple Commissioners provided comments and questions related to:

- Having the Forester specify types of trees that will be planted.
- Press release, notes, postcard or email notifying potential donors about the changes and the new program.
- Make sure donors don't show up to Walt's Bike Shop
- Can P&R look at individualizing the donations in case someone makes a large donation
- If everyone gives, how do we recognize donors on the trail and through a thank you note

REPORTS

Council Items

Huffington shared these updates:

Huffington provided an update on the \$100,000 donation from the Columbia Youth Basketball Association for the PA system at the Columbia Sports Fieldhouse. He also let the Commission know that the FY2026 budget was approved by the City Council with all discussed P&R items included in the budget. An update regarding AOFAC capital project was also provided with the public hearing set for October 6.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission Report

Huffington provided additional information regarding the Commission discussion about the upcoming FY2026 trail projects.

Capital Project Report

Dooley shared photos of recent and ongoing projects: LA Nickell cart shed, Fieldhouse expansion, Westwinds Park, Whitegate Park, Gans Creek Rec Area, Blind Boone Home, Clary-Shy, Cosmo football fields and Flat Branch Park.

Recreation Services Report

Cole-Neal shared photos and information: Kaleidospoke, summer interns, Heritage Festival, Life Enrichment, 50+, ARC, Adapted Recreation, Aquatics, Community Recreation, Golf and Sports.

STAFF COMMENTS

Huffington alerted the Commission that the dedication for the Columbia Sports Fieldhouse - Phase II project has been set for Thursday, December 11 @ 5:30 pm. Huffington introduced Moira Theis, Recreation Specialist, and she provided each Commissioner with a flyer for the Heritage Festival.

COMMISSION COMMENTS TO STAFF

Paul thanked P&R staff for the large amount of support for the PDGA Amateur Disc Golf Championships and the visitors to our community noticed the efforts.

He also thanked staff for moving forward with the Whitegate Park improvement project and is excited to see the amount of use that park gets by the neighborhood.

Ted asked about an update regarding online meeting options and Director Huffington said he would get more information from the IT Department.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mickie Britton asked for an update on the Gans Creek Recreation Area natural surface trail project including current status, measurement of erosion and wildlife, upcoming race event and timeline for the development of the blue trail. Director Huffington responded with answers to each question.

Debbie Robinson spoke about the need to continue to renovate and construct tennis courts in the community. She spoke about the condition of outdoor courts and the need to look at a long-term option for an indoor tennis court facility. Director Huffington responded with an update on multiple outdoor tennis court projects including Cosmo-

Bethel tennis courts, Rock Quarry tennis courts and Fairview tennis courts. He also provided information about the department's efforts to work with the USTA regarding funding for court improvements.

Bill Mees spoke about the Columbia Audubon Society concerns with the blue trail alignment at Gans Creek Recreation Area. He stated that their group didn't oppose the green or yellow trail alignments but had concerns with the blue trail south of the creek. He said their group would be open to working with the department on a blue trail alignment that would be a single track foot path. He also voiced concerns about use of E-bikes on the trails.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Oct. 16, 2025

ADJOURNMENT