

Recreation Commission Minutes

Monday, November 2, 2025

5:30 pm

Whipple Memorial Hall

Members present: Jackie Christensen (Chair), Julie Corey (Vice Chair), Caitlin Taylor, Cara Leone, Kim Ilg, Tara Stone and Dana Pyle

Also present: Recreation Director Putnam Kidder, John Ellis

The meeting opened at 5:30pm

Review of Minutes and Future Meeting Dates

It was moved (Tara Stone) and seconded (Jackie Christensen) to approve the minutes of the September 8, 2025 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

It was moved (Tara Stone) and seconded (Jackie Christensen) to approve the minutes of the October 6, 2025 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

There will be a Budget Committee meeting on Wednesday, November 19, at 6pm in Whipple Hall where the Recreation Department budget will be reviewed. Commission members were asked to attend, if possible.

The next regular Recreation Commission meeting will be Monday, December 1 at 5:30pm, at Whipple Hall.

Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Budget Discussion

Recreation Director Putnam Kidder gave a review of the status of the FY2026 budget process, and the Commission discussed several topics. The commission made suggestions for Mr. Kidder to consider before the budget is reviewed at the November Budget Committee meeting:

- Review how some expenses are listed or duplicated in the report. For example, the Commission found the FICA/Medicare expense confusing to understand as written.
- Add a narrative to explain the 87.5% increase in the Telephone & Pagers line item.
- Clarify the narrative for the Conferences & Training increase of 46.88%. Explain the \$3000 increase in more detail so it doesn't seem arbitrary.
- Review the program summary memo from last year's budget process and consider updating with details from this year. Consider providing the rationale behind reducing Beach Attendant coverage in the summary memo.

The Commission asked for additional information from Mr. Kidder regarding the FY26 "actuals", so it was easier to compare line items and details regarding the Capital Reserves account total and how much is being requested to be transferred into the account.

Beach Playgrounds

Mr. Kidder gave an update on the swingset replacement project at Elkins Beach. The Department of Public Works has removed the old swingset and the storm water management improvements are underway. The new swingset is scheduled to be installed on the week of November 17th. The expected total cost should be less than the \$14,500 that was approved to draw down from the Capital Reserve Fund.

The Commission asked Mr. Kidder to get Recreation on the agenda for an upcoming Select Board meeting so that we can request spending up to \$2000 to have Ultiplay complete a landscape plan for us. This is the next step in defining Phase 2 of the Elkins Playground Project. The Commission also asked Mr. Kidder to find out from the Finance Department if there were any restrictions or information required for online fundraising for the playground.

Halloween Recap and Food Truck Scheduling

Whipple Hall was open, which was helpful for warming up and for bathrooms. The Odd Fellows provided food, and the Wicked Tasty food truck was on site. They reported a good experience at Halloween, and we will see if they are available for Strawberry Fest and next Halloween. There were eight or nine businesses offered parking the day of the event. The Fire Department, Police Department and the Department of Public Works and nine community volunteers assisted with the event. There was a discussion of ideas for next year, and how to track community feedback.

Marketing and Event Tracking

Julie Corey has been speaking with Abby Peel to see if she can attend a recreation meeting to share how she might help us ensure our event promotions get a big reach. She will attend the December Recreation Commission meeting. Mr. Kidder gave an overview of upcoming programming and the Commission discussed ways to improve how they can track events that are in the process of being planned.

It was moved (Kim Ilg) and seconded (Jackie Christensen) to adjourn the meeting at 6:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cara Leone