



Board of Park Commissioners

Regular Meeting

Minutes

335 South Broadway
De Pere, WI 54115
www.deperewi.gov

Thursday, September 18, 2025

6:30 PM

City Hall, Council Chambers 335 S.
Broadway, De Pere, Wisconsin
54115

I. Call to Order

Present: Randy Soquet, Jim Kneiszel, Elizabeth McMasters, Shana Ledvina, Connor Mason

Absent:

Excused: Mike Eserkaln, Amy Kundinger

Others Present: Marty Kosobucki, Director of Parks, Recreation and Forestry, and Grace Lahtela, Administrative Assistant

II. Public Comment on Matters not on the Agenda. Comments made during the public comment period shall pertain only to matters under the jurisdiction of the Board of Park Commissioners. §6-3(f) DPMC

None

III. Items

1. Consideration and Possible Action to Approve the Board of Park Commissioners Minutes from the August 21, 2025 meeting

James Kneiszel moved to approve the Board of Park Commissioners minutes from the August 21, 2025 meeting, seconded by Randy Soquet. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	(UNANIMOUS)
MOVER:	Jim Kneiszel
SECONDER:	Randy Soquet
AYES:	Randy Soquet, Jim Kneiszel, Elizabeth McMasters, Shana Ledvina

2. 2026 Budget Discussion

Marty Kosobucki, Director of Parks, Recreation and Forestry, explained that the information provided in the packet is what was submitted to the Mayor and City Manager for review. Along with the budget information, a summary sheet was prepared to summarize any changes from the previous year's budget. Since the summary was prepared, there have already been a few changes in the operational budget. In the park administration budget, the \$25,000 for the design of the James Street marina has been eliminated. In the forestry budget, Alderperson Hansen had requested an incentive plan for resident street tree planting be added to the budget. The proposed incentive plan was for residents to pay a flat fee of \$100 for street trees and the city would subsidize the additional costs. The cost for this incentive plan has been removed from the forestry budget. The special event budget proposed a 1/2 time additional employee to help staff the beer gardens and additional funds to allow for growth of the beer gardens. These additional funds were eliminated from the special event budget. In the capital budget a sheet was provided at the meeting highlighting proposed changes. The Mayor, City Manager, and Finance Director

met and pulled out around 10 projects from the proposed capital budget. After these were removed, the Mayor and City Manager told staff what the estimated capital budget was for the department, and it is up to the department what projects they want to see in the budget. The executive budget is in the process of being completed, but if there are any projects that the Park Board feels strongly about, staff can ask that these projects get discussed in the budget workshop.

Aldersperson Defnet Ledvina questioned what the difference was between the list provided in the packet and the list provided to the Park Board tonight. Marty Kosobucki explained that the list in the packet did not list any of the Community Center capital projects which are included on the list tonight. Also, on the list provided tonight, the highlighted projects are the ones that have been deleted from the budget. Aldersperson Defnet Ledvina questioned if a temporary bike rack could be placed at Voyageur Park seeing the proposed permanent bike rack was deleted. Marty Kosobucki stated that the department does have temporary racks that could be placed at the park, but the capital project would be a permanent rack with a concrete pad. Aldersperson Defnet Ledvina questioned if the permanent location was by the Nelson Family Pavilion or by the playground. Marty Kosobucki stated that this project is for a permanent bike rack to be located near the driveway at the Nelson Family Pavilion. If a permanent bike rack was wanted by the playground, this would be an additional project. Marty Kosobucki stated that there is an additional topic on tonight's agenda that could address some of the projects that were cut from the budget.

Elizabeth McMasters questioned if any type of decision was necessary tonight. Marty Kosobucki stated that the discussion is to see if there are any projects that have been eliminated that the Park Board feels should remain in the budget. Staff would then request those projects to be discussed at the budget workshop.

Elizabeth McMasters questioned the removal of the pickleball courts. The sport is so popular, and she hears how hard it is to get on a pickleball court. With the removal of the project, when could it get funded? Marty Kosobucki explained that with any project that is removed from the budget, it would then get added to the 7-year CIP. This is where the Park Board would decide where they would like it to be located with regard to new projects.

Elizabeth McMasters questioned if the total amount of the capital projects list is normal. Marty Kosobucki stated that the number of projects requested is around the same. However, project costs have jumped exponentially since COVID. Randy Soquet commented that from the total you can deduct around \$500,000 for the projects that have already been eliminated.

Connor Mason questioned the removal of the pickleball courts from the budget and the process of how it would get funded. Marty Kosobucki stated that if the project is not funded this year, then it would get put on the list of Capital Improvement Projects. This list is brought to the Park Board and the board would have to determine where they would like the project to be on the list. Marty Kosobucki explained that it has always been his philosophy that maintenance projects should be taken care of prior to adding anything new.

Randy Soquet questioned if there is a location earmarked for a new pickleball court. Marty Kosobucki stated that the only park that was identified in the master plan is Southwest Park, but there would need to be a conversation about where a new court would be located.

No changes were requested by the Park Board.

3. Consideration and Possible Action to Approve Legion Park Disc Golf Course Improvement Request *

Marty Kosobucki, Director of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry stated that he was approached by some of the disc golf course users stating they would like to initiate some improvements to the course at Legion Park. Originally, the group wanted the city to fund it, but this would either need to be requested in the budget process or staff would need to find alternative funding. An alternative to city funding would be to give the group authority to fundraiser for the project.

James Kneiszel moved to open the meeting to public comments at 6:45 pm, seconded by Randy Soquet. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Patrick Ferron stated that the group would like to get permission to make improvements to the disc golf course at Legion Park. The improvements would be eight concrete pads and new course signage. A quote for the work has been received from a business that the city has done work with before. The original request was for the city to fund the improvements, but if the city does not fund the project, the group is willing to fundraiser to get the improvements completed.

Randy Soquet questioned if this was a formal group. Mr. Ferron stated that back in 1997 this group was called the Green Bay Disc Golfers and put in the disc golf course at Triangle Park near Bairds Creek. The group raised funds and installed the course themselves. There are no concrete pads on this course because of the sledding hill at the park. The use of concrete pads improve the look of the course and more people are willing to play the course. They are also safer, provide better footing, improve wear and tear on the course and improves the longevity of the course. If you go to Legion Park, there are people using the disc golf course year round. The concrete pads will also eliminate the erosion that occurs around the rubber pads that exist on the course now. The quote of \$3,900 to put in eight tee pads is very reasonable. Along with new signs on each hole, a welcome sign showing course layout and rules could be placed on the restroom building. At this point, the group is looking for permission to move forward with the improvements, and if funding is not approved by the city, then the group would like approval to raise funds for the project.

James Kneiszel moved to return to regular order at 6:50 pm, seconded by Alderperson Defnet Ledvina. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

James Kneiszel stated that he would like to try to get these improvements funded through the city. From a historical perspective, the course itself was funded through private donations, which he coordinated 10 years ago. At that time, there were questions about whether the course would be utilized. The group did not think the project would get funded, so the group thought it was important to fundraiser to get the course developed. The baskets on the course are fine. This is a very small financial item for the benefit derived in both aesthetics and safety on the course. This course is used a lot by all ages, and he would like to find a way to work this into the budget.

Conner Mason, Teen Advisor, agreed with James Kneiszel. This project is a low-cost, high-reward project. He has been out on the course a lot recently and there is a wide range of people that use it. The gym classes use it. These improvements will make a better playing experience for golfers and would bring the course to life.

James Kneiszel added that he forgot to mention the schools using the facility. Originally, the gym teachers had to set up the baskets every day. He did not realize it was still being used by the gym classes. He stated that this is a minimal expense, seeing the usage of the course.

Randy Soquet moved to approve the Legion Park disc golf course improvement request without funding at this time, seconded by James Kneiszel. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	Passed (UNANIMOUS)
MOVER:	Randy Soquet
SECONDER:	Jim Kneiszel
AYES:	Randy Soquet, Jim Kneiszel, Elizabeth McMasters, Shana Ledvina

4. Consideration and Possible Action on Allocation of Beer Garden Revenue *

Marty Kosobucki, Director of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry, stated that there are a number of projects that are not included in the budget that could be considered for funding from the beer garden revenues, but any recommendation made would still need to be approved by council. Marty Kosobucki explained some of the options available for potential funding. One project on the list is a portable ice rink with a project cost of \$120,000. Something worth noting with this project, there is a group that is willing to fund-raise half of the cost of a portable rink. Staff always gets calls in the winter complaining about why our ice rinks are not ready. Staff cannot make ice if the temperature is above 32 degrees. This system allows ice for about 3–4 months out of the year. Another project would be funding the Legion disc golf course improvements, or any of the projects that were already cut from the budget process. Staff would not recommend funding the Rotary Park gazebo and access pad. This project is one that staff would like further discussion on. The gazebo is not used that often and questioning if it should be improved or removed. Staff would also like to reach out to the Rotary Club to see if they have any input on the project. Optimist Park roof replacement or the Voyageur Park bike rack could be possibilities. The Voyageur Park electrical extension would be to extend electrical service to another area of the park. This would be beneficial in growing the Holiday Light Event. Optimist Park storm drain installation would improve drainage issues at Optimist Park. There have been comments regarding getting permanent trash receptacles at the Nelson Family Pavilion in Voyageur Park. Another project that was cut was a new pickleball facility. The amount listed on the budget worksheet is for a new facility. We currently do not have enough funds for a new facility, but there might be a potential option to expand the VFW or Legion courts. Staff could research the cost of expanding the existing facilities versus adding a new facility.

Aldersperson Defnet Ledvina clarified that the project list provided are ones that are currently in the budget and these projects should not be considered. Marty Kosobucki agreed that projects currently listed in the budget should not be selected. The projects that he just summarized are ones that have already been removed from the budget.

Marty Kosobucki summarized that the possible funding options would be the projects that were already eliminated from the budget process, the Legion Park disc golf course improvements, the portable ice rink, funding a new pickleball court or adding onto the existing courts, or any new project that the park board would like to consider.

Aldersperson Defnet Ledvina questioned if the park board wanted to explore the option of adding onto the existing pickleball courts, would the item need to be brought back for discussion? Marty Kosobucki stated that he would suggest tabling the item and staff would research the costs of expanding the existing pickleball facilities for the next meeting.

Elizabeth McMasters questioned if it is possible to set aside the funds for future years. Marty Kosobucki explained that he believes this is an option but would need to verify it with the Finance Director. Elizabeth McMasters questioned if we could recommend setting aside the funds with the intention of building a new pickleball facility in the future. Aldersperson Defnet Ledvina commented that normally it is not recommended to tie future Park Board and council members to a project.

Aldersperson Defnet Ledvina moved to approve the request for the Legion Park disc golf course

improvements, up to \$5,000, from the beer garden revenues, and refer the item back to staff for research on other projects on the list for the remaining funds, seconded by Randy Soquet.

James Kneiszel questioned if the bike racks at Voyageur Park is a needed project. Alderperson Defnet Ledvina commented that there is plenty of space to park your bike at the pavilion. Marty Kosobucki explained that the reason this item came up was that during a couple for the beer gardens, there were bike clubs that actually rode to the event.

Upon vote, the above motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	(UNANIMOUS)
MOVER:	Shana Ledvina
SECONDER:	Randy Soquet
AYES:	Randy Soquet, Jim Kneiszel, Elizabeth McMasters, Shana Ledvina

5. Consideration and Possible Action to Approve Pink Flamingo Request to Place a Statue and Plaque at Legion Park

Marty Kosobucki, Director of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry, explained that there was a request from the Pink Flamingos to install a statue, similar to the one that is located in the alley by Nicky's, and a plaque at Legion Park to honor the two individuals that started the Pink Flamingo tournament. Staff has suggested that the statue be placed on top of the scorers' shack to avoid vandalism.

James Kneiszel questioned if it would be better to place the statue on top of the scoreboard, as he sees many kids climbing on the scorers shack. Marty Kosobucki stated that structurally the flamingo could not be located on the scoreboard.

Randy Soquet moved to approve the request from the Pink Flamingos to install a statue and plaque at Legion Park, seconded by James Kneiszel. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	(UNANIMOUS)
MOVER:	Randy Soquet
SECONDER:	Jim Kneiszel
AYES:	Randy Soquet, Jim Kneiszel, Elizabeth McMasters, Shana Ledvina

6. Consideration and Possible Action to Approve Rainbow Park Playground Addition

Marty Kosobucki, Director of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry, explained that after all the bills are paid for the Rainbow Park playground project there is approximately \$5,100 remaining in the budget. Staff has researched and provided three options available for use of the funds.

Elizabeth McMasters stated that she has heard from people in the neighborhood, and they would like to see more benches at the park.

Randy Soquet commented that the bench with the canopy would be a nice addition, providing shade for park goers. Elizabeth McMasters commented that three standard benches could be purchased for one shaded bench and that there are trees that could provide shade.

Marty Kosobucki explained that the city does offer a memorial bench program that is extremely popular with around 7–8 memorial benches requests per year. It would be great to get some memorial benches to

be placed around the playground, then we could add something with play value, but we cannot guarantee a memorial bench would be requested at Rainbow Park.

Connor Mason, Teen Advisor, questioned if there is anyone waiting for a memorial bench. Marty Kosobucki explained that there is not anyone waiting for a bench. When a memorial bench request is received, the Park Superintendent discusses options on placement with the individual.

James Kneiszel questioned if it was possible to target residents in the area about the memorial bench program. Marty Kosobucki stated that we could, but what the topic now is how to spend the \$5,100 in available funds. If the Park Board is interested in play value and decides on the chair, then staff could market the memorial bench program in the area. If the Park Board decides to put in benches, then it doesn't make sense to market the memorial benches.

Aldersperson Defnet Ledvina questioned if the benches would be installed this year, or if we could wait to see if any memorial benches are purchased for the park. Marty Kosobucki stated that there is a possibility that the bench could be installed yet this year if the Park Board decides to go this way. Randy Soquet commented that if we went with the bench with the canopy there would be room for other memorial benches. Aldersperson Defnet Ledvina stated that we could go with the fun adirondack style chair if memorial benches were to come in.

Connor Mason, Teen Advisor, questioned if there was a way to install benches with the possibility of them becoming memorial benches in the future. Marty Kosobucki stated that the benches that would be installed are the same as a memorial bench, but it is not possible to take the money from the sale of a memorial bench and allocate it to a future project.

Randy Soquet moved to approve the purchase of the bench with canopy for Rainbow Park, seconded by Elizabeth McMasters. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	(UNANIMOUS)
MOVER:	Randy Soquet
SECONDER:	Elizabeth McMasters
AYES:	Randy Soquet, Jim Kneiszel, Elizabeth McMasters, Shana Ledvina

7. Consideration and Possible Action to Approve the Wilson Park Grant from the David and Rita Nelson Foundation *

Aldersperson Defnet Ledvina moved to approve the Wilson Park grant from the David and Rita Nelson Foundation, seconded by James Knieszal. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	Passed (UNANIMOUS)
MOVER:	Shana Ledvina
SECONDER:	Jim Kneiszel
AYES:	Randy Soquet, Jim Kneiszel, Elizabeth McMasters, Shana Ledvina

8. Consideration and Possible Action to Approve Conducting a Survey for Residents to Provide Options for a Park Name for the Waterview Heights Subdivision Park

Marty Kosobucki, Director of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry, explained that he has reached out to McKim Boyd several times. McKim Boyd stated that the Historical Society has not been able to find anything that really stands out for a park name. In all the staff research, there haven't been any names that gained momentum or that everyone is in favor of. Staff is not excited about preparing a survey asking for resident input, because there may be suggestions that are not wanted.

James Kneiszel stated that he originally suggested the name Henry Cady Park and questioned if someone thinks this is inappropriate. Marty Kosobucki explained that he felt if the Park Board was in favor of that name, then the Park Board would have voted for it. Marty also explained that when talking to McKim Boyd he got the impression that the Historical Society was not in full support of this name. James Kneiszel stated that he had researched this young man and he is compelled to advocate for this name. He joined the union army and died for his country. He is not memorialized anywhere else and grew up right in that area. This name meets a lot of the criteria. Cady Park is a short name that provides history and teaching opportunities. James Kneiszel stated that he feels compelled to continue to advocate for this name and feels that the park board should come up with the name and is not in favor of a survey.

Aldersperson Defnet Ledvina stated she was under the impression that the Historical Society was still working on a name. Marty Kosobucki stated that he could follow up with McKim Boyd again, but the last time he spoke with him, he was told they were not able to find anybody from the west side that would be significant enough for a park name. Aldersperson Defnet Ledvina stated she just spoke with Patrick from the Historical Society and the Historic Preservation Committee, and he stated that he was still working on it.

Aldersperson Defnet Ledvina explained that she thought there was an issue with Cady being a resident of De Pere. James Kneiszel stated there wasn't a city at the time and Henry Cady joined the regime in West De Pere, he is buried in the cemetery a mile from the location, and it is where he grew up. James Kneiszel stated that he would just appreciate a vote on Cady Park at some time and wished that everyone would come up with more suggestions.

Aldersperson Defnet Ledvina stated she had a female suggestion, but the issue she is struggling with is that parks have never been named for historical figures. Parks have historically been named for individuals that have had a significant impact on the park and recreation department.

Randy Soquet stated the action item is if the Park Board is interested in doing a survey or not.

James Kneiszel moved to not move forward with a community survey at this time, seconded by Aldersperson Defnet Ledvina.

Elizabeth McMasters questioned if there are still a lot of houses to be built in the area. Marty Kosobucki confirmed that there are a lot of vacant lots left, but the south half of the subdivision is really built up, and they are starting to develop the north side of the subdivision.

Randy Soquet confirmed that there is \$200,000 in the budget for developing the park. Marty Kosobucki confirmed that the \$200,000 in the budget to start development of the park with a sign, playground, and an accessible route to the playground.

Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	Passed (UNANIMOUS)
MOVER:	Jim Kneiszel

SECONDER: Shana Ledvina

AYES: Randy Soquet, Jim Kneiszel, Elizabeth McMasters, Shana Ledvina

IV. Staff Updates

1. Staff Update on Donation from BCCWC

Marty Kosobucki, Director of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry, stated that the Community Center received a donation from the Brown County Community Women's Club.

2. Staff Update on 2025 Beer Gardens

Marty Kosobucki, Director of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry, stated that a summary of the 2025 beer gardens is included in the agenda packet.

3. Staff Update on 2025 Holiday Light Event

Marty Kosobucki, Director of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry, explained that the dates are set for the 2025 Holiday Light Event. The walking event will take place on Thursday, December 11th, with the drive-through event starting on December 12th. Staff has ordered 15–20 new large displays and are working on a few other new ideas.

Randy Soquet confirmed the dates of the Holiday Light Event, with the walking event taking place on December 11th, and the drive-through event being held December 12th - 14th and December 18th - 21st.

V. Future Agenda Items

Marty Kosobucki, Director of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry, stated that the topics regarding naming of the park and the allocation of beer garden revenues will be returned on future agendas.

VI. Adjournment

Aldersperson Defnet Ledvina moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 pm, seconded by Elizabeth McMasters. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Grace Lahtela