



# Board of Park Commissioners

## Regular Meeting

### Minutes

335 South Broadway  
De Pere, WI 54115  
[www.deperewi.gov](http://www.deperewi.gov)

Thursday, April 16, 2026

6:30 PM

City Hall, Council Chambers 335 S. Broadway

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Randy Soquet called the April 16, 2026 Board of Park Commissioners meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

#### 2. ROLL CALL

**Present:** Jeremy Beck, Jim Kneiszel, Elizabeth McMasters, Randy Soquet, Mike Eserkaln, Amy Kundinger, Shana Ledvina, Olivia Alberson, Connor Mason

**Absent:**

**Excused:**

**Others Present:** Paula Rahn, Recreation Superintendent, and Grace Lahtela, Administrative Assistant. Christine Pichler and Joseph Pepitone from Graef.

#### 3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

James Anderson questioned if procedures could be implemented where individuals that have a lot of knowledge of a topic could communicate with the park board individually prior to the meetings, instead of just opening the meeting for individual comments. This would allow the board members time to consider options when the topic comes forward at the meeting.

Randy Soquet commented this would need to be reviewed by the legal department.

#### 4. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Consideration and Possible Action to Approve the Board of Park Commissioners minutes from the March 19, 2026 meeting.

Alderson Defnet Ledvina moved to approve the Board of Park Commissioners minutes from the March 19, 2026, meeting, seconded by Jeremy Beck. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>Passed (UNANIMOUS)</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Shana Ledvina
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Jeremy Beck
<b>AYES:</b>	Jeremy Beck, Jim Kneiszel, Elizabeth McMasters, Randy Soquet, Mike Eserkaln, Amy Kundinger, Shana Ledvina

- B. Consideration and Possible Action to Approve \$2,500 Donation from Ameriprise Financial on behalf of Greta Johnson to the Recreation Scholarship Fund\*

Randy Soquet moved to accept a \$2,500 donation from Ameriprise Financial on behalf of Greta Johnson to the Recreation Scholarship Fund, seconded by Alderson Eserkaln. Upon vote, the motion passed

unanimously.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>Passed (UNANIMOUS)</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Randy Soquet
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Mike Eserkaln
<b>AYES:</b>	Jeremy Beck, Jim Kneiszel, Elizabeth McMasters, Randy Soquet, Mike Eserkaln, Amy Kundinger, Shana Ledvina

- C. Consideration and possible action to approve a rental waiver request from Cerebral Palsy Inc. for use of the East River Trail.

Aldersperson Defnet Ledvina moved to deny the rental waiver request from Cerebral Palsy Inc. for the use of the East River Trail, seconded by Aldersperson Chandik Kundinger.

Randy Soquet moved to open the meeting to public comment at 6:33 pm, seconded by Aldersperson Defnet Ledvina. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Kristine Blum from Cerebral Palsy explained that this is the first inaugural event for CP, which services individuals with disabilities. The walk has a total of 110 participants signed up that will be walking with their caregivers. The walk is scheduled to utilize only .6 miles of the De Pere portion of the East River Trail and wanted to give you some context from neighboring communities. Allouez is not charging for the use of their portion of the trail and Ledgeview is charging a total of \$115 for the use of a park, pavilion, barricades and garbage collection.

Aldersperson Chandik Kundinger questioned if the department has ever looked at a different fee structure for events that are not completely closing off park use and where others can use the space in conjunction with the event. Paula Rahn, Recreation Superintendent, explained that there are rates for non-profit organizations, as well as for-profit organizations in relation to field usage. It does not pertain to trails, parks or shelter use. Grace Lahtela, Administrative Assistant, also commented that in Marty Kosobucki's memo to the board, he is requesting that if the park board is interested in entertaining any fee waivers, then the entire policy be reviewed.

Aldersperson Chandik Kundinger feels that there should be a policy in place before fees are waived.

Aldersperson Defnet Ledvina moved to close the meeting to public comment at 6:38 pm, seconded by James Kneiszel. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Randy Soquet commented that the item could be tabled until the next meeting. Aldersperson Defnet Ledvina stated that the item could not be tabled due to the timing of the event.

The above motion to deny the request for the rental waiver request from Cerebral Palsy, Inc. passed unanimously.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>Motion to Deny Request Passed Unanimously</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Shana Ledvina
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Amy Kundinger
<b>AYES:</b>	Jeremy Beck, Jim Kneiszel, Elizabeth McMasters, Randy Soquet, Mike Eserkaln, Amy Kundinger, Shana Ledvina
<b>NAYS:</b>	None

D. Consideration and possible action to approve the color scheme for the Carney Park playground.

Paula Rahn, Recreation Supervisor, presented color schemes for Carney Park that were provided by the manufacturer, as well as several other combinations that she designed. She stated that colors can also be customized any way you want.

Jeremy Beck stated that lighter colors should be avoided, due to wear and tear, dirt and vandalism. Jeremy stated that his family chose the West Palm Beach color palette, but it might be too close to the colors at Willems Park.

Randy Soquet moved to approve the West Palm Beach color palette but reversed, so the slide would be changed to dark blue and the climbing wall changed to orange, seconded by Elizabeth McMasters. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>Passed (UNANIMOUS)</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Randy Soquet
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Elizabeth McMasters
<b>AYES:</b>	Jeremy Beck, Jim Kneiszel, Elizabeth McMasters, Randy Soquet, Mike Eserkaln, Amy Kunding, Shana Ledvina

E. Consideration and possible action to approve the color scheme for the Volunteer Park playground.

Paula Rahn, Recreation Superintendent, presented the color options submitted by Lee Recreation for the Volunteer Park Playground. Paula Rahn stated that Marty Kosobucki recommended option R6 or R7, but again, color configurations could be altered in any way.

Aldersperson Defnet Ledvina stated she likes the R7 color option.

Elizabeth McMasters stated that she thinks that color option is pleasing to the eye.

Aldersperson Chandik Kunding suggested changing out the grey components with brown.

Jeremy Beck moved to approve color option R7, but substitute brown in place of the grey, seconded by Aldersperson Defnet Ledvina. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>Passed (UNANIMOUS)</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Jeremy Beck
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Shana Ledvina
<b>AYES:</b>	Jeremy Beck, Jim Kneiszel, Elizabeth McMasters, Randy Soquet, Mike Eserkaln, Amy Kunding, Shana Ledvina

F. Consideration and possible action to approve the thrid quarter financial statements for the De Pere Ice Arena.

Randy Soquet moved to open the meeting to public comment at 6:53 pm, seconded by Jeremy Beck. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Greg Binsfield questioned the comments listed on the Brown County Ice Management Financial Statements. There are three accounts that have outstanding balances listed in the comments, and he is

questioning if these outstanding balances are included in the income shown for each group, or if these outstanding balances would be an addition to the income numbers shown. If already in the profit and loss numbers, then he feels that the numbers listed are low. There is no ice time available from November to March for the user groups. The rink hosted the national hockey tournament and a girls' hockey tournament this year, so the rink was used quite a bit more and is showing a \$13,000 loss, when the previous year had a net income of \$8,000. Mr. Binsfield feels that the presented financial statements need to be explained.

James Kneiszel moved to close the meeting at 6:56 pm, seconded by Randy Soquet. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Aldersperson Chandik Kundinger moved to table the approval of the financial statements until financial information can be shared in greater detail, seconded by Aldersperson Defnet Ledvina. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED TO TABLE [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Amy Kundinger
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Shana Ledvina
<b>AYES:</b>	Jeremy Beck, Jim Kneiszel, Elizabeth McMasters, Randy Soquet, Mike Eserkahn, Amy Kundinger, Shana Ledvina

## 5. OLD BUSINESS

### A. Review of the Conceptual Design of Wilson Park with Graef.

Randy Soquet stated that Christine Pichler and Joseph Pepitone from Graef are here at the meeting to review and discuss the Wilson Park project.

Christine Pichler, Project Manager from Graef, shared the conceptual design for the Wilson Park project. There has been some conversation that the population around the park has changed a little from the original conceptual design, so the one that is presented tonight has been updated. There was a request to remove the hammock stands from the design and to leave an open area as green space. These are the only changes that have been made to the original design concept.

Christine Pichler stated that there have been a number of potential changes that have been brought up, so the goal is to address each change and get the park board's recommendation. The first suggested change would be to upgrade the path in the park from crusher dust to concrete. This change will add substantial cost to the project. Graef would be able to bid the project with a crusher dust trail and have an alternative bid with an upgraded concrete trail.

Randy Soquet questioned the approximate cost increase. Christine Pichler stated that the last project she bid, crusher dust came in around \$4-\$7 per square foot, with concrete being \$10-\$13 per square foot, but it is easy to bid out as an alternative for the project and then a decision can be made when the bids are received. Joseph Pepitone stated the advantages of concrete are durability and longevity.

Jeremy Beck questioned if asphalt was an option. Christine Pichler stated that trails of this size are harder to pave because there would be different equipment needed and there is no shouldering. Jeremy Beck stated that in Green Bay they did an asphalt trail with concrete along the side. Joseph Pepitone stated that it is an option, but there would definitely be a cost to it. With this trail being more passive and 6' wide versus 8', there would be much more handwork, but a cost estimate could be received. James Kneiszel questioned if the cost estimate for asphalt is typically between the cost of crusher dust and concrete.

Christine Pichler stated that asphalt would typically be cheaper than concrete, but with the size of the trail, she isn't sure where the numbers would come in, because it will be a much harder project to pave. Randy Soquet commented that there will also be more upkeep with asphalt than concrete.

Alderson Eserkaln questioned how often crusher dust needs to be replenished. Christine Pichler stated that it actually gets more durable as it gets used. If there are storms, parts of the trail could erode and maintenance would then be needed.

James Kneiszel questioned the ADA accessibility of the crusher dust. Joseph Pepitone stated that it would be ADA compliant because it is compacted, but it might need maintenance because of weather issues. It really comes down to how much you want to pay upfront versus longevity and maintenance in the future. James Kneiszel commented that the concrete would be nice with the senior housing nearby and, in the long term, he would like to see a concrete trail.

Elizabeth McMasters stated that when the design was developed, the crusher dust provides a more natural feeling. Concrete is nice to walk on, but if we want to stay on the more natural side, crusher dust would provide a more natural feeling.

Joseph Pepitone stated there are advantages and disadvantages to both surfaces. The original concept plan calls for the crusher dust trail, and it seems like there is enough interest to bid the project with a crusher dust trail with an alternative bid for concrete.

Christine Pichler stated that the next potential change was the addition of a playground. The concept plan for the park was for a more passive, natural park, but there is an area where a playground could be located, which is highlighted on the new concept plan. Park staff provided an estimated budget of \$150,000 for the playground and poured in place surfacing.

Alderson Defnet Ledvina questioned where the discussion of a playground came from because it was never in the plan. Randy Soquet commented that it might have come about because of the changing neighborhood demographics.

James Kneiszel stated that there is a space available where a playground could be located in the future, but wouldn't want to take away from how nice the rest of the park is, by trying to add a playground.

Alderson Chandik Kunding stated that a playground would not be attainable with the current budget. Christine Pichler stated there is an open green space that could be programmed in the future if desired.

Christine Pichler stated that the next item to discuss is the addition of a gazebo. There are two circles located on the new concept where a gazebo could be located. Joseph Pepitone stated that if a gazebo was to be added to the design, it would have to be a prefab structure and the cost would be around \$15,000-\$20,000.

James Kneiszel questioned where the idea of a gazebo came from. Christine Pichler stated that she believes this idea came from a residential request to Marty. James Kneiszel stated that he feels a gazebo would look out of place in the park and there would be more value in a small informal performance area.

Christine Pichler stated that the monument is the next area for discussion. With the current concept, the plan is to just relocate the current monument as is, with a cost estimate of around \$2,000 and questioned if there is anything else that should be done to the monument.

Connor Mason, Teen Advisor, questioned if the entire stone would be moved. Joseph Pepitone stated that there are some unknowns regarding the stone that the plaque is on and investigation needs to be done before moving it. The other option would be to take the plaque off the existing stone and place it on a different type of monument. The plaque is quite large, so whatever you put the plaque on will be substantial, and it is not a 360 degree monument, so landscaping would be needed around it.

James Kneiszel questioned if the plaque would benefit from having some type of protection put on it. Joseph Pepitone stated it is a bronze plaque that has been at the park for this long, so the material of the plaque should be fine. Christine Pichler stated the plaque itself has been at the property since the early 1900s, so the plaque should be fine, but when the monument is moved, we are not sure what will happen to the stone that it is on. James Kneiszel questioned if there could be a contingent cost added in case something happens to the monument when trying to move it. Elizabeth McMasters stated that if a new monument is needed, she likes the appearance of the natural stone. Christine Pichler stated that a contingency will be added to the bid packet for the natural stone option to place the monument on if something were to happen when the monument is moved.

Christine Pichler stated that the next area for discussion is the possibility of investigating and highlighting the foundation of the original De Pere High School. It was brought to our attention that this property is the sight of the original De Pere High School and there should be some of the foundation from this original building on the property. There have been discussions on some type of investigation and preservation of this foundation and the question would be how much, and what type of investigation is wanted. Alderperson Chandik Kundinger stated that part of the foundation of the building can currently be seen on the property and the Historical Society should be able to verify exactly where the corner is. James Kneiszel mentioned putting up another plaque highlighting the foundation of the original school but doesn't see the need to get an archeologist involved.

Christine Pichler summarized the schedule of the project moving forward. If everything goes as planned, the goal is for a design, 90% completed, to be brought back to the May meeting, with the hopes for the bid packet to go out in June. In July, the bids will come back to the Park Board for approval, with hopes for construction to begin in September or October.

Christine Pichler summarized the decisions from this meeting. There is no interest in a playground or gazebo, but possibly a small performance area. To relocate the monument as is and, if necessary, to replace the plaque on a natural-looking stone monument. To add a plaque indicating the corner of the original school, if the corner foundation is able to be located.

Randy Soquet moved to open the meeting to public comment at 7:33 pm, seconded by Alderperson Chandik Kundinger. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Joe Nicks provided some history of Wilson Park and the school location. Mr. Nicks stated that the current location of the Gettysburg address monument would have been to the left of the sidewalk going up to the front door of the original school. The plaque is not bronze, it is cast iron and an incredible historic monument. There are resources locally that can restore the plaque, and it would not do the plaque justice to just relocate it. It needs work done to it and the cast iron needs to be preserved. Locally, Nick Backhaus has worked on the monument already and has ideas on what can be further done to the plaque. Also, the Wisconsin Historical Society has contacts for individuals that work on historic monuments. From the original concept plan and cost estimate from Graef, he feels that this project can be done with the allotted budget of \$200,000, is in favor of the concrete sidewalk, and feels the monument and plantings should not be scrimped on, making sure to use the allotted funds.

Randy Soquet moved to close the meeting at 7:41 pm, seconded by Alderperson Chandik Kunding. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Alderperson Defnet Ledvina questioned the speaking space and if it was going to be in the new plan. James Kneiszel stated that he originally he was thinking of a small concrete slab around the area of the monument, possibly 200–400 square feet.

James Kneiszel also mentioned that he feels restoration of the plaque should be taken into consideration with the project.

6. INFORMATIONAL

- A. Staff Update on \$750 Donation from CertaPro Painters of NEWI for July 21, 2026 Beer Garden.

Paula Rahn, Recreation Superintendent, stated that CertaPro Painters has been secured as the last sponsor of the Beer Garden. The last two dates of the Beer Gardens are left open for potential rain dates.

Alderperson Chandik Kunding questioned the sponsorship agreements and departmental policies regarding sponsorship and vendor relationships.

- B. Staff Update on Donations Under \$1000 for Various Events/Equipment.

Paula Rahn, Recreation Superintendent, stated that the list provided is for donations received by the Recreation Department for special events and programs.

7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Alderperson Chandik Kunding requested that staff look into the policy for fee waivers for both De Pere area non-profit organizations and others.

Randy Soquet requested staff look into James Anderson's request regarding the ability for individuals to communicate with the Park Board members on topics prior to the actual Park Board meetings.

8. ADJOURNMENT

James Kneiszel moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 pm, seconded by Alderperson Defnet Ledvina. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>Passed (UNANIMOUS)</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Jim Kneiszel
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Shana Ledvina
<b>AYES:</b>	Jeremy Beck, Jim Kneiszel, Elizabeth McMasters, Randy Soquet, Mike Eserkahn, Amy Kunding, Shana Ledvina

Respectfully submitted,  
Grace Lahtela