

**WARREN PARKS AND RECREATION
COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, July 16, 2025**

Call to order: Meeting called to order by Commissioner Salka at 6:33pm

In Attendance: Mike McCrillis, Adam Sawka, George Chapp, Heather Craig,
Sara Frederick, Amy Motyka, Ken Dalpra and Council Ex-officio Councilman Jonathan Lafferty

Excused Absence: Ken Voss

Unexcused Absence: Jim Schoenherr

Approval of Agenda: A motion by Commissioner Sawka, seconded by Commissioner Frederick to approve the Agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

Vote on approval of April 16, 2025 Minutes: A motion by Commissioner Dalpra, seconded by Commissioner Chapp to approve the minutes from April 16, 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

A. Update on Skate Park and Splash Pad

- Phase two of the skate park is on track to be completed sometime in August. The specific opening date is not yet set.
- Funding has been approved to renovate the restrooms at the park, and the contractor is expected to begin work shortly
- Phase three, which includes benches, amenities, and signs, is planned for the end of the year or the beginning of next year.
- A gate still needs to be installed at the park, which is outside the current project's scope.

Splash Pad Project

- The splash pad will not open this month as originally scheduled due to several setbacks.
- The project has experienced problems with the subcontractor responsible for installing the splash pad equipment, which is identified as the primary source of issues, including material delays.
- The project was also set back by vandalism, where individuals cut wires and smashed a couple of pumps.
- The primary contractor for the project is Great Lakes Recreation.
- The restrooms at the splash pad were renovated and are planned to be opened for public use.
- A police report was filed by the contractor regarding the vandalism at the splash pad.
- To improve security, new cameras will be installed as part of a 90-day trial.
- One camera will be placed at the splash pad.
- Two bullet cameras will be installed at the skate park.

B. Playscape and Park Renovations

- - A new universal playscape has opened and is receiving positive public feedback, with visitors appreciating the AstroTurf over previous pebble surfaces.
- The department plans to build three more playscapes
- A large, \$800,000 playscape is planned for Halmich.
- Three smaller, \$250,000 playscapes are planned for Rentz, Altermatt and Jaycee Parks.
- Discussion from a resident of Altermatt Park neighborhood expressed dissatisfaction with the park's declining quality.
- Planned renovations for Altermatt Park include a new playscape, redoing the asphalt walkway to meet ADA compliance, and adding new park furnishings.
- A comprehensive 5 year plan is due in 2026, which will provide residents an opportunity for formal input on park needs.

C. Veteran's Park Pickleball & Basketball Court

- New pickleball and basketball courts are in the final phases of engineering and are expected to break ground in late summer.
- The department held meetings with the pickleball community to gather input on the new court design, which was incorporated into the engineering plans, addressing concerns about fencing and restrooms.

New Business:

A. Department Budget and Staffing for FY 2026

- The total approved revenue for the fiscal year 2026 is \$6,373,611. Budget details are available online at cityofwarren.org.
- The department has undergone a budget-neutral restructuring of its staff, effective July 1.
- The Events/Sports Coordinator position was promoted to an Events Facility Administrator, responsible for events and all facilities.
- A new Sports Supervisor will be hired to focus on improving the sports program.
- Two full-time maintenance employees were promoted to Maintenance Technicians to manage the maintenance program, as there is no foreman position.
- The Park Supervisor position was eliminated.
- The department currently has nine full-time employees.
- It has no secretary or accountant, with existing staff handling these duties.

- - Renovation of Halmich Park.
 - Installation of two new play structures:
 - ****Lick Park:****Universal playscape with pour-and-play, expected completion in spring.
 - ****Veterans Park:****Challenge playscape with a rope course, opened in November, received positive feedback on social media.
 - Nine-hole disc golf course at Steinhäuser Park, well-received, with temporary restroom facilities.
 - Reopening of Owen Jax Community Center with senior activities and other programs.
- **Future Goals for 2025:**
 - Renovate north and south restroom facilities.
 - Design and build a pickleball court at Veterans Park.
 - Repave parking lot at Warren Community Center.
 - Expand city transportation services for residents, including field trips.
 - Reorganize Parks and Recreation Department structure.
 - Complete skate park and splash pad.
 - Renovate or remove the stadium from Warren Community Center.

B. Tree Inventory

- The city received a grant to conduct a city-wide public tree inventory and purchase new trees.
- The project will begin with a meeting on the 28th, and the inventory work is scheduled to start in early August, lasting six months.
- The goal is to increase the city's overall tree canopy to 20-22%, with a specific target to increase the street tree canopy from its current 18% to a minimum of 25%.
- The inventory data will be integrated directly into the city's GIS system and used to apply for future grants for tree purchase, management, and maintenance.

C. Community Engagement and Programming

- A recent "Mayoral Light on the Parks and Rec Department" event was well-received, though attendance was low (around 25 people). The event showcased the department's extensive programming and staff involvement.
- An open house and ice cream social for seniors is scheduled for September 18 to gather input on programming needs via a survey. This event will be advertised in the "Warren Today Program" publication.
- The department is open to residents from Centerline and Sterling Heights.
- Discussions are underway with Sterling Heights about potential cross-programming opportunities, leveraging their dedicated senior center and other resources for mutual exchange.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn was made at 7:07pm by Commissioner Dalpra, seconded by Commissioner Fredrick. The motion passed unanimously.