



**CITY OF MANITOU SPRINGS
PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD**

Regular Meeting Minutes
Hybrid Meeting held at 515 Manitou Ave.,
Manitou Springs, CO, 80829 and via Zoom
July 14, 2025

A. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Fatt called the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PARAB) meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT FOR ROLL CALL:

Chair Danu Fatt
Vice Chair Tim Bresnahan
Board Member Christina Grow
Alternate Board Member Jan Johnson

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT FOR ROLL CALL:

Board Member Anthony Lane
Board Member Colin McAllister
Board Member Rebecca Wood
Alternate Board Member Candace Craig

STAFF AND LIAISONS PRESENT:

Natalie Johnson, Council Liaison
Gillian Rossi, Parks and Recreation Director
Erin Ringsred, Project Manager

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Vice Chair Bresnahan moved to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Chair Fatt. The motion was carried (4-0).

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Draft Minutes from PARAB June 2025, Meeting

The minutes were tabled due to the absence of a second.

D. PUBLIC COMMENTS NOT ON THE AGENDA

(Please limit your comments to 3 minutes)

There was no public comment.

E. PRESENTATIONS

1. Hiawatha Gardens Update / Planning Dept.

Project Manager Ringsred and multiple project contractors provided an update on the Hiawatha Gardens Project. Contractors included Justin DiPietro and Byron Zick from Davis Partnership Architects, Emily Hayter from Franson Pittman, and David Senko from Artaic Group. Despite the property being zoned commercial, with plans to rezone it to Public Facilities, the team emphasized the importance of considering its proximity to the park. The update included current design plans for Phase 1 of the project and went into detail on the tree removal and pruning plan.

The consensus was that the board was supportive of the plan.

There was a brief discussion about tree removal and replacement, during which Project Manager Ringsred confirmed that an adequate number of trees would be planted to make up for the trees to be removed.

Project Manager Ringsred stated that the goal is to break ground on Phase 1 before the end of 2025 and to finish Phase 1 construction by the end of 2026.

F. REPORTS

1. Arborist Report

Director Rossi provided a brief report, highlighting a dead pine tree that was recently removed from Fields Park. Much of this update was included in the Hiawatha Gardens Update presentation, as it included information on tree removals and pruning as part of the project. She stated that an ArborKelp treatment by SavATree is planned for the Weeping River Birch Tree in front of City Hall in hopes of improving its health.

2. Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PARAB)

a. Memorial Tree has been planted at SSP

Chair Fatt shared that a memorial tree was planted in Soda Springs Park by City Staff after being purchased by an approved applicant.

3. Council Liaison

There was no Council Liaison report.

G. PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

1. Director's Report

Director Rossi reported that rain sensors were installed on all of the irrigation control boxes in the parks to support the irrigation systems and help save water. She reported that quotes had been requested for hybridizing the tennis court into a tennis and pickleball court. No contractors have responded yet. A Google search showed that the cost could be between \$250 and \$600.

There was a brief discussion about the restriping the tennis court and additional opportunities to support tennis and pickleball players. Chair Fatt stated that the tennis players may feel like they are being kicked out if pickleball stripes are added to the tennis court. Board Member Johnson mentioned that Board Member McAllister joined a club elsewhere due to overcrowding at the pickleball court. Chair Fatt noted that Board Member Lane does not support striping the tennis court for pickleball. Board Member Grow suggested adding a pickleball court behind the middle school. Board Member Johnson suggested constructing a pickleball court on the west side of Fields Park. Chair Fatt said this was worthy of a discussion.

Director Rossi asked PARAB if they would be in support of the "sod phase" of Soda Springs Park Phase III in 2025 if the City could find the money. The board determined that they do not want any additional construction in the park in 2025 and would prefer the sod phase be completed in 2026.

H. NEW BUSINESS

1. Memorial Bench Request, Mansions Park / Greg DiFiore

The application from Greg DiFiore to install a Memorial Bench in Mansions Park for his late wife was reviewed by the board and approved. The board suggested replacing an old bench near the Mansions Park fountain with the new memorial bench.

Chair Fatt moved to approve the location for the DiFiore memorial bench in Mansions Park, near the fountain to replace one of the older benches. The motion was not seconded. The motion was carried (4-0).

I. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Candace Craig (Secretary) requests leave of absence from PARAB for the summer

Chair Fatt reported that Alternate Board Member and Secretary, Candace Craig, submitted a leave of absence request. The board did not determine who would take meeting minutes in Craig's absence. They discussed hiring someone to do the minutes, similar to the structure adopted by the Open Space Advisory Committee. The board decided to table the discussion until the next meeting.

J. 2026 PROJECTS / BUDGETS

1. Construction Documents for Higginbotham Flats / Professional Services: \$65,000

The board discussed phasing the master plan implementation for the project, along with hosting public events and volunteer days to keep momentum going. Vice Chair Bresnahan suggested using "Hügelkultur" to create a sound barrier between the park and the highway. Hügelkultur is a German permaculture technique for creating raised garden beds using a core of decaying wood.

2. Memorial Trees/Benches / Replacement costs: \$5,000

Chair Fatt mentioned that the account is to replace memorial trees that die and benches that get damaged.

3. Pool and Recreation / Playground Equipment: \$25,000

Director Rossi mentioned that playground equipment in some of the parks, including a slide in Mabel Willie Park and the astroturf in the Schryver Park playground, need to be replaced in order to comply with playground inspection standards. Director Rossi stated that she would share the monthly Playground Inspection Forms with PARAB.

4. Art in the Parks / \$5,000

- a. Repair or Rebuild Little Free Libraries

Director Rossi mentioned that the repair on the Schryver Park Little Library was done for free by the Fabrication Library (FAB Lab). Future repairs on these structures could be done by the same group.

- b. Manizoo Repairs

Chair Fatt suggested funding these repairs as needed, as PARAB did in 2025.

5. Urban Forestry in Parks / \$10,000

Vice Chair Bresnahan suggested using the account to incorporate more whimsy into the parks, such as the tree house in Memorial Park. He stated that opportunities to include whimsy could come when replacing existing structures in the playgrounds and parks.

Chair Fatt requested quotes for pruning the large willow trees at the entrance to Fields Park.

6. Parks / General Repairs and Maintenance: \$35,000

Board Member Johnson asked if the memorial plaque on the rock next to the fountain in Mansions Parks had been replaced. Chair Fatt stated that she is working on this. Vice Chair Bresnahan asked if the funds were spent in 2025; Chair Fatt confirmed they were not. Board Member Grow suggested that the picnic area next to the Schryver Park restroom could be converted into shuffleboard courts where the equipment could be checked out at the Pool & Fitness Center. Director Rossi suggested using the same system for checking out chess pieces for the chess table in Schryver Park. Board Member Johnson suggested repurposing the shuffleboard area in Mansions Park into a hopscotch area.

7. Total 2026 budget: \$145,000

Board Member Johnson moved to approve the proposed 2026 budget. The motion was seconded by Board Member Grow. The motion was carried (4-0).

Board Member Johnson inquired if the trash and recycling cans could be cleaned more frequently in the summer months. Director Rossi mentioned that the cans are being cleaned on Mondays and Fridays, on a rotation. She commented that the cans get very dirty, very quickly.

Director Rossi mentioned that plumbing issues are happening at the Schryver Park restrooms. There is a plan to get them fixed, in-house. For the time being, there are portalets in the park while the restrooms are closed. The portalets are being cleaned by park staff.

K. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:23 PM.