

# Parks, Recreation + Tree Commission

## September 2024 Minutes - DRAFT

Monday September 9, 2024

The Parks, Recreation + Tree (PRT) Commission met at the Sylvester Powell, Jr. Community Center (PCC) on Monday, August 12, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

**In attendance:** Chair Nicole Sullivan (Ward I), Vice-Chair Sarah Emanuels (Ward III). Commission Members Katie Anderson (Ward I), Sarah Grittmann (Ward II), Sam Komosa (Ward II), Angela Vandegrift (Ward II), Dylon Sease (Ward III), Jacque Gameson (Ward IV).

**Council Liaisons:** Councilmember Debbie Kring.

**Staff:** Penn Almoney, Parks and Recreation Director.

**Guests:** Jenny Smith, Recreation Program Supervisor and Jenna Dickmann, Aquatics Facilities Supervisor.

**Not in Attendance:** Dustin Wolfe (Ward I), Cindy Long (Ward IV), Councilmember Brian Schmid (Council Liaison).

**Call To Order:** Chair **Nicole Sullivan** called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes:** The Minutes from the August 12, 2024, Parks, Recreation + Tree Commission Meeting were reviewed.<sup>1</sup>

**Jacque** requested two edits on page four: include the phrase “sign board” under Other and correct the spelling under “City Wide Trail Connection”.

**Sarah E.** motioned to approve the amended minutes; **Angela** seconded. **Amended Minutes were approved 8-0.**

**End of Season Presentation for Aquatics and Recreation: Jenna Dickmann** (Aquatics Facilities Supervisor) and **Jenny Smith** (Recreation Programs + Events Supervisor) gave a season ending recap of their respective summer programming.

### **Aquatics:**

**Jenna Dickmann** began her presentation pointing to several items that debuted this year at the Mission Family Aquatic Center (MFAC) including an Aqua Circuit fitness class and adult moonlight swim. She noted that revenue margins increased by 10%. This was a result of decreased personnel expenses and greater membership sales, though daily visits remained static. There was decreases visitation from Super Pass members due to Leewood and Roeland Park opting out of the program this season. In response to a question from **Councilmember Kring**, **Jenna** advised that the department would review the prudence of continuing in the Super Pass program.

**Jenna** then targeted opportunities for growth and a better patron experience. She pointed to maintaining competitive pay for a fully staffed pool to avoid program cancellations. She commended the

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.missionks.org/event/parks-recreation-and-tree-commission-18-6/>

employee referral program, citing a 60% retention rate in staff members. She shared that the MFAC was served by 100 aquatic team members and was pleased that zero drowning emergencies occurred this summer.

**Jenna** finished her presentation by highlighting improvements made to the MFAC. These included repainting the competition pool, new shades for the awnings, added lounge chairs and three picnic tables (one of which is ADA compliant) and freshly repainted splash pad characters, fountains and amenities.

**Katie** spoke approvingly of Pool Party for Pooches that took place on September 3. This is an event at the end of the summer where staff eliminates the chemicals from the water and allows dogs to swim before the pool is drained. She asked if there was any possibility for another event of this type. Jenna replied that it really is a one-time event since it requires staff to completely drain and clean the pool.

**Nicole** asked if there were any specific marketing ideas to improve patron attendance. **Jenna** underscored the importance of a consistent effort with outreach to gain more visibility.

#### **Summer Recreation Camps:**

**Jenny Smith** gave a presentation on the summer camp program which lasted for nine weeks (June 3 to August 2, 2024). The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) licensed program employed 23 seasonal staffers to service 1,278 total campers (including repeat attendees) for a maximum of 150 campers per week. The program serviced 205 unique campers with 21% of those campers being Mission residents and 75% of campers returning from last year.

While sharing the financial data, **Jenny** noted that Mission increased weekly camp registration \$10 from last year charging \$161 for residents and \$171 for non-residents. She expects to increase these fees again in 2025 to offset the rising costs in personnel and supplies with the goal to service 160-170 campers per week next year (1:8 staffer to camper ratio). She noted that the margin was 153% – which was down from 2023 and 2022, because a Childcare Aware grant funding had expired.

**Jenny** shared that pickleball lessons were added as an additional activity, which were very successful since many of the campers play the sport at school. She also highlighted other popular programs such as Knight School Chess, Play-Well LEGO Camp, swim, tennis, karate, and basketball skill development.

**Jenny** said that her offseason focus will include market research on how to limit the number of advanced camp reservation cancellations. **Katie** asked that Jenny share camp openings to the local PTAs, so that we can tap into their reach. **Dylon** shared an incentive from some of his children's camps which require the parents to find a replacement camper or else registration would not be refunded.

**Jenny** closed with a pitch for volunteers for the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary this Friday (September 13). She also requested volunteers for the annual Spooky Walk at Streamway Park on Friday, October 18. Last year had over 1,200 attendees. A \$1,000 sponsorship from BG Wealth Management was secured for this year.

#### **Positive Improvements:**

**Katie** shared that @kidsinkc on Instagram reviewed Water Works Park.<sup>2</sup> She also relayed a concern about the lack of a changing table at Water Works Park. Penn replied that this was a part of the overall scope of work and that he would look into it. (In an email after adjournment, Penn shared that this will be completed with the punch list.)

**Sustainability Liaison: Nicole** said that we will table selecting a volunteer for the November Sustainability meeting until next month.

**Tree Drive Update:**

**Penn** shared that 19 trees have been sold and there are 31 available. **Katie** suggested we advertise at the Rushton Elementary School open house on September 19 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

**Mohawk Phase 2 Update:**

**Penn** provide a status update on Mohawk Park Phase 2 – which is estimated to be completed by the end of October. The baseball field back stop was recently installed and work will continue with tree planting and playground installation.

**Sarah E.** noticed patrons using the trail even though the park is closed. **Penn** shared that there are sections of the trail unfinished which is a safety hazard. **Nicole** suggested adding more signage at common access points.

**Action Items & Planning:**

**Penn** shared that the next City Council Meeting will feature Jenna and Jenny’s presentation of their summer programming and a proclamation for the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Powell Community Center.

**Penn** said that the Andersen Park parking lot will be scheduled for resurfacing at the end of September or early October. **Katie** noted that at the latest movie night at Andersen Park, several tennis players were turned away. She suggested more signage and perhaps switching to a movie geared towards tweens or teens since the late start time may be deterring families with young children from attending.

**Maintenance Items:**

Vireo will be landscaping along Johnson Drive to improve site lines and plant native species to assist driver visibility and sustainable growth maintenance.

Heartland Tree Alliance began TreeKeeper training on Thursdays. As part of this program, participants will learn to prune two to three trees and will plant a new tree on the Northeast section of the PCC lawn.

City Administrator, Laura Smith, sent an email that Milhaven has an infestation of Oak Wilt. This is a fungal disease that wilts and eventually kills oak trees, with red oaks being the most at risk. The City is notifying all impacted residents. **Penn** reminded commissioners that Section 240 of the city code compels owners to remove diseased trees if they put other trees in harm’s way.

**Tree Protection Ordinance:**

**Penn** shared an updated memo of the current Tree Protection Ordinance discussion. He highlighted that the most critical component is educating the public and protecting the trees we have. The main target

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.instagram.com/reel/C\\_RAd-cpJk/?utm\\_source=ig\\_web\\_copy\\_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA==](https://www.instagram.com/reel/C_RAd-cpJk/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA==)

audience are new owners who are undergoing “tear down/rebuild” and other large scale development projects.

**Streamway Park:**

**Nicole** noted that commissioners wanted to discuss the future of Streamway Park pointing to the 2021 conceptual drawing that outlined a possible dog park. **Councilmember Kring** said that Council hadn’t discussed this dog park in a while. **Penn** counseled that any discussion relating to a dog park should take into account Roeland Park’s interest in renovating Nall Park to include a dog park. He also said that any future development at Streamway Park will have significant hurdles since the City of Mission does not own the land and any improvements would require a full renovation of the parking lot due to its existing steep grade. **Penn** followed up on a previous suggestion that the company- **BarK** may be looking to expand. During that conversation they advised that Mission is too close to an existing location and not a viable option.

**Penn** shared that the financial earmark for initial site development had since been removed and reallocated to be used in the 2024-2025 budget. He said that the trees have been pruned about ten feet on each side of the trail to maintain safe walkways which is a special concern due to the lack of lighting at dusk. **Nicole** suggested that we partner with the apartment complex on future discussions.

**Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grant for Mohawk Park:**

**Penn** announced that Mission had been reimbursed for the LWCF matching grant for Mohawk Park Phase 1. This reimbursement covered 50% of the total cost of Phase 1 for \$394,560. The city will not receive grant funds for Phase 2 since the scope of work commenced before LWCF reviewed Mission’s application. That review period can last more than a year, so the Parks and Recreation Department, with the consent of Council, proceeded without the LWCF funding.

**Adjournment: Sam** moved to adjourn the meeting; **Sarah E.** seconded the motion. **Motion passed 8-0.**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

Faithfully submitted by Sam Komosa, secretary pro tempore.