

CITY OF LAKEVILLE
PARKS, RECREATION & NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
April 1, 2026

Committee Chair Weberg called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Lake Marion Conference Room.

Members Present: Holly Weberg, Vicki Schwartz, Pat Sauer, Dan Volkosh, Mark Engler, Rachel Bland

Members Absent: Angie Lueschen

Staff Present: Parks and Recreation Director Joe Masiarchin, Recreation Program Coordinator Bridget Samson

1. Approval of March 4, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Sauer made a motion, seconded by Engler, to approve the March 4, 2026, minutes as written.

Ayes: unanimous

2. Citizen comments

No citizens were present.

3. New committee member introductions

Rachel Bland began her three-year term with the committee, and members shared some of their backgrounds and other details about the committee.

4. Discussion Items

a. Heritage Center Update and Information Sharing

Recreation Program Coordinator Bridget Samson presented a review of 2025 and an update on current activities at the Heritage Center.

The Heritage Center staff includes one program coordinator, two part-time administrative assistants and three facility attendants. The Heritage Center has its own dedicated advisory committee consisting of seven volunteers. These committee members assist with special events, fundraising and other duties as needed at the Heritage Center. Operations at the Heritage Center rely heavily on volunteers; over 200 volunteers dedicate their time to running special events, delivering bread, leading groups, and other duties as needed. In 2025, volunteers contributed 2,765 hours to the Heritage Center!

Membership at the Heritage Center has been steadily increasing over the last number of years, recently hitting an all-time high of 1,678 members. Most of the members are Lakeville residents at 1,284 and non-residents comprise 394 members. The most popular check-in offerings at the Heritage Center include bread pick-up, coffee lounge, library and the fitness center. The top activities currently are Pickleball with 1,985 members and Flexibility & Strength with 1,518 members. A number of outdoor groups are set to start in the next few weeks, including Walking Group, Ladies' and Men's Golf, and Biking Group.

2025 Review

A number of changes were made at the Heritage Center last year, from events to facility updates. Here is a peek at what was happening:

- Retired the Waffle Breakfast fundraiser; this fundraising event was not financially feasible, as the event was just breaking even the last few years.
- New classes included iPhone 101, Polish Bingo, History Classes, collaborative pottery classes, and Sarcopenia. The Lakeville Lions donated the funds to purchase weights and benches for the sarcopenia class, and it has been popular so far.
- Over 40 presentations were offered.
- A brand-new roof was installed, and a new coffee maker was purchased.
- As part of the department's strategic plan, new branding was rolled out and the newsletter was refreshed.

2025 Financials

- \$7,665 in Heritage Happenings advertising.
- \$108,555.96 in membership, passes, programs and special event fees.
- \$2,550 in sponsorships.
- \$10,760 in fundraising.
- \$4,240.36 in donations were received to support special events, offset registration fees and expand programming.
- \$42,060 in rental fees were collected.

2025 Rentals

Overall, 2025 was a good year for rentals, though one long-term rental dropped, reducing total rental revenue.

- 262 paid rentals
- 130 non-profit rentals
- 194 single room rentals
- 68 multiple room rentals

Coming in 2026

- A volunteer appreciation event will be held this fall.
- Seeking more opportunities for community outreach, including a clean-up day at the Heritage Center's adopted park.
- Staff hired new Sports Courts Program Supervisors to ensure that pickleball players are checking in appropriately and that courts are being utilized during the group's scheduled times. This new position will also monitor inclement-weather closures, assist with AED use, resolve minor disputes, and perform other duties as needed. This will be a paid City position, whereas volunteers have been utilized in years past.
- A new committee for special events will be leveraged to organize upcoming events at the Heritage Center. This will be an immense help to staff and the advisory committee.
- A push to increase craft sale vendors.
- Continuing on with initiatives related to the strategic plan.
- Changes to membership fees are being reviewed by group leaders in the coming weeks. The fees have not changed since the Heritage Center opened. Some activities will also move to an

“inclusive” model where pre-registration will no longer be required. (Card and other game groups, crafting groups, etc.).

Committee Discussion

Are building improvements, such as a roof replacement, shared costs between the groups that use the facility? (i.e. Yellow Ribbon, Historical Society) No, this was part of the Facility’s CIP and was paid for by the City.

Are there scholarship opportunities? Yes, as funds are available, members can apply for scholarships. Samson indicated that only a handful of scholarships are requested annually.

How is participation among off-site groups monitored? Group leaders and volunteers track this for staff.

If some groups are moving away from pre-registration, is there concern about losing contact with these members or about a decline in participation? Staff have considered this and intend to leverage the mass contact function through RecTrac and contact members based on historical registration information.

How are volunteer hours tracked? What standards are they held to? Volunteers are tracked through a membership pass; they are asked to scan in whenever they volunteer. Sometimes they do forget to scan in for their group participation, but for the most part, this process provides accurate volunteer information. Volunteers are held to the same code of conduct as City staff and must sign the same waivers that regular staff are required to.

With so many volunteer hours needed to keep operations running at the Heritage Center, is there a discussion around increased staffing? Adding staff is not an option at this time, but improving efficiency and streamlining processes are ongoing discussions to manage staff workload.

b. Draft Mobile Food Vendors in City Parks Policy

Staff is proposing changes to the current Mobile Food Vendor Policy to include food vendor parking at Grand Prairie Park and institute a \$100 annual administrative fee. Vendors would be issued an annual parking permit that allows them to park at Antlers and Grand Prairie Parks. Catering or vending for private reservations, special events, tournaments, and other instances would not be assessed the proposed fee, and no changes would be made to how staff processes those requests. Some City-affiliated events have required vendor fees; these policy changes would not impact those established fees.

Committee Discussion

Is there food truck parking located at Grand Prairie Park similar to Antlers Park? No, a spot will be striped for food trucks, and permanent signage will be posted, but vendors must provide their own power source. One food vendor will be permitted per day; Antlers Park allows four food trucks daily.

Regarding the rate, is this similar to what other communities are charging? From what staff has reviewed, the rate is lower than that of the surrounding communities. Since this will be new for vendors this year, staff did not want to create an unnecessary barrier to entry for vendors and we want to encourage more vendors to be in the parks.

Why is the fee being assessed this year? A considerable amount of staff time is dedicated to issuing permits, promoting vendors via the City website, posting their schedules, etc. We've also run into issues with vendors requesting dates that they never use, requiring a fee would hopefully change this. The fee can be adjusted based on vendor feedback.

What guidelines are there for vendors pertaining to waste disposal? Vendors are asked to remove all trash from the park or, for Antlers Park, use the on-site dumpster. Trash removal has not been an issue with vendors in the past but staff will keep an eye out for issues and address them as needed.

c. Draft Parks System Master Plan Trail Map

Staff presented a draft of the master plan trail map that included additional trail segments and roadway crossings, improved access to existing roadway crossings, and some realignments of existing trails. Other improvements would include more user-friendly signage and potentially striping bike lanes on roads. Though many roads in Lakeville can accommodate bicycles, they are not striped to indicate this.

The map was designed based on feedback from the community survey, staff input, and long-term planning initiatives. The draft trail map was presented at the March Parks System Master Plan Open House, a number of comments and recommendations were received. Staff and the consultant will be making adjustments based on community feedback.

Committee Discussion

The railroad storage near Antlers Park is included in the map, is that a sure thing? No, though the property has been earmarked for Dakota County's Rails to Trails initiative, it has not been acquired. Trails that would be cooperative infrastructure with Dakota County have been included in the draft map but not finalized.

There is an area where the trail appears to overlay an existing creek. Would the trail impact the creek? No, it is staff's intention to incorporate the existing topography and natural elements into a scenic railway but not impact them.

d. Parks System Master Plan Project Team Update

Weberg shared an update on the most recent Parks System Master Plan project team meeting. It has been determined that a facility study is necessary at this time, given the substantial feedback received specifically on facilities. Staff will present an expansion of HKGI's original proposal, including a facility study, to the City Council for approval next week. Staff is asking for another committee member to participate on the project team working on the facility study. Committee members will be sent a poll to complete in the next or so.

5. Staff Report

A ribbon-cutting for Grand Prairie Park has been scheduled for June 1. Staff is in the process of sending invitations to community members, former advisory board members, and others involved in the project. The main building and field support building are on schedule to open mid-April; most of the outdoor amenities are open to the public, excluding the athletic decks and grandstand.

The bid opening for East Community Park is scheduled for this Friday, the plans have been pulled by 35 contractors so far and staff is hoping for some competitive options.

The Arts Center playground is scheduled for removal this coming week and the new one will be installed over the next month. The project also includes extensive landscaping and a new art fence along the property line.

7. Other Business

No other business.

Sauer made a motion, seconded by Volkosh, to adjourn the March 4, 2026 meeting.

Ayes: unanimous

8. Adjourn

Meeting 7:40 p.m.