



# Parks and Recreation Commission

## Regular Meeting

~ Minutes ~

1408 Lake Street South  
Forest Lake, MN 55025  
[www.ci.forest-lake.mn.us](http://www.ci.forest-lake.mn.us)

Wednesday, March 19 2026

6:00 PM

City Center - Council Chambers

### 1. Call to Order

### 2. Roll Call

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Don Theisen	Chair	Present	
Karen Morehead	Vice-Chair	Present	
Aaron Eckert	Commissioner	Absent	
Tim Garry	Commissioner	Present	
Sue Herdina	Commissioner	Present	6:03 p.m.
Melissa Lundmark	Commissioner	Present	
Nikki Syring	Commissioner	Present	

### 3. Pledge of Allegiance

### 4. Approve the Agenda

**Motion:** Commissioner Morehead made a Motion to Approve the Agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Commissioner Syring. Motion carried 5-0.

### 5. Open Forum – Citizen Petitions, Requests, and Concerns

*The Open Forum is available for residents to express personal opinions on any item of business. Please limit your comments to three (3) minutes.*

Riley Richardson, 4406 Douglas Drive, Crystal, stated that he was with MWP Recreation. They wanted to participate in the request for proposal for Bayview Park.

Keith Kuhnly, 7841 Northshore Trail, stated he was with Let’s Go Fishing in Forest Lake. He noted that they would be starting in Forest Lake in June. He noted that they were in a strong financial position. They were working to recruit volunteers to staff the boat this summer.

Commissioner Morehead asked how volunteers sign up. Mr. Kuhnly responded that volunteers could sign up on their website.

### 6. Approve Meeting Minutes from February 18, 2026, Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting

Commissioner Lundmark asked to change “Rotary Lions” to “Rotary.”

**Motion:** Commissioner Garry made a Motion to Approve the Meeting Minutes from the February 18, 2026, Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting with the stated change. Motion seconded by Commissioner Lundmark. Motion carried 6-0.

## 7. Forest View Estates Park Dedication – Abbi Wittman

Community Development Director Wittman reviewed the application for a Preliminary Plat and Variance for the Forest View Estates project. She noted that the project was located within the service radius of Kulenkamp Park, which met the intent of the 2014 Parks and Trails Master Plan and the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. She reviewed the park dedication history and stated that the legal counsel advised that parkland dedication could be accepted at the time of land subdivision, so the City had the right to request parkland dedication.

Commissioner Morehead asked if Kulenkamp Park had additional amenities other than athletic fields. Community Development Director Wittman answered that there was a picnic area and playground at the park.

Commissioner Morehead asked if the trail would be wide enough to accommodate bikes and people. Community Development Director Wittman confirmed this information.

Commissioner Syring asked about the three parcels. Community Development Director Wittman clarified that the City owned the purple parcel from a previous land dedication.

**Motion:** Commissioner Morehead made a Motion to Recommend the City Council accept a trail dedication and cash dedication fee in lieu of land dedication for the Forest View Estates plat. Motion seconded by Commissioner Garry. Motion carried 6-0.

## 8. Lakeside Memorial Park Boat Launch Discussion and Recommendation – Abbi Wittman

Community Development Director Wittman reviewed the previous agreement with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for the construction of the downtown boat launch. She discussed the more recent downtown planning efforts and the discussion for shoreline redesign and boat launch relocation. She noted that the City Council would like to move the launch out of Lakeside Memorial Park, but they do not own a portion of the property for the proposed boat launch relocation. She noted that there was no publicly available alternative, and there were repair and upgrade concerns. She noted that the Planning Commission needed to discuss the shoreline stabilization with or without the public launch.

Commissioner Herdina requested to see the boat launch relocation options. Community Development Director Wittman reviewed the boat launch relocation options. She noted that the blue launch option was partially on City property and partially on private property.

Commissioner Garry clarified that the blue boat launch was primarily owned by someone else. Community Development Director Wittman answered that a portion of the parking area was privately-owned and they had not heard back from the private property owner.

Commissioner Morehead stated that she preferred the existing boat launch but expressed a need to have the shoreline restoration. Community Development Director Wittman answered that the shoreline restoration would not allow for a dedicated non-motorized launch and would move the boat launch slightly south.

Commissioner Morehead asked about other entrances for non-motorized boat launches. She said that there were very few locations to accommodate the boat launch. Community Development

Director Wittman answered that the scope of work from the study considered six or eight alternatives to the boat launch, but the two alternatives found had pros and cons.

Community Development Director Wittman answered that the City Council noted the preferred option for the boat launch.

Public Works Director Adams stated that the City Council wanted feedback from the Parks and Recreation Commission once it was formed.

Chair Theisen said that if they could make the boat launch into park space, it would benefit Arts in the Park.

Commissioner Lundmark noted that she thought the current space was an odd space for a boat launch.

Community Development Director Wittman said that the shoreland and boat launch needed repair.

Public Works Director Adams said that the docks and concrete at the boat launch needed repair. If they were to lock into an agreement with the Department of Natural Resources to assist with the costs, they would have a twenty-year contract. He discussed the costs to fix the boat launch.

Public Works Director Adams said that the shoreline and boat launch was a capital project that had funding in the capital improvement plan.

Chair Theisen asked if they could continue the conversation after the City could see if they could reach an agreement with the landowner. The Parks and Recreation Coordinator answered that the Parks and Recreation Commission could provide recommendations on the next steps to move forward.

Commissioner Garry asked about the costs of developing a new launch. Public Works Director Adams answered that the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources would not buy land, but they could collaborate on the costs of building the boat launch.

Commissioner Morehead asked to get feedback from the public.

Chair Theisen asked if the Parks and Recreation Commission would like to keep the boat launch in the current location or move to the preferred location. Commissioner Garry answered that he would like to use the current location.

Commissioner Syring asked how many people utilize the boat launch. Community Development Director Wittman answered that they could get information about how many people use the boat launch.

Commissioner Syring said it would be beneficial to see how many people utilize the boat launch.

**Motion:** Commissioner Garry made a Motion to Recommend the City Council accept the location of the current boat launch.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Morehead. Motion failed 3-3 (Syring, Theisen, and Lundmark voted against).

Chair Theisen noted that he liked the preferred location, especially if they wanted the vision for the downtown to come to fruition.

Community Development Director Wittman asked how the Parks and Recreation Commission felt about receiving public input.

Commissioner Lundmark said she would love to hear feedback from those who utilize the boat ramp.

Community Development Director Wittman said they could put together a plan for public engagement to bring it back to the Parks and Recreation Commission. She said that the Parks and Recreation Commission seemed in favor of fixing the shoreline.

Commissioner Syring asked if they had moved the boat launch and if the current docks would stay in place. Community Development Director Wittman answered that they would eventually try to consolidate the docks so that all the shoreline space is not docking space.

Commissioner Morehead asked if a performance space was included in the downtown plan. Community Development Director Wittman answered that a new bandshell was proposed in the downtown plan if they moved the boat launch.

Commissioner Lundmark said that the gazebo was not set up for a dance group, and different groups would enjoy the new performance space.

Chair Theisen requested cost estimates for both options and comments from the City Engineer on the property flow.

Commissioner Morehead requested feedback about whether the property owner would willingly give up the property.

Commissioner Syring said she liked a new location for the boat launch, so that Arts in the Park can continue to grow and families can utilize the park space.

## **9. 10-Year Parks Capital Improvement Plan – Dave Adams**

Public Works Director Adams reviewed the updated draft of the 10-year Parks Capital Improvement Plan. He said that the park fund receives \$425,000 from the general levy.

Commissioner Syring asked about when the cash-in-lieu took place. Public Works Director Adams answered when the development agreement was signed.

Public Works Director Adams said that they need to submit a ten-year plan to the City, but he has a twenty-five-year plan and a fifty-year plan, so they are aware of the continual maintenance needs.

## **10. Dog Park Potential Sites – Kyle Young**

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young stated that they identified four City-owned spaces that would provide opportunities for a dog park.

Commissioner Lundmark said that she liked the idea of Bixby Park.

Commissioner Syring expressed interest in option A.

Chair Theisen reviewed the different options. He stated that he did not like option D because of its proximity to residential homes.

Commissioner Lundmark voiced appreciation for Options A and B.

Commissioner Morehead said she liked Option B best.

Chair Theisen said he liked options A and B, but he would prefer option B since it would take advantage of pre-existing parking and accessibility to City water.

Commissioner Syring stated that she liked option B but would be interested in the prime times for dog park usage since Fenway already has parking limitations. Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young responded that they would encourage parking in a gravel lot near Fitzgerald.

Commissioner Morehead discussed the south area since the land would not be used for other purposes, but she liked option B best.

Public Works Director Adams clarified that they would not utilize all twelve acres for a dog park.

Commissioner Lundmark discussed the options for on-leash trails in addition to dog parks.

“Peggy”, 19850 Forest Road Trailside Senior Living, said she would like to find an area where her dog can run and that would provide benches, receptacles, and bag posts. She stated she would like there to be an option for people to donate to the dog park at the location. She asked if there would just be one dog park.

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young answered that they would start with providing one dog park. They previously discussed having fenced-off areas for large and small dogs.

“Peggy” asked for clarification on the proposed dog park locations. Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young answered that it was near the new recycling center.

The resident asked if there was land near the airport. She said she liked the location, as people already use the space for their dogs.

## **11. Farmers Market Update – Kyle Young**

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young stated that there had not been large changes. They would have the City Council approve the Forest Lake Farmers Market Purpose and Regulations.

**Motion:** Commissioner Garry made a Motion to Recommend the City Council approve the Forest Lake Farmers Market Purpose and Regulations.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Herdina. Motion carried 6-0.

## **12. Department Purpose Discussion – Kyle Young**

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young requested feedback to help guide future planning and priorities for the Parks and Recreation Department.

Commissioner Syring said that she noticed there was no outline of toy donation opportunities during the holiday season. She asked if they could validate information for residents or provide information about other events in the community.

Commissioner Morehead stated that there was a shortage of locations for bikers to go.

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young clarified that they desired the Parks and Recreation Department to be a hub of information for the community.

Chair Theisen asked if the City had a mission statement. Public Works Director Adams answered that they were working through a strategic plan with the City Council, but they hit a bump in the road.

Chair Theisen said that this was a complex topic to consider, both parks and recreation. He asked what recreation would mean. He asked what other suburbs do for their parks and recreation department. Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young answered that it changes based on the City.

Public Works Director Adams discussed the option of a mission statement to help them determine what work to pursue.

Commissioner Syring discussed the benefit of communicating information City-wide, such as the option to utilize the YMCA six times for free. She wanted to communicate other resources in the City, like the splash pad.

### **13. Arts in the Park Sign Up Discussion – Kyle Young**

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young asked for feedback on the weekly sign-up he used for Arts in the Park last year.

Commissioner Lundmark discussed the value of having the Parks and Recreation Commission attend Arts in the Park.

Commissioner Morehead said she enjoyed going to Arts in the Park weekly. She asked if there was a sign-up for bikes at Beltz Park.

### **14. Staff Updates**

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Young discussed the positive sales response to the Memorial Pavers. He stated that the sculpture was moving forward.

### **15. Park and Recreation Commissioner Updates**

Commissioner Morehead asked about a sign for bikes at Beltz Park and how it could ruin the ground. Public Works Director Adams answered that they ordered a bike rack, and they would work on installing it and put a reader board up at the park.

Commissioner Lundmark noted that the Good Samaritan volunteer clean-up would be on April 25th.

### **16. Adjourn**

**Motion:** Commissioner Garry made a Motion to Adjourn the regularly scheduled Parks and Recreation Commission meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Herdina. Motion carried 6-0.