

City of Eldridge Park Board



The regular meeting of the Eldridge Park Board was called to order at 6:30 p.m. on February 10th, 2026, at City Hall.

Board Members present were Jill DeWulf, Samantha Nichols, Tricia Campbell, Chris Spensley and Aarsal Shareef. Also, present were Tony Rupe, Jeff Ashcraft and Scott LaPlante.

New Park Board members Chris Spensley and Aarsal Shareef were introduced. They replace Jeff Ashcraft and Scott LaPlante, who have transitioned to the City Council.

Motion by DeWulf, second by Nichols to approve the agenda. All ayes. Motion carries.

Motion by Dewulf, second by Nichols to approve the minutes from the January 13, 2026 meeting. All ayes. Motion carries.

Motion by Spensley, second by DeWulf to approve the park bills in the amount of \$410.47. All ayes. Motion carries.

Public Comment

None.

Old Business

Potential 2026 Capital Improvement Projects – The Park Board reviewed potential future capital improvement projects. Due to aging infrastructure, City staff recommended that the Board consider the following improvements: replacement of the Sheridan Meadows Diamond 2 field lighting, reconstruction of the retaining wall at the Centennial Park playground, and replacement of the roof at the Centennial Park shelter.

Board members expressed strong interest in advancing plans for a new structure at Hickory Park to include restrooms, a concession area, and storage. Tony Rupe was authorized to contact Shive-Hattery to request a proposal for the design of this structure, including evaluation of sanitary sewer access, which is not currently available on site.

Board members were asked to submit their top five capital improvement priorities to Trish Campbell. The results will be compiled and discussed at the March Park Board meeting.

Jeff Ashcraft reported that the Sheridan Meadows Pond Committee recently met and would like to present a proposal to construct a pond at Sheridan Meadows. The Committee requested that the Park Board consider reserving a portion of future Capital Improvement funds for this potential project.

Tony Rupe reviewed current funding levels. The Park Operating Fund presently has an approximate reserve of \$165,000. City Administrator Nevada Lemke will work with the City Council to determine appropriate use of these funds, as maintaining a reserve in the Operating Fund is not necessary. The

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Parks Capital Improvement Fund has a balance of approximately \$250,000. Four projects scheduled for spring and summer are estimated to total \$245,000, including pickleball court repairs, construction of a shelter and restroom at Elmegreen Park, restoration of the Lions Shelter, and amenities along the Hickory Creek walking paths.

Concession Stand Contract- The Board reviewed an updated contract providing a one-year extension for concession operations by Derek Lingle. Tony Rupe and Administrator Lemke met with Mr. Lingle on January 26 to review the previous season's operations and address any questions or concerns from 2025. Rupe reported that prior concerns have been resolved and are not expected to present issues in the upcoming season. Motion by Dewulf to approve a one-year extension for concession operations to Derek Lingle, second by Spensley, All Ayes. Motion carries.

New Business

FY27 Budget Review – Rupe presented the proposed FY27 Park budgets. He explained that several years ago, when the Parks and Recreation Director position was consolidated under the Public Works Director, park-related wages and equipment expenses were reassigned to the General Fund within the Street Operating Expense budget. While this streamlined Public Works budgeting, it made it difficult to clearly identify the true cost of park operations.

To better reflect actual expenses, the proposed FY27 budget reallocates park wages and equipment costs back to the 004 Park Operating Fund. Although this results in an increased transfer from the General Fund to the Park Fund, the change is largely offset by a corresponding reduction in Street Operation expenses within the General Fund.

The Capital Projects Fund remains largely unchanged from FY26. If approved, the budgets will proceed to the City Council for review prior to final Council approval. Rupe noted that minor adjustments may occur as City Administration finalizes insurance-related budget figures, but overall totals are expected to remain substantially the same.

Motion by Dewulf to approve the proposed budgets, second by Nichols, All Ayes. Motion carries.

Motion by Dewulf to adjourn the meeting at 7:22 p.m., second by Nichols. All ayes. Motion carries.

Respectfully submitted,
Tony Rupe, Public Works Director