

City of Aurora Park Board

Aurora City Hall - City Council Chambers

2 W. Pleasant St. Aurora, Missouri 65605

Thursday, January 15, 2026 - 6:00 PM

1/15/2026 - Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Tracey Houchin called the meeting to order at 6:05PM.

2. ROLL CALL

President Tracey Houchin	Present
Vice President Nikki Kennedy	Absent
Board Member David Brammell	Present
Board Member Melody McKinley	Present
Board Member Jesse Rathbun	Present, Arrived at 6:15PM.

Ex Officio Members:

City Manager Carrie Howlett	Present
Mayor Tony Kennedy	Present
Parks Director Travis Wittenborn	Absent
Rec Center Director Anthony Finzo	Present

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

President Tracey Houchin requested a motion to approve Park Board minutes from December 18, 2025. Board Member David Brammell motioned to approve the minutes and Board Member Melody McKinley seconded the motion. Motion passed with votes documented as follows:

President Tracey Houchin	Aye
Vice President Nikki Kennedy	Absent
Board Member David Brammell	Aye
Board Member Melody McKinley	Aye
Board Member Jesse Rathbun	Aye

4. NEW BUSINESS

4.I. Park Concerns To Be Addressed By Park Board

President Tracey Houchin began the discussion by expressing her concern with the safety of a few pieces of playground equipment in some of the parks. As discussed in the previous board meeting, some of the pieces have rusted metal. Dennis Carlisle, present to represent the Parks Department, shared the difficulty the Parks Department has had in finding replacement parts as the pieces are older. He stated the powder coating is flaking, exposing the metal to rust. The Board questioned if it would be a more cost-effective option to try to take the equipment apart and have the pieces sand blasted then powder coated again. The Parks Department will continue seeking the best option to ensure the parks' playground equipment is safe for the community.

Next, Houchin brought up discussion on the skate park. While the desire is to eventually build a new skate park out of the floodplain, the Board discussed possible ways to make the current skate park safer and more attractive. To ensure safety, cameras will eventually be installed by the Parks Department and lighting improved. To clean up the skate park and make it more attractive to the community, the Park Board discussed painting the framework and panels. Hiring an artist to paint graffiti on the panels was discussed. The ramps themselves would need to be painted with a special grit paint specific for skateboarding ramps.

Houchin moved discussion to the old sand volleyball court and what could be done with it to ensure safety. As there are concrete chunks in the sand, this court is no longer safe. The Parks Department has the necessary equipment and fill dirt to remove the sand and fill in the court. Signage should be added to direct the community to use the new sand volleyball court at Crosby Park.

The Board then created a list of items they feel they can tackle with the help of volunteers:

- Paint White Park, then all parks (the Parks Department will work to power wash equipment prior to painting)
- Clean grills at parks and repaint with high heat paint
- Pain Trash cans
- Legion Concession stand - wire brush flaky paint and repaint

Volunteer groups were discussed. The Board mentioned several community groups they will approach to coordinate a Park Clean-Up Day.

- Rotary Club - Jesse Rathbun will seek an opportunity to visit one of their meetings to request their assistance.
- Chamber of Commerce, Boys and Girls Clubs, Boy and Girl Scouts, and Project Rise - Tracey Houchin will approach each of these groups.
- Lions Club and FFA - Melody McKinley volunteered to reach out to these groups.

After discussing possible dates, President Tracey Houchin requested a motion to set the Park Clean-Up Day for Saturday, April 18th at 9AM in White Park. Board Member David Brammell made the motion, and Board Member Jesse Rathbun seconded the motion. Motion passed with votes as follows:

President Tracey Houchin	Aye
Vice President Nikki Kennedy	Absent
Board Member David Brammell	Aye
Board Member Melody McKinley	Aye
Board Member Jesse Rathbun	Aye

Board Member Jesse Rathbun suggested creating a flyer with QR code to access a registration form for the Park Clean-Up Day.

4.II. Additional Park Concerns

Discussion for the next Park Board meeting will include long-term plans/ideas for the city parks and ADA compliance.

5. STAFF UPDATES

Recreation Center Director Anthony Finzo briefly updated the Park Board on events/activities currently underway at the Recreation Center.

- Youth Basketball leagues have started up. The league has access to 4 facilities for the 26 teams enrolled.
- Registrations open in February for the Adult Pickleball League and the Adult Basketball League.
- Winter Transformation is set to begin at the end of January.
- Finzo will direct a new fitness class Mondays and Thursdays over the lunch hour.
- The Center has over 750 memberships.

Dennis Carlisle was present to represent the Parks Department, informing the Park Board about the work the Parks Department has been working on since the previous Park Board meeting.

- Installing benches at the Skate Park
- Cut down 3 trees at the Dog Park
- Pulled the signposts down from Crosby Park
- Painted the flagpole at Oak Park
- Purchased trash barrels for the city parks
- They are ordering mulch to place in Crosby and Oak Parks

City Manager Carrie Howlett then shared the Walking Trail Grant is moving through the next phase. City Hall Renovations are underway: tuck pointing is complete, acid wash continues, while the stairs have proven more challenging. Despite said challenges, the project should wrap up in March.

Howlett then informed the Park Board that the Council has approved the 2026 budget. A focus for the year will be on storm water and cleaning out ditches in the city.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were made.

7. ADJOURNMENT

President Tracey Houchin requested a motion to adjourn the Park Board meeting. Board Member Jesse Rathbun made the motion to adjourn. Board member David Brammell seconded the motion. Motion passed with votes documented as follows:

President Tracey Houchin	Aye
Vice President Nikki Kennedy	Absent
Board Member David Brammell	Aye
Board Member Melody McKinley	Aye
Board Member Jesse Rathbun	Aye

Meeting adjourned at 7:20 PM.