

**MINUTES
CITY OF LONSDALE
PARK AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
DECEMBER 8, 2025**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Miller called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm in the City Council Chambers, 103 15th Ave SE.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Everyone stood and recited the pledge of allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Jeanette Utecht, Micki Ziskovsky Kari Miller, Dana Nickell, and Charlie Peterfeso

Members Absent: None

City Staff Present: City Administrator Joel Erickson, Public Works Director Joe Dornfeld, and Community Development Planner Cory Hinz-Ibarra

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Miller asked if there were any additions, deletions, or corrections to the agenda. A motion was made by Utecht and seconded by Peterfeso to approve the agenda addition and order. Vote for: Utecht, Ziskovsky, Miller, Nickell, and Peterfeso. Against: None. Vote 5-0. Motion carried.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Miller asked if there were any additions, deletions, or corrections to the November 10, 2025 meeting minutes. A motion was made by Peterfeso and seconded by Ziskovsky to approve the minutes from the November 10, 2025 meeting. Vote for: Utecht, Ziskovsky, Miller, Nickell, and Peterfeso. Against: None. Vote 5-0. Motion carried.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

7. PRESENTATION OF CITIZEN PETITIONS AND COMMENTS

None

8. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

None

9. OLD BUSINESS

None

10. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Community Discussion Regarding Mosquito Spraying and Park Chemicals

Hinz-Ibarra explained that Nickell had requested adding discussion regarding mosquito spraying and park chemicals to this meeting's agenda. Hinz-Ibarra noted the proposed 2026 mosquito control budget is \$47,600 and requested that the Board make a recommendation to the City Council for the finalization of the 2026 budget at the upcoming December 11th City Council Meeting. Miller invited public comment from Sophie Orluck, who addressed the Park Board with concerns about the City's mosquito spraying program. Orluck, a resident at 315 2nd Ave SW, expressed concerns about chemical exposure from mosquito spraying, specifically noting health impacts on residents, gardens, produce, pollinators, and pets. Orluck indicated that the previous property owner had successfully advocated for a "do not spray" list that was discontinued in 2020 following that person's death. Erickson clarified the history of the "do not spray" list, explaining that it was discontinued because more than half of the people who had signed up for it later requested to be returned to the spray route. Orluck presented information about low West Nile Virus risk factors and questioned the efficiency and cost of the current spraying program. Dornfeld stated that mosquito spraying is a necessity and noted that organic alternatives would be twice the price with half the effectiveness. Utecht recommended maintaining the current program for 2026 but suggested exploring alternatives for the 2027 budget planning. Ziskovsky shared data on increased West Nile virus cases in Minnesota (from 35 cases with 1 death in 2024 to 107 cases with 10 deaths in 2025) and expressed concern about vulnerable populations including nursing home residents and children at sports facilities. Nickell noted that neighboring cities like Burnsville, Lakeville, and Northfield use the Metropolitan Mosquito Control District service which takes a more targeted approach based on larvae sampling and thresholds, rather than spraying entire towns. Peterfeso cited his experience with the Boy Scouts attempting organic methods which proved less effective, especially after rain, and substantially more expensive. The Board then addressed park chemical usage. Nickell expressed concern about chemicals used in parks affecting children and pets, mentioning that Rochester's Park Board has 12 chemical-free parks started through a pilot program in 2016. Nickell noted these parks require less maintenance and are popular with residents. Dornfeld indicated that staff from neighboring communities that have eliminated chemicals reported embarrassment over the aesthetics of their parks, noting challenges with dandelions and thistles. Dornfeld advised that certain parks near woods, wetlands or fields would be susceptible to noxious weeds and buckthorn if not chemically treated. Utecht and Ziskovsky expressed preferences for maintaining the current chemical treatments to keep parks green and weed-free. The Board discussed the possibility of designating Bastyr Park as a chemical-free pilot as it has minimal turf area, but concerns were raised about obtaining sufficient community input and ensuring the test would provide meaningful results.

A motion was made by Utecht and seconded by Peterfeso to recommend to the City Council to stay with the current mosquito spraying program and send out a community survey to collect mosquito spraying and chemical-free pilot park feedback. Vote for: Utecht, Ziskovsky, Miller, Nickell, and Peterfeso. Against: None. Vote 5-0. Motion carried.

b. Discuss 2026 Park Board Goals

Hinz-Ibarra reviewed the Board's established project and grant priorities for 2026:

- Veterans Memorial Park Paver and Landscaping Enhancement project (with external funding sources)
- Completion of Jaycee Park Concrete project including Shuffleboard Court Addition
- Incorporating pickleball functionality into the tennis court at Treka Memorial Park (multi-sport net system quoted at \$5,153 not including installation)
- Removal of the baseball field at Singing Hills Park
- Continuation of the pollinator garden on the 10-acre area by the elementary school

Hinz-Ibarra noted that capital funding will not be allocated to the park budget in 2026 and the City may potentially receive \$101,500 in park dedication from the Harvest Pond Apartments Project. The Board agreed to add a question about desired park amenities to the upcoming community survey to gather updated resident feedback.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

a. 2026 Landscape Planters

The Board discussed that in previous years Laura Carpentier, a former Park Board member had done the planting with Public Works handling maintenance. The Board recommended reaching out to Laura Carpentier to determine her continued interest and advertising for volunteer groups (possibly JoAnn Erickson's 4-H Club) in January to assist with planting and maintenance at the Fire Hall, welcome signs, and Lions Park. Ziskovsky expressed concern that the welcome signs looked unkept during the past year. Dornfeld noted that many of the shrubs at the welcome signs need replacement due to age.

12. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Utecht and seconded by Peterfeso to adjourn the meeting at 7:05 pm. Vote for: Utecht, Ziskovsky, Miller, Nickell, and Peterfeso. Against: None. Vote 5-0. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted:


Cory Hinz-Ibarra, Community Development Planner