

CITY OF FALCON HEIGHTS

Joint Meeting
Parks & Recreation Commission
Environment Commission
City Hall
2077 West Larpentour Avenue

AGENDA

February 2, 2026 at 6:30 P.M.

A. CALL TO ORDER:

B. ROLL CALL:

Eric Brenton (Chair) _____ Tom Faust (Vice-Chair) _____ Joe Morseth (Secretary) _____
Robert Haight _____ Jerry Buckridge _____ Naomi Loud Heinsch _____

Adam Keester (Chair) _____ John Pellegrini (Vice-Chair) _____ Nuz Sanidad (Secretary) _____
Beth Mercer-Taylor _____ David Smith _____ Monika Chandler _____ Erica Bjelland _____

COUNCIL LIAISON:

Randy Gustafson _____
Georgiana May _____

STAFF PRESENT:

Kelly Nelson _____
Hannah Lynch _____

C. PRESENTATION:

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. January 5, 2026 - Parks and Recreation Commission Regular Meeting

E. AGENDA:

1. In Common Commission Goals
 - a. Community Garden Expansion
2. Community Park Phase 2 Discussion

F. INFORMATION/ANNOUNCEMENT

G. ADJOURNMENT:

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CITY OF FALCON HEIGHTS
Regular Meeting of the Parks & Recreation Commission
City Hall
2077 West Larpenteur Avenue

MINUTES
January 5, 2026

A. CALL TO ORDER: 6:52 PM

B. ROLL CALL:

Joe Morseth X Eric Brenton X Tom Faust X
Bob Haight Wesley Goldberg Jerry Buckridge X VACANT

COUNCIL LIAISON (UNASSIGNED):

James Wassenberg X

STAFF PRESENT:

Kelly Nelson X

C. PRESENTATION: N/A

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. December 1, 2025 – Parks and Recreation Regular Meeting Minutes

Faust motions to approve the Park minutes;
approved 4-0

E. AGENDA:

1. 2026 Officer Elections

Morseth would like to be considered for the role of Secretary. Motion carries 4-0 to elect Joe Morseth as Secretary.

Brenton nominates Faust as Vice Chairperson and motions to approve him. Motion carries 4-0 to elect Tom Faust as Vice Chairperson.

Faust nominates Brenton as Chairperson and motions to approve him. Motion carries 4-0 to elect Eric Brenton as Chairperson.

2. Adopt the Standing Rules

Brenton asks if commissioners have any changes they would like to propose and there are none.

Buckridge motions to Adopt the
Standing Rules;
approved 4-0

3. 2026 Parks and Rec Commission Goals

At the November 3, 2025 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, commissioners identified the following commission goals for 2026, which were then discussed further during the December 1, 2025 meeting.

Brenton suggests reordering the goals so that the Community Garden-related goals are together.

Nelson will reorder goal #3 and #5 for the final list.

Faust wonders if each commission could share a park idea at upcoming meetings to build out the information/announcements section. Commissioners support this idea but determine it will be a practice rather than added as a goal.

Faust also wonders if the commission could look towards fundraising efforts in order to purchase park amenities.

Wassenberg identifies exercise equipment as a possibility to solicit donations for.

2026 Parks and Rec Commission Final Goals

1. Hold three annual events (Ice Cream Social, Fall Fest and a TBD event at The Grove).
2. Share annual goals with other commissions to foster collaboration and support common goals.
 - a. Work with Environment Commission for Community Garden expansion
3. Conduct a feasibility study for Community Garden expansion. Implement and monitor a Community Garden Steering Committee
4. Identify partners to help increase programming participation and class offerings.
5. Make recommendations for amenities and improvements of all parks through annual park audits.
6. Support the completion of a new picnic shelter with concessions and outdoor restrooms, and a playground area at Community Park. And look ahead to Phase 2 improvements.
7. Assess the current ice-skating season and finalize a plan for 2026-2027 ice skating facilities for all three parks.

Faust motions to Adopt the 2026 Parks and Rec Commission Goals as Final;
approved 4-0

4. 2026 Commission Calendar

Nelson says that no Commission action is needed. The calendar is a working document to show known upcoming agenda items to commissioners in advance of meetings. Commissioners suggest adding a joint meeting with the environment commission to discuss garden plots. And, adding two agenda items so that the commission can plan a Grove Park event and brainstorm fundraising opportunities for park amenities.

Wassenberg wonders if upcoming free family events should be added to the event calendar section.

Nelson will add these to the working calendar and reach out to the Staff Liaison to the Environment Commission.

4. 2026 Parks and Rec Budget

Nelson says that no Commission action is needed. The 2026 budget sections that pertain to parks and rec are simply shared to be transparent with the commission and to aid in planning events and purchasing sports equipment during the year.

Information/Announcement

G. ADJOURNMENT: 8:20 P.M.

Buckridge motions to adjourn the meeting;
Approved 4-0

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REQUEST FOR DISCUSSION

Meeting Date	February 2, 2026
Agenda Item	E1
Attachment	See below
Submitted By	Kelly Nelson, Administrative Services Director/Deputy Clerk

Item	Discussion of In Common Goals between the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Environment Commission
Description	One of the identified Parks Commission's goals for 2026 is to share annual goals with other commissions to foster collaboration and support common goals. Then, more specifically, to work with the Environment Commission for Community Garden expansion. Because the Environment Commission has also previously expressed interest in expanding the city's available garden plots, the two commissions are brought together to collaborate on this subject and potential upcoming park projects that may have overlap and be of interest to both commissions.
Budget Impact	N/A
Attachment(s)	Community Garden Overview Garden Rules
Action(s) Requested	Staff recommends that the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Environment Commission have a collaborative discussion to suggest recommendations regarding the possible expansion of Community Garden plots and potential future park projects.

Community Garden Wait List Overview

We have 38 garden plots at Community Park, which are approximately 10' x 12' in size. Currently:

- 20 are gardened by FH residents
- 16 are non-FH residents
- 2 plots are currently unassigned and will open to a lottery entry on 2/4.

Up until this year, we maintained a waiting list. This year, we will move to a lottery system, which opens on February 4. The lottery system should better determine current interest, as there are 13 people that were added to the wait list between 2022 and 2025 who were offered a plot and then never responded. A few of them said “Yes, but not now; check back again.” It requires considerable staff time to determine who actually still resides in Falcon Heights, and who still has an interest in a plot during any given year.

There are currently 21 names on our wait list.

-7 are existing gardeners who want a second plot. It was determined years back that no second plots would be granted until all those waiting for their first plot were given one.

- 4 are Falcon Heights residents
- 3 are from non-FH residents.

Of the remaining 14 requests:

- 1 is a Falcon Heights resident
- The other 13 are non-FH residents (St. Anthony, St. Paul, Minneapolis, Roseville, and Lauderdale).

These names were added to the wait list from 2023 through 2025, so it's unclear how many would still have interest in a garden plot today.

Falcon Heights Community Garden

Friendly Governance - Updated 12/1/2025

Governing principle: Gardeners understand that this is a community garden, and working together, we can grow healthy produce and enjoy gardening.

Garden Rules:

- Plots must be at least partially planted or tended by June 1. Plots not planted or tended will be reassigned unless previously communicated to staff.
- No harvesting from others' plots without their authorization is allowed.
- Be respectful of other gardeners and their spaces and communicate with neighboring gardeners to work out issues of borders, weeds or the size of plants.
- Gardeners provide their own tools and seeds.
- Water and hoses with nozzles are available in the garden. Gardeners need to comply with city-wide or regional watering regulations and shut off water after each use. Water hoses must not cross other plots and must always be attended. Water sprinklers are not permitted.
- Gardeners must maintain plots throughout the growing season: keep annual weeds from going to seed, perennial weeds from becoming established, and trash out of their plots.
- Gardeners will follow organic gardening principles and not use insecticides or weed killers.
- Gardeners will not bring in sand or gravel or make permanent changes (e.g., adding an underground watering system or changing the fence).
- Place weeds in designated receptacles. Because weeds are not heat-treated, they should not be used for mulch.
- Plots must be cleared of weeds at the end of the season. Crop residue need not be removed unless they harbor insect or disease pests. Please store your stakes and frames neatly.
- If a garden is abandoned during the year or the gardener fails to clean up their garden in the fall, no plot renewal/request will be allowed for that gardener in the following year, and no refunds will be issued.
- Pets are not allowed in the gardens.
- Do not plant trees or shrubs. Perennials are not allowed without prior approval.
- Growing or using illegal substances in the garden will lead to immediate expulsion with no return of plot fee.

Garden Management:

The Falcon Heights Community Garden, located within Falcon Heights Community Park (corners of Roselawn and Cleveland avenues), is a self-governing project of the City of Falcon Heights, which owns the property, and which has authority and responsibility for its use. The garden includes 38 plots, each approximately 10 ft by 12 ft in size. The implementation of garden rules is the responsibility of the Steering Committee, which is composed of three people: two gardeners elected by the gardener community and one Falcon Heights staff member. The gardening members of the Steering Committee act in an advisory capacity to staff and may assist them in decisions related to garden policies, rules and procedures, monitoring the plots, and mediating complaints. Election of two Steering Committee members by the gardener community takes place in spring after plots are assigned. The City of Falcon Heights maintains the property and equipment – garden paths, fencing, hoses, and hose nozzles. An annual rental fee is charged for each plot, and all monies are handled by the city of Falcon Heights. See [Fee Schedule](#) for current plot fees.

Plot Assignment Procedure

Returning gardeners will receive an application via mail in early January, and applications with plot fees must be submitted to the City on or by February 1. Returning gardeners will be granted the same plot. If a returning gardener's application is received after February 1, the application is handled as a new gardener application. If plots remain unassigned after February 1, then application forms will be available to new gardeners, **who must be current Falcon Heights residents**, online from February 4 to February 28. Open plots will then be assigned to applicants by lottery in early March. Those selected in the lottery will be notified by email and sent a request for payment with a deadline for payment stated in the email. Those applicants not selected in the lottery system will not be retained on file and must reapply during a subsequent open lottery period to be considered. Garden plots are assigned to one applicant and are not transferable. Others may garden at your plot, but the responsibility for payment of fees, cleanup and other duties at the site will be the responsibility of the individual whose name is assigned to the plot.

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REQUEST FOR ACTION

Meeting Date	February 2, 2026
Agenda Item	E2
Attachment	Community Park Photos; Phase 2 Estimate
Submitted By	Kelly Nelson, Administrative Services Director/Deputy Clerk

Item	Community Park Phase 2 Renovation Discussion
Description	During bid submittals for Phase 1 of the Community Park Renovation Project, which includes the picnic pavilion, splash pad and restroom/concessions building, bid alternates were obtained for consideration during future phases of renovations. This includes an estimate to resurface the basketball court. The bid estimate is included for informational purposes only and is not reflective of a finalized plan. While no formal decisions must be made today, the Parks Commission should begin discussing and prioritizing what projects they would like to see occur during a potential Phase 2 of renovations at Community Park, with a future timeline and budget still to be determined.
Budget Impact	TBD
Attachment(s)	• Community Park court/field pictures • Bid Alternates Estimate
Action(s) Requested	Staff recommends the commission begin to prioritize future projects and amenities to be addressed during Phase 2 of renovations at Community Park.

**FALCON HEIGHTS COMMUNITY PARK
Master Plan Cost Estimate**

	Item	Description	Qty.	Units	Unit Cost	Subtotal	Estimated Development Cost Range	
1		Building Area (2703 s.f. building)					2,199,600	2,419,560
2		Indirect Project Costs					374,817	374,817
		Base Bid: Total Range of Project Costs for Community Park Improvements					2,574,417	2,794,377

	Bid Alternates						
3A	Play Area (5000 s.f.) (incl. wood fiber)					312,000	343,200
3B	Play Area (7500 s.f.) (incl. wood fiber)					402,000	442,200
3C	Play Area Rubber Surfacing (5000 s.f.)					180,000	198,000
3D	Play Area Rubber Surfacing 7500 s.f.)					270,000	297,000
3E	Play Area Fencing					75,600	83,160
4	Parking Lot					465,000	511,500
5	Small Shelter - 24' x 24'					119,880	131,868
6A	Large Pre-Fab Shelter - 30' x 40'					373,200	410,520
6B	Large Custom Shelter - 30' x 40'					697,680	767,448
7A	Splash Pad (1,200 s.f.)					263,280	289,608
7B	Splash Pad Fencing					32,400	35,640
8	Basketball Court Improvements					81,240	89,364
9	Geothermal System for Building					96,000	105,600







This play structure was installed in 2002 and has pea gravel as the ground cover.



This pirate ship play structure was installed in 2002 and has wood chips as the ground cover.



The swing set is original to the park and installed in the early 1980s. There is pea gravel as the ground cover underneath.



The merry-go-round was installed in 2002. There is pea gravel as the ground cover underneath. A sandbox was installed at that time as well.





Falcon Heights Community Park | Concept 1

Falcon Heights, Minnesota
September 6, 2024 | WSB Project number: 023855-000

