

City of Birmingham
Parks And Recreation Board Meeting Minutes
June 10, 2025, 6:30 p.m.
851 South Eton - Conference Room

I. Call To Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Present: Vice Chair Pam Graham; Board Members Susan Collins, Jessica Einstein, Sarah Kupczyk, Anne Lipp; Alternate Board Members Narlu Castellano, Joseph Wrobel

Absent: Chair Heather Carmona; Board Member Steve Sweeney; Student Board Member Jack Bassett

Staff: Department of Public Services Director Zielinski; Ice Arena and Facilities Superintendent Folk, Parks and Recreation Manager Laird, Parks and Recreation Foreman McNab

Presenter: Lance A. Shipman, LLA, CPSI Penchura Recreation Consultant

III. Announcements, Introductions Of Guests & Chairperson Comments

- 1. Ad Hoc Senior/Recreation Center Committee (SCC) - Update**
- 2. In The Park Summer Concert Series begins: a) Friday, Jun 13, 2025**

IV. Open To The Public For Items Not On The Agenda

Jill Kahler commented regarding the Derby Well Site.

V. Approval Of The Minutes - May 6, 2025

Motion by Lipp

Seconded by Collins to approve the minutes as presented in our packet.

Motion carried, 7-0.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: Wrobel, Castellano, Kupczyk, Einstein, Collins, Graham, Lipp

Nays: None

VI. Unfinished Business

- 1. Adams Park (photos of updates)**
- 2. Booth Park Update**

The Chair introduced the item and staff presented the item. Staff answered informational questions.

Board members raised the following points during discussion:

- Some Board members would individually visit Booth Park to assess the present furniture.
- A longer table and bench might be less useful than some of the smaller options.
- The wooden bench by the trail needs to be replaced.

- It might be a long way to walk with picnic accoutrements.
- The proposed trail furniture was much more contemporary than the more traditional furniture selected for the entry to the Park.

3. Pumphouse Park & West Lincoln Well & Park Playgrounds

Staff and Mr. Shipman presented the item and answered informational questions.

Board members raised the following points during discussion:

- Presently, both Lincoln and Pumphouse Park have lower accessibility ratings.
- While it is likely more appropriate to focus wheelchair accessibility efforts at the community park level, there are likely changes that could be implemented at smaller parks to still be supportive to wheelchair accessibility.

Board comments for Pumphouse Park:

- The Board has elected not to include elevated playground components accessible by ramp.
- The playground equipment intended for ages five to 12 complies with the minimum ADA standards and the equipment intended for ages two to five exceeds the minimum ADA standards.
- A sidewalk could be added adjacent to the curb at any time.
- The house structure for the younger age range may not provide enough opportunity for highly active play. It would also be challenging for caregivers to access the house space. A climbing structure might be better. The house structure could also be complementary to another structure that encouraged more activity.
- Similar house structures have been integrated into active play by children elsewhere. The store structure also has the benefit of being partially usable by children with limited mobility.
- It might be valuable to add poured in place surfaces to the two to five area and to the swings area.
- The City should solicit donations for the benches
- The playground equipment should be expected to last about 30 years.
- Mr. Shipman did an excellent job integrating neighborhood feedback.
- Since 2020, Royal Oak and Troy have focused on improving their parks accessibility ratings to four or better when improvements are implemented.
- It was unfortunate that the plans for Pumphouse Park would not improve the accessibility rating. At the same time, the rating cannot be improved at this location until the roads are better, which is outside of the Department of Public Service's purview.
- The playground equipment is very out of date.
- It may be more feasible to improve the accessibility once the equipment is further improved and the Park has increased utilization.

Board comments for Lincoln Park:

- It might be pleasant to allow the playground to extend a bit further to the west.
- The distance from the parking lot and accessibility features may constrain where the playground should be located at Lincoln Well. It would be important to see how the access path would be drawn.
- It might be appropriate to consider retaining some of the good condition equipment in order to direct some funds towards improving wheelchair accessibility.
- It was good to hear from staff that funds were already being allocated for improving wheelchair accessibility at the parks.
- The proposal was well done. Moving the play structure for the younger age range towards the presently proposed location of the omni-swing might help establish better physical limits for the younger play area.

- It was helpful that the playground transfer points were accessibly designed. It will be necessary to prioritize access to those transfer points. Putting accessible surfaces in the middle of the equipment could maximize the amount of accessibility that can be achieved.
- There should be an accessible path of some kind connecting the parking lot to the accessible surface.
- A four-seater seesaw would promote more social interaction than a two-seater. Adding backs to that piece would be worthwhile.
- A baby swing should replace one of the other swings.
- The planned improvements to equipment, parking lot, sidewalk, and surfaces would bring this park to an accessibility rating of four.
- These plans exceed the minimum required ground level components required for an accessibility rating of five. The poured in place surface should abut some of these ground level components. Rotation or relocation of the structures may enable that access.
- Following Royal Oak to create targets for tree cover per acre would be valuable. Adding can recycling bins and bike racks would also be valuable.
- Poured in place surfaces permit water infiltration.
- The recommended conceptual changes would result in improved accessibility and sustainability in coordination with other related projects. This should be demonstrated to the Commission with support of visual aids wherever possible.
- There was some interest in trying to accommodate an adult bench swing, possibly as part of the additional amenities.
- It could be confusing to show a playground plan with two benches when there are already six benches on site.

Public Comment

Jenny O’Laughlin supported poured in place surfaces, distinguishing between ADA compliance and wheelchair accessibility, and making wheelchair accessibility the norm throughout Birmingham’s parks, and commented that her daughter would be thrilled to offer feedback about wheelchair accessibility for any of the present or proposed park conditions.

Mr. Shipman distinguished between fully inclusive and fully universal, noted that universal design limits features that can be included in playgrounds, and supported inclusivity of wheelchair users as a goal over technical adherence to universal design.

Kathleen Greiner supported the plans, adding a swinging bench for adults to Lincoln, and focusing on intensive accessibility investments at parks with larger budgets like Poppleton, and commented regarding poor Zoom audio.

Motion by Lipp

Seconded by Collins to approve the updated playground layout design for Pumphouse Park and recommend the playground equipment including installation and surfacing purchase be forwarded to the City Commission for consideration of approval.

Motion carried, 7-0.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: Wrobel, Castellano, Kupczyk, Einstein, Collins, Graham, Lipp

Nays: None

Motion by Lipp

Seconded by Collins to approve the updated playground layout design with ADA accessible surfacing and poured-in-place pathway for Lincoln Well Park and recommend the playground equipment

including installation and surfacing purchase be forwarded to the City Commission for consideration of approval, the plan to be revised in accordance with the priorities that the Board raised today, which includes replacing the double bobble rider with a four-seat see-saw and revising the configuration of the playground to create accessible internal pathways.

Public Comment

The Chair noted in response to Ms. Greiner that staff committed to adding the bench swing via other budgets, as well as playground access, reconsideration of the drop off, recycling can bins, and additional tree canopy.

Motion carried, 7-0.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: Wrobel, Castellano, Kupczyk, Einstein, Collins, Graham, Lipp

Nays: None

Motion by Lipp

Seconded by Collins to recommend Pumphouse Park remain the name of the park, and that the name of West Lincoln Well Park be changed to West Lincoln Park.

Motion carried, 7-0.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: Wrobel, Castellano, Kupczyk, Einstein, Collins, Graham, Lipp

Nays: None

VII. New Business

VIII. Miscellaneous Communications

- 1. Communication regarding parks**
- 2. Communication regrading Kenning Park**
- 3. Communication regarding Pumphouse Park**
- 4. Communications regarding Accessibility**
- 5. Communication regarding Golf Courses**

Board comments regarding the golf course correspondence:

- The Board appreciated the correspondence. There were some concerns to validate and some in need of correction.
- It was not factual that Springdale was not in operation last season.
- It was hard to let the concerned letterwriter know about the City's efforts with the golf courses since the letter was anonymous.

IX. Reports From Staff

X. Items For Next Meeting

- 1. July Parks and Recreation Month**

PRF McNab presented the item.

Board comments were as follows:

- Staff's proposal of a park scavenger hunt could be fun.
- Other activities to encourage residents to visit parks they do not usually visit could also generate interest.

XI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:11 p.m.



Connie Folk, Ice Arena and Facilities Superintendent

Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist

approved