

City of Birmingham
Parks And Recreation Board Meeting Minutes
August 5, 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: Chair Heather Carmona, Vice Chair Pam Graham; Board Members Susan Collins, Jessica Einstein, Sarah Kupczyk, Anne Lipp, Steve Sweeney; Student Board Member Jack Bassett, Abigail Murphy

Absent: Alternate Board Members Narlu Castellano, Joseph Wrobel

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

Guests: Maureen Kijek, Ross Lee, Kristi Lewis, John Lewis, Michael Lewis, Kevin Kozlowski, John Rusche, Bob Bernhard, Renee Bernhard, Jeff Heichol, Jenny O'Langhlin, Rachel Allare, Kathleen McInerney, Liz Pasquarette, Cliff Ragor, Danny Seidman, Jack Burns, Anthony Petrovich, Susan Shacket, Joan Ritter, Karen Hsu

III. Announcements, Introductions Of Guests & Chairperson Comments

- 1. Thank you to all volunteers for distributing Poppleton Park Playground Improvement Flyers**

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

V. Approval Of The Minutes - June 10, 2025

Motion by Graham

Seconded by Lipp to approve the minutes from the June 10th meeting.

Motion carried, 7-0.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: Carmona, Sweeney, Kupczyk, Einstein, Collins, Graham, Lipp

Nays: None

VI. Unfinished Business

- 1. Bench Swing Options**

PRM Laird presented the item. Staff answered informational questions.

Board members raised the following points during discussion:

- Comfort and accessibility should be prioritized for any bench swing purchase.

- Premier Poly Steel likely has a number of options available, including ones with and without arms.
- It would be helpful to know if any of the benches have accessibility ratings.
- The estimated costs for these benches might be too much for an amenity coming out of the general parks fund.
- Artists might be interested in designing art for benches in the park. The Public Arts Board could potentially help facilitate this. The Noble Winds bench options have space for graphics.
- Benches should be considered by the Board on a site-by-site basis moving forward.
- Board members should retain this portion of the physical agenda packet for future reference.
- Accessibility is a priority.
- It might be useful to plan on having shaded options for a certain number of people in each park. Water fountains and picnic tables could also be standard options. It could be useful to have baseline options for these features, and then special needs or donations could be used to optimize these features on a case-by-case basis.

VII. New Business

1. Playground Design Public Input Session Poppleton Park Playground

PRM Laird presented the item. Mr. Shipman presented the playground area plans. Mr. Shipman and staff answered informational questions.

Board members raised the following points during discussion:

- The pathway around the playground is wider than it seems in the drawing. If there would be a way to communicate that width better in the drawings, that would likely be beneficial for the public's understanding.
- Increasing the size of the legend and the writing on the drawings would also be helpful.
- These plans reflect on the City's Parks and Recreation program well. Mr. Shipman's work on the project is appreciated.
- There was some concern that parents would not comfortably be able to see into the top level of the Volo Aire.
- An interest in options that might offer comparable accessibility and increased visibility were discussed.
- A comparable playground to the proposed equipment could be visited in Dearborn, Michigan
- Baby swings should be available at the Park. It would be positive if monkey bars could be incorporated as well.
- Bike racks should be present at the Park.

Public Comment

Maureen Kijek supported adult size changing facilities in park restrooms, shade and misting stations for increased accessibility, and the Board's efforts towards increasing accessibility in the parks and playgrounds in general.

Michael Lewis and another commenter supported swings that were high enough to accommodate older children.

Avery and Owen Olson supported swings, rock walls, hide and seek spaces, zip lines, tire swings, rock walls, trampolines, and space for chalk use.

Alex Petrovich supported addressing drainage issues in Poppleton and adding equipment that could be enjoyed by tweens and teens.

Jenny O'Langhlin supported the playground designs due to their extensive accessibility, praising Mr. Shipman, the Board, and staff for their prioritization of accessibility needs.

Joan Ritter supported Board members finding and trying out the playground elements in real life before voting on the item.

Kathleen McInerney supported muted colors for the playground structure.

Danny Seidman thanked the Board, Mr. Shipman, and staff, and supported the plans, adding monkey bars, adding adult fitness equipment elsewhere in the park, adding a restroom, adding a bike rack, adding swings for taller/older children, as well as adding a basketball court, a water fountain, and other potential features in the future.

John Rusche supported adding shade, exercise equipment for adults, and a basketball court, as well as evaluating the parking plans for the park.

Cliff Rager supported the plans, and commented regarding the location of the restroom and the need for landscaping.

Kevin Kozlowski supported sandboxes and swings that can accommodate older children.

Jeff Heichel supported additional benches and shade, as well as more future investment in Poppleton Park in other areas.

Ross Lee supported the plans, as well as baby swings, a sandbox, and swings that can accommodate taller/older children.

Patty Blair supported the plans.

Danny Hill supported adding bucket swings and picnic tables.

VIII. Miscellaneous Communications

- 1. All Communications received - Poppleton Park Playground Improvements**
- 2. Booth Park Natural Area-Native Perennial Plug Planting Event (Wednesday, August 6th)**

IX. Reports from Staff

- 1. Pumphouse Park and West Lincoln Well & Park Update**

X. Items For Next Meeting

XI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Connie Folk, Ice Arena and Facilities Superintendent



Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist

Approved