

City of Birmingham
Parks And Recreation Board Meeting Minutes
December 2, 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, Anne Lipp; Alternate Board Member Joseph Wrobel; Student Board Members Jack Bassett, Abigail Murphy

Absent: Board Members Jessica Einstein, Sarah Kupczyk; Alternate Board Member Narlu Castellano

Staff: Department of Public Services Director Zielinski; Recreation Coordinator Kirkwood,
Parks and Recreation Manager Laird, Parks and Recreation Foreman McNab

III. Announcements, Introductions of Guests & Chairpersons Comments

None.

IV. Open To The Public for Items Not On the Agenda

Owing to his recent appointment to the City's Design Review Board, Steve Sweeney informed the Parks and Recreation Board of his resignation and thanked his Parks and Recreation Board colleagues.

The Parks and Recreation Board acknowledged Mr. Sweeney for his service.

V. Approval of the Minutes – October 28, 2025

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

Motion carried, 5-0.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: Wrobel, Carmona, Collins, Graham, Lipp
Nays: None

VI. Unfinished Business

None.

VII. New Business

1. Pembroke Park Playground Design Planning Session

PRM Laird introduced the item and Lance Shipman of Penchura presented the item. Mr. Penchura and staff answered questions from the Board and the public.

Board members raised the following points during the discussion:

- These are great concepts.
- There was disagreement as to whether a sandbox should be included in the new plans.
- Combining concept two with the structure from number one because it would be different from the structures presently at the park.
- Red and gold are the colors of Pembroke School, and so the red color scheme might be appropriately complementary.
- Alternatively, the brown and green color scheme was also attractive.
- The house play structure would likely be well-utilized by younger children.
- The Park presently has drainage issues which should be taken into consideration when selecting a surface for the playground.
- The design clearly took public feedback into consideration. Children are likely to enjoy the zipline very much.
- The Park should have swings.
- Children would likely enjoy the music feature. Care should be taken that the volume is not disruptive to nearby residences.
- Having this playground be distinct from other Birmingham playgrounds would be welcome. The distinctive middle structure added interest.
- Adding the trees on future plans would be helpful for considering where additional shade might be added.

Public Comment

Michael Derry supported retaining the open space north of the tennis court, upgrading and retaining one sandbox, and commented regarding a decibel rating of the music feature, more context for the location of the structures, and drainage concerns near the restroom facilities.

Audrey Lipp supported new drinking fountains, the proposed zip line, and adding a tire swing.

Eliza Lipp supported having bicycle racks on a paved surface, the addition of a child-friendly and usable graffiti wall, and opposed the addition of a sandbox.

It was noted that it was Eliza Lipp's birthday.

Leota Lipp supported the zipline being 'longer' and 'funner'.

Theresa Larsen supported how the plans would allow caregivers to supervise children at multiple structures at once, supported the second concept with added shade towards the center of the play area, supported addressing drainage concerns throughout the park, supported the proposed zipline and Quantis, supported expanding the shade structure so that picnic tables could be located under it, and supported adding swings.

Charles Haig supported the addition of six or seven more swings and a sandbox.

Liz Kaufman opposed the music feature, supported the addition of a sandbox, supported retaining any code-compliant play structures, supported including space between the younger and older play structures, and supported the retention or addition of swings for smaller children.

David McElroy supported the addition of a sandbox.

Derek Lipp supported including the music feature since the tones are low and unobtrusive, and supported retaining the swings located to the east within the park and the inclusion of swings for smaller children.

Ms. Larsen concurred that the tones of the similar music feature at Adams Park are low and unobtrusive, supported keeping one of the present sandboxes so as not to add to the park budget, and supported the addition of water fountains with canine-accessible features.

Joseph Derry supported the overall plans, addressing the drainage concerns in the park, and adding and/or retaining swings.

Sue Derry commented that the money for the shade area might be better spent on play structures, supported the inclusion of a sandbox, and supported Pembroke remaining a neighborhood park.

Tim Derry commented his appreciation for the Board and staff, and supported evaluating whether the music feature would impact residences, retaining the space between the older and younger play areas, the fact that the play structures should accommodate a fair number of children at once, and retaining any code-compliant structures.

Doug Arceo supported retaining the spaciousness of the play areas in Pembroke, and supported future presentations including a scaled layout of the current park and a scaled overlay of the proposed park.

VIII. Miscellaneous Communications

1. Carpenter Lake Nature Preserve, Southfield, Michigan

2. Student Leadership Pembroke Elementary School Communication

IX. Reports from Staff

1. City-wide Playground Project Update

PRM Laird summarized the item.

2. Playgrounds Closing During Freezing Temperatures

PRF McNab summarized the item.

X. Items for Next Meeting

XI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.



Connie Folk, Ice Arena and Facilities Superintendent

Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist