BIRMINGHAM

Parks And Recreation Board – Regular Meeting Minutes
June 2, 2026 – 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 Chaur Lipp; Board Members Susan Collins, Jessica Einstein; Alternate Board Members Narlu Castellano, Joseph Wrobel

Absent: Chair Heather Carmona; Board Member Sarah Kupczyk; Student Representative Sienna Weinberg

Staff: Department of Public Services Director Zielinski; City Planner Blizinski, Recreation Coordinator Kirkwood, Parks and Recreation Foreman McNab

Guests: Rachel Bush OHM Advisor, Quentin Hyde OHM Advisor

III. Announcements, Introductions of Guests & Chair Comments

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

V. Approval of the Minutes – May 5, 2026

Motion by Einstein
Seconded by Castellano to approve the previous minutes.

Motion carried, 5-0.

ROLL CALL VOTE
Yeas: Wrobel, Collins, Einstein, Castellano, Lipp
Nays: None

VI. Unfinished Business

None.

VII. New Business

1. OHM Professional Design Services Update St. James Park & Kenning Park

Ms. Bush, Mr. Hyde, DPSD Zielinski and PRF McNab presented the item and answered questions.

The Board discussed the following regarding Kenning:

- The Board should be mindful of potential equity issues in terms of updating the baseball and softball fields.
- While bathrooms and a pavilion would likely be a popular option with the public, updating the playground and the drainage should likely be the first priority.
- Project area three should likely be the second priority, project area one is inexpensive and so can be addressed as appropriate, and the bathrooms and pavilion area should likely be the lowest priority.
- Improvements of the softball fields would include drainage improvements.
- A rain garden near the tennis bubble would benefit drainage in the park.

The Board discussed the following regarding St. James:

- Per the survey, residents prioritized the playground first and the picnic area second.
- The Board supported that prioritization order, with project area four being next and project area three being last.
- Since the softball upgrades were not a significant expense, that area might be able to be included in the upgrades.
- There would likely be public support for adding outdoor gym equipment.
- It would be beneficial if additional opportunities for multi-generational uses could be added.
- The furniture should be accessible to people of different ages and mobility needs.

The Board discussed the following regarding the general item:

- For this round of improvements, the City should improve either Howarth or St. James since they are in the same neighborhood.
- Beginning some of these proposed park improvements and retaining some of the funds to begin upgrades at other parks as well might be the most optimal option.
- Alternatively, doing a number of improvements to parks at different times may lead to residents feeling that the projects near their homes are incomplete for longer than preferred.
- Referencing the five year plan might help to inform how these improvements should be approached.
- Since the improvements to St. James were already delayed on account of the process around 400 E. Lincoln, it might be most appropriate to complete the improvements now rather than postponing them further.
- If the majority of the improvements to St. James are postponed, the playground should still be improved given residents' prioritization.
- If this occurs, the Little League may have to understand that improvements to the ball

fields might occur within five years instead of more imminently.

- The Board understood that hosting Little League games brings activity and revenue into the City.
- The Board had increased the focus on improvements that would benefit the Little League versus the original plans.
- Ground Energy-Passive Systems could be utilized to address some of the more pressing drainage issues on an interim basis.
- The Board reached consensus that the playground and drainage should be addressed at Kenning with the Kenning funds, and staff should ask the City if further funds might be allocated to complete the St. James improvements. If further funds for St. James are not forthcoming, the remainder of the Kenning funds after the playground and the drainage are improved should be allocated to St. James to implement the Board's priority list.

Public Comment

Sue Gallagher supported improving St. James in as short a time period as possible, and commented regarding tennis, basketball, and pickleball at St. James, single-sided parking on Edgewood, the proposed walkways, and possibly moving the softball field to the south end of the park.

John Keller supported including more detailed information in the presentations, potentially removing the central median from the parking lot next to St. James, improving the playground, and commented regarding the proposed location of the ball field and its potential impact on buried utilities.

Ina Brown supported improving St. James in as short a time period as possible, supported using rendering A at the plan for the improvements, and allowing for gate access for those whose properties abut the park, and commented regarding the ball field location and orientation.

Bridgette Halseth supported improving St. James in as short a time period as possible, tree preservation along Edgewood, and commented regarding the ball field location and orientation at St. James and parking.

VIII. Miscellaneous Communications

IX. Reports from Staff

Brief updates on Poppleton were provided.

X. Items for Next Meeting

XI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

Clinise Kirkwood

Clinise Kirkwood, Recreation Coordinator

Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist