



**Meeting of the Parks and Recreation  
Commission  
Held at the Elk River City Hall  
Wednesday, May 13, 2026**

Members Present: Chair Stewart, Commissioners Anderson, Goodwin, Niziolek, and Loidolt

Members Absent: Commissioner Varty, Commissioner Fermoyle and Councilmember Grupa

Staff Present: Parks and Recreation Manager Jeff Shelby and Senior Administrative Assistant Dawn Larson

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the meeting of the Elk River Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chair Stewart.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. CONSIDER AGENDA

**Moved by Commissioner Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Goodwin to approve the May 13, 2026, agenda. Motion carried 5-0.**

4. CONSIDER MINUTES

4.1 04-08-2026 Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes

**Moved by Commissioner Goodwin and seconded by Commissioner Loidolt to approve the April 8, 2026, Parks and Recreation Commission minutes. Motion carried 5-0.**

5. OPEN FORUM

6. PRESENTATIONS, AWARDS, AND RECOGNITION

6.1 Park Passport

Mr. Shelby presented his report and PowerPoint.

7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

7.1 Burr Oak Park Access Road

Mr. Shelby presented his report. Lee Whiting, 13463 Ranch Rd. Elk River, shared his concerns about the location of his driveway. He bought his property from the people who used to own the Burr

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Oak Park property. He reviewed the details he included in the letter that he submitted to Mr. Shelby.

Commissioner Niziolek asked Mr. Whiting what his thoughts were about the city collaborating with him on a land swap agreement to put a parking lot down by the county road for people to access the park, and then he could access his property via the same road. Mr. Whiting said it doesn't interest him. He said he wants more privacy and that it would not be easy to sell his property if there was a parking lot at the end of his driveway. He also pointed out that there will be a parking lot on the north side of the park once the development is done. Commissioner Niziolek said he is trying to produce a suggestion. Mr. Whiting said he understands, but he does not want to add more traffic to his property by adding a parking lot.

Commissioner Niziolek said he always looks for opportunities to help people access parks but also wants to take care of the park neighbors. Mr. Whiting asked what the intended use of the park is. Commissioner Niziolek said the park is 25 acres and there will likely be trails there. He wants to eliminate the road there to help Mr. Whiting out but would like there to be a parking lot to provide access to park goers.

Commissioner Niziolek said the city will eventually own the service road and then Mr. Whiting could use it to connect to his driveway. Commissioner Anderson asked when the city will take ownership of the road. Mr. Shelby said at some point this summer. Commissioner Anderson also asked how long before the parking lot would be ready on the north side. Mr. Shelby said the earliest would be 2027 if not beyond. Commissioner Anderson said he thinks they should move Mr. Whiting's driveway access from the County Road and then give an easement over the parkland property for ingress and egress, and then it can connect to his existing driveway at the point of his choosing. Commissioner Anderson said Mr. Whiting could put a gate across his old driveway entrance by the County Road to prevent people from using it. Commissioner Anderson suggested the city could also extend the agreement to include an egress and ingress to the back of Mr. Whiting's shed, and then he could put a gate up to prevent people from accessing it. Commissioner Anderson said that he is not in favor of selling park property to Mr. Whiting. Commissioner Anderson said the city will need access to the service road for the bow hunters and maintenance, and he does not see the problem with offering an easement.

Mr. Whiting said he did not want that offer. He said that this is the city's problem and the commission is part of the city. Chair Stewart suggested tabling the item since they couldn't come to an agreement. Commissioner Anderson said this is a very unfortunate situation, but the city doesn't even own the property the road is on yet. He would like to find a way to work with Mr. Whiting, but they aren't making any progress tonight.

Mr. Shelby asked the commission what the directions were to staff. Chair Stewart asked if staff had any suggestions for a solution to this issue at this time. Mr. Shelby said no, but if there was interest in the shared road usage, staff could research that in conjunction with planning. Mr. Whiting said he would look at options. Commissioner Loidolt said he agrees that they do need to look at shared options. He confirmed this is not an action item, just a discussion item.

Commissioner Anderson confirmed with the other commission members that there is a consensus to not sell the property that Mr. Whiting is requesting. Commissioner Niziolek said that he thinks it is important to keep this piece of property for access to the park.

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Mr. Whiting asked the commission what they thought if he bought a strip of land from a neighbor and sold or traded it back to the city. None of the commissioners commented. Commissioner Niziolek asked if the road would be park dedication property. Mr. Shelby said he will investigate it and confirm.

Chair Stewart said he would like staff to explore options. Mr. Whiting said he is disappointed, and he wants to know who to talk to in the meantime about his driveway issues. Commissioner Niziolek explained that they can only make decisions on park-related issues, not road issues.

Commissioner Loidolt asked if he had considered moving his driveway to the east. Mr. Whiting said he had checked into that, but it would be \$50,000. He said that is too much money for him.

Mr. Shelby said at this point, staff will work with the city planning department to see what other alternatives and solutions they can come up with. He will share the information with all parties to see what is possible.

## 7.2 Kliever Pointe Basketball Court

Mr. Shelby presented his report. Chair Stewart said he went and looked at the court himself and agreed while it is bad, there are others in a lot worse shape. He said he thinks they could do some repairs to get it through for now. Commissioner Niziolek said he agreed. Commissioner Loidolt asked if they were replacing the whole thing or just the hoop. Mr. Shelby said just the hoop, and it is a 2-to-3-week delivery. He pointed out that the whole court is scheduled for resurfacing in 2030 according to the CIP schedule for about \$30,000. Commissioner Loidolt asked if they could wing out around the base and fill it in, so it is more even. Mr. Shelby said he could get a price quote on that and bring it back next month for approval. He also said that parks maintenance is looking at doing some crack filling and court sealing this summer so they could potentially add this court into the rotation. Mr. Shelby said Parks maintenance is just looking for approval to patch the court for now or amend the CIP if they want it replaced.

## 8. ACTION ITEMS

### 8.1 Global Unity Fair Event

Mr. Shelby presented his report. Matias Gonzalez, Elk River reviewed his PowerPoint presentation. He showed the commissioners a map of how he planned to lay out the event at the park. He will be working with Karen Wingard, one of the Program Supervisors for Parks and Recreation, on the planning for the event to make sure everything is all set up properly. He will have 20 to 25 volunteers working at the event to make sure it does not go over capacity and the parks stay clean. Mr. Gonzalez will also be collaborating with the police department on security and Central Lutheran Church and the Elk River high school for additional parking.

The event is from 10 to 5pm to be courteous of neighbors and how the noise would affect them. Mr. Gonzalez has contacted groups such as the Lions Club and Knight of Columbus for grants and sponsorships. His goal is to raise \$5000 to put together food bags for immigrant families in need. He is working with the Monticello Diversity Community and Churches to find additional ways to help those in need. He wants to make an impact and make changes in the community.

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Chair Stewart pointed out that there are a lot of moving pieces. Mr. Gonzalez said he will be working very closely with Mrs. Wingard to make sure the event will go smoothly.

**Moved by Commissioner Niziolek and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to approve the Global Unity Fair Event at Lion John Weicht Park on Saturday, August 22, 2026, with final approval to be given by staff once details are finalized. Motion carried 5-0.**

## 8.2 Park Dedication - Lane Estates

Mr. Shelby presented his report.

**Moved by Commissioner Niziolek and seconded by Commissioner Loidolt to approve park dedication for Lane Estates, be paid in cash for one single family parcel, at the applicable rate at the time of recording in addition allow staff to finalize an easement for a trail along County Road 33. Motion carried 5-0.**

## 8.3 DERBA Chair

Mr. Shelby presented his report. Chair Stewart said having it at Rivers Edge Commons Park would create visual clutter and it is already a confined space. Commissioner Niziolek said he is not in support of it. Commissioner Anderson said putting the chair there would detract from the river view and vision of this park. Commissioner Goodwin asked if there were any other places they could put it. Commissioner Loidolt suggested putting the chair in Orono Park. Mr. Shelby said that he didn't think DERBA was in support of that. He thinks they wanted to keep it public and accessible for photo opportunities. Commissioner Goodwin suggested placing it by the Rotary Walk off the Parish bridge or on the patio area by The Edge coffee shop. Commissioner Loidolt said it would be dangerous for pedestrians. The commission is declined to make a recommendation. Commissioner Anderson asked if they needed to recommend that they don't want it at River's Edge. Mr. Shelby said they could just decline to support the motion in the staff report.

## 8.4 Wind Phone Grant Proposal

Mr. Shelby presented his report.

**Moved by Commissioner Loidolt and seconded by Commissioner Niziolek to recommend that staff pursue grant opportunities for a wind phone installation. Motion carried 5-0.**

## 9. PARKS AND RECREATION MANAGER UPDATE

### 9.1 Parks and Recreation Manager Update

Mr. Shelby presented his report.

Mr. Shelby shared with the commission that the deadline for the RFP submissions for the Parks and Recreation Framework plan has been amended to next Tuesday May 19.

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10. ANNOUNCEMENTS

11. MOTION TO ADJOURN

**Moved by Commissioner Goodwin and seconded by Commissioner Anderson to adjourn the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting at 8:10pm. Motion carried 5-0.**



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Hal Stewart, Chair



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Justin Dunford, City Clerk