

BOARD OF PARKS COMMISSIONERS
May 5, 2026

A regular meeting of the Board of Parks Commissioners of the City of Columbus, Nebraska, was convened in open and public session on May 5, 2026, at 12 p.m. in the Columbus Community Building, Community Room, 2500 14 Street, Columbus, Nebraska. Notice of this meeting was given in advance thereof by publication in the Columbus Telegram on April 29, 2026, with a copy of the proof of publication being on file in the office of the city clerk. Availability of the agenda was communicated in the advance notice to the mayor, members of the city council, and members of the Board of Parks Commissioners. All proceedings hereafter shown were taken while the convened meeting was open to the public.

1. **Statement of compliance with open meetings act.** Chair Brezenski announced that a copy of the Open Meetings Act is posted in the meeting room. Present were members Araceli Esquivel, Jon Brezenski, Brad Hansen, Gary Puetz, and Lynn Sjuts. Members Tina Pelan, Bruce Schmidt, and Stacy Smith were absent and excused. Member Nick Larson was absent. City staff members included Assistant City Clerk Linda Nickeson, Director of General Services Betsy Eckhardt, Park and Recreation Director Sydney Mroczek, and Park and Recreation Coordinators Alondra Castillo and Jake Novicki.
2. **Minutes of April 7, 2026, meeting.** The minutes were approved as presented with a motion by Sjuts and a second by Hansen. Esquivel, Brezenski, Hansen, Puetz, and Sjuts voted "Aye" and none voted "Nay". Larson, Pelan, Schmidt, and Smith were absent.
3. **Aquatics and Parks and Recreation fees.** Eckhardt explained the proposed fee changes and confirmed that, if approved, they will become effective in the next budget year. The recommendation to approve the aquatic and parks and recreation fees for the 2026-2027 budget year was approved with a motion by Sjuts and a second by Hansen. Esquivel, Brezenski, Hansen, Puetz, and Sjuts voted "Aye" and none voted "Nay". Larson, Pelan, Schmidt, and Smith were absent.
4. **PARK AND RECREATION DIRECTOR REPORT.** Eckhardt reviewed the report. She stated that in order to restore grass damaged by heavy use of St. Isidore School, a large portion of Gruenther Park will be closed during the summer months allowing staff to re-seed and establish grass in areas that have become bare. She noted that staff will reach out to the school and encourage them, going forward, to utilize more of their own open space for organized outdoor activities in order to minimize daily use of the park while their project is being completed.
5. **Adjournment.** The meeting adjourned at 12:14 p.m.

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
: Linda Nickeson