

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes
January 6th, 2026

Chair Kazmira Herberger called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. on January 6th, 2026, at Mayors Riverfront Park.

Roll Call:

Members Present: Kazmira Herberger, Isabela Ballez, Chris Bol, Rachel Hughes-Nilsson, Karen Wellman, Elizabeth Kraatz, Riley Nilsson

Members Absent:

Staff Present: Patrick McVerry, Deidrean Barrett

Commissioner Liaison: Chris Praedel

Introduction of Guests: None

Changes to the Agenda: None

Special Presentations: None

Approval of Minutes: Rachel Hughes-Nilsson motioned; Kazmira Herberger seconded for unanimous approval of the December meeting minutes.

Old Business:

1. Park Inventory and Park Adoptees List – The Board reviewed updates on outreach to potential adoptees and follow-ups with existing contacts. Chair Kazmira Herberger will share the current park inventory/adoptee list with board members for reference. Board members discussed the year-end reporting form for adoptees and will confirm whether the updated form has been posted to the website. Patrick McVerry noted that eligible Adopt-A-Park groups may be reimbursed for approved purchases with receipt submission.
2. Youth and Family Paddle 2026 – Planning has not yet started. The Board expects planning to begin within the next couple of months.

New Business:

1. Adopt-A-Bench/Tree – The Board discussed providing general cost guidance for the program. Costs vary by tree species/size and site conditions; bench and table/pad costs can vary based on vendor/contractor pricing and installation needs. The Board discussed adding a small buffer to quoted amounts to account for price variability and to support Parks operations. Promotion ideas included updating/confirming website

content and creating a short promotional video/social media post (with staff support for a script).

2. 2026 World Migratory Bird Day – The event is scheduled for May 16, 2026. This year's theme is Citizen Science. Planning updates included outreach for educational partners/booths (including a live raptor/bird ambassador, if available) and potential Air Zoo partnership focused on flight/aerodynamics.

Event Recommendations: None

Adopt-A-Park Applications: Applicant for Woods Lake Park – Isabela Ballez for Kalamazoo River Watershed Council. Rachel Hughes-Nilsson motioned; Kazmira Herberger seconded for unanimous approval of Kalamazoo River Watershed Council's adoption of Woods Lake Park.

Comments:

Citizens: None

Commission Liaison: Commissioner Chris Praedel reported that the new City Manager started on January 6, 2026. He also shared that the Imagine Kalamazoo 2035 design-phase neighborhood meetings will be beginning soon and will provide the board with additional information/links.

Friends of Recreation Liaison Update: None

Parks and Recreation Director Monthly Report: The 2026 Parks and Recreation budget was approved. Milham stream restoration is ongoing (approximately halfway complete). Patrick McVerry reported that a Land and Water Conservation Fund grant was approved for Milham Park improvements.

Staff: None

Board Members: Chair Kazmira Herberger noted that logo design work is moving forward at a cost of \$600, with half due up front. Christopher Bol shared that he will be resigning from the board. He also suggested inviting the City Attorney and Deputy City Manager to a future meeting to discuss mileage-related items.

Adjournment: 7:00 p.m.

The next Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 3rd, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. at Mayors Riverfront Park.

Respectfully submitted by Deidrean Barrett, Recording Secretary

Deidrean Barrett 02/03/2026
Recording Secretary

Kangmin Kim 2/3/2026
Chair