

**CITY OF IRON RIVER
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, September 10, 2025
10 AM
Minutes**

Chairperson Craig Richardson called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m., in the Council Chambers of the Iron River City Hall.

Roll Call: Dan Hinch, Benjamin Garcia, Keith Hamel, Steven Saunders, Keith Hamel and Richardson.

Absent: Aubrey Richardson.

Also present: City Manager Rachel Andreski and City Clerk Tyana Elenbaas.

Public attendance: Holly Harvey and Faith Phillipson.

Public Comment:

None.

Approve Agenda

Garcia moved with support from Hinch to approve the agenda as presented. All in favor; Motion carried. Absent: A. Richardson.

Approve Minutes

Garcia moved with support from Saunders to approve:

- May 14, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes
- June 25, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes

All were in favor. Motion carried. Absent: A. Richardson.

MANAGER'S REPORT

- Trash Can Purchase and Dog Waste Station – Andreski noted that it has been a while since the Committee has met and wanted to update them regarding the trash cans and the dog waste stations being placed out on the Apple Blossom along the trail.
- Bachman Park – Andreski stated that one of the lights at Bachman Park failed and was not under warranty.
- Disc Golf Course – Andreski noted that she and Zach Hautala (ICECA) are still working on signage.

Garcia moved with support from Hinch to approve the manager's report as presented. All in favor; Motion Carried. Absent: A. Richardson.

OLD BUSINESS

MDNR Conversion Issue

C. Richardson provided an update on the ongoing collaboration with Aspirus. He noted that the proposal was scheduled to go before the UP Board for approval; however, the meeting lacked a quorum. As a result, Aspirus Corporates have decided that it must now go before the Corporate Leadership Board, which has not yet scheduled a meeting. Richardson concluded by saying that while the process may be delayed, the outlook remains promising.

2025 PROJECTS

Sale of Parks

Garcia suggested that we compile a list of parks that could potentially be sold. He mentioned that he had printed a list from the city website and identified a few parks he believed would be suitable for sale, specifically: Segundo Park, Homer location Park, Mattioli Park and the baseball field in Forbes location.

Andreski suggested that Interim City Attorney Goodman investigate the legal status of these parks to ensure they can be sold without triggering a conversion issue, which the City wishes to avoid.

Hinch moved with support from Garcia to have Interim City Attorney Goodman investigate the legality and feasibility of selling Homer Location Park, Segundo Park, Mattioli Park and the baseball field in the Forbes Location. All in favor; Motion Carried. Absent: A. Richardson.

Disc Golf Course (Signage)

Andreski stated that she has been working with Zach Hautala regarding the signage. They have requested a quote from Nicolet Signs.

Iron County Little League Scoreboard Request – Bachman Park

Andreski stated that Alisa Porier, Iron County Little League President, reached out to her regarding a scoreboard at Bachman Park. Andreski has asked Mrs. Porier to provide more information at the request of the Parks and Recreation Committee. Mrs. Porier noted that there are pick up softball games currently underway at Bachman Park.

C. Richardson asked if this would be the best investment for the community to purchase the scoreboard. He was curious if this would grant the ICLL exclusive use to the scoreboard or if the community could use it.

C. Richardson motioned with the support of Garcia to table the Iron County Little League Scoreboard Request, until more information can be provided from the ICLL. All in favor; Motion Carried. Absent: A. Richardson.

Ice Lake Park Restroom/ Changing House Facility Paint

R. Andreski stated that she put this on the agenda after some Facebook postings from residents. The posts stated that the restrooms and changing house look terrible, and paint could greatly improve the appearance of the Park. She noted that the bathrooms have been locked because they have been vandalized beyond repair, specifically the plumbing.

Garcia recommended postponing any improvements until the DNR Conversion Issue is resolved. He emphasized that painting the changing house now could be a waste of funds, as resolving the conversion issue would make the City eligible to apply for DNR grants, which could support a more comprehensive improvement project. C. Richardson agreed, stating that there are broader plans for Ice Lake Park, and once the necessary land is secured and the conversion issue addressed, the City can pursue DNR grants for the project.

C. Richardson moved with the support from Garcia, to table the Ice Lake Park Restroom and Changing House Facility painting until the DNR Conversion Issue is resolved. All in favor; Motion Carried. Absent: A. Richardson.

NEW BUSINESS

Nelson Field Tennis Court Lighting – Distribution and Controls

Andreski reported that no bids were received for the Nelson Field light project. She noted that the engineers' estimate for the project is approximately \$45,000.

Hinch shared that the old prison has offered to donate metal poles for the project, which could help reduce costs. However, C. Richardson pointed out that the concrete needed to install the poles would still be a significant expense.

Andreski stated that she submitted a proposal to UPPCO seeking assistance in obtaining the necessary poles, and Hinch noted that he also submitted a proposal for the same purpose. Additionally, Hinch announced that he and Ronjo Leonoff will be appearing on TV6 News to highlight their efforts to secure funding for the Nelson Field lighting project. He inquired whether the City plans to rebid the project. C. Richardson responded that the City should wait for UPPCO's decision before moving forward.

Donated Property – Dog Park

Andreski reported receiving an email from a family interested in donating 3.9 acres of land for the development of a dog park. Hinch mentioned that he previously lived at the proposed location.

Saunders indicated that while the road leading to the parcel is still maintained by the City, it is narrow and overgrown. He added that the parcel contains remnants of old foundations and bricks that would need to be cleared, and the area is currently overgrown with weeds and large trees. Garcia added that the trees would not need to be removed, just a fence would need to be erected.

C. Richardson questioned the logic of accepting a new park, when the City is in the process of reducing its number of parks.

Saunders raised concerns about maintenance responsibilities, pointing out that the Department of Public Works (DPW) is already stretched thin with its current workload.

Community member Faith Phillipson expressed her interest in volunteering at the proposed dog park. She shared her experience visiting many dog parks and explained that they are often community-maintained with volunteer support. She added that James Welch has offered to provide dog training and educate owners on responsible pet ownership. Phillipson also noted that signs stating, "You are responsible for your own animal," are commonly posted to shift liability away from municipalities.

Garcia gave a brief update on past discussions regarding establishing a dog park and reaffirmed his support for the idea, noting its potential benefits to the community. However, he emphasized that the City still needs to prioritize selling some of its existing parks. He also inquired whether neighboring residents had been notified about the potential development of the parcel into a dog park.

Garcia motioned with support from Saunders to table the discussion on the Donated Property – Dog Park until the City can further investigate selling additional parks. All in favor. Motion carried.
Absent: A. Richardson.

Honor Roll Park Improvements Request – Fitzpatrick Construction

Andreski stated that she received a request from Fitzpatrick Construction with proposed work that needs to be completed at Honor Roll Park. The concrete is starting to crack, and the roof is leaking. Fitzpatrick Construction supplied a proposal regarding the service in the amount of \$12,952.00.

Andreski also noted that the Committee will be getting another request regarding putting electricity at the Memorial Park across from Kermit's.

Garcia asked if the City maintains the Honor Roll Park. Andreski stated that the City maintains portions but the Veteran's maintain a majority of the park.

Hamel stated that another quote should be requested, because someone might be able to do the work cheaper. Garcia suggested sending the project out to bids to obtain more quotes.

Garcia asked about giving the parks to the VFW and the American Legion. Andreski stated that it is a possibility.

Saunders moved with the support of Hamel to add Honor Roll Park and the park across from Kermit's to the list for Interim City Attorney Goodman to investigate selling. All in favor; Motion Carried. Absent: A. Richardson.

Public Comment


Hinch inquired about the Sheriff's Work Van and if that got used. Andreski noted that it was indeed used. She added that the work van helped clean up the blighted home on Altone.

Member Comments

None.

Adjournment

C. Richardson moved with support from Garcia to adjourn at 10:51 a.m. All in favor. Motion carried. Absent: A. Richardson.



Tyana Elenbaas, City Clerk