

Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee

Meeting minutes

June 25th @ 6:00 pm

Mt. Hood Room – City Hall

625 Center Street
Oregon City, OR 97045

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair, Tim Lainhart called the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee meeting to order on Thursday, June 25, 2026 at 6:00 PM. Kori Buth conducted roll call, with the following members present: Karen Buehrig, Ken Worcester, Tim Lainhart, Kevin Cayson, Melissa Deyoe (online), and Erin McClellan (online).

2. Public Comments

No public comments were received in person. Written comments submitted prior to the meeting were noted for discussion under General Business.

3. Approval of Minutes

a. PRAC Draft Meeting Minutes - May 28th, 2026

The committee moved to approve the draft meeting minutes from the May 28th, 2026 PRAC meeting.

Motion to approve the May 28th, 2026 PRAC meeting minutes.

Moved by: Ken Worcester / Seconded by: Erin McClellan Motion passed unanimously.

4. General Business

a. Pool Operations Assessment (cont'd)

Parks and Recreation Director, Scott Archer, introduced this item, noting it was the continuation of a discussion held over the previous two meetings. He explained that staff had been asked at the last meeting to return with a proposed schedule based on the operational assessment report and identified community priorities from the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. He emphasized that the proposal was very much a draft subject to input and change. Staff had also met the prior week with the coaches of the two primary swim programs—the Oregon City High School swim team and the Oregon City Swim Club (Legacy Aquatics)—to give them advance notice of the proposals being discussed. A written public comment submitted before the meeting by OCHS head swim coach, Bryan Watt, was also noted for reading into the record.

Existing Schedule Overview

Aquatic and Recreation Manager, Melissa Sebastian, presented the current schedule as a baseline. She noted the schedule varies slightly by season, with the most significant differences occurring during the ten-week summer period. Under the current model, the facility operates Monday through Saturday. Morning opening times vary between 5:00 AM and 6:00 AM depending on the day, followed by Masters swim, water fitness classes, and independent lap swim. Swimming lessons are offered Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings from 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM, while Tuesday and Thursday mornings are partially rented to a private swim school due to lower demand. A break is taken from approximately 2:00 to 3:00 PM for staff breaks, maintenance, and cleaning. Beginning at 3:00 PM on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, swim teams use the full pool, retaining the full six lanes until 5:00 PM, then four lanes from 5:00 to 6:00 PM, and two lanes from 6:00 to 7:30 PM. On Tuesday and Thursday, the teams use the full pool from 4:00 to 6:00 PM. Evening programming includes water exercise and various swim formats depending on the day. On Saturdays, the schedule includes lap swim, private lessons, recreational swim, and public rentals typically running from 2:00 to 8:00 PM. The facility is currently closed on Sundays.

Proposed Schedule Overview

Melissa then presented the staff draft proposal. Key changes included:

- Consistent opening and closing times: Staff proposed a uniform 5:30 AM opening and 8:30 PM closing, Monday through Friday. The change was driven in part by new state code requirements for pre-opening facility checks and the fact that the facilities maintenance team does not begin until 5:00 AM. This would result in a 30-minute reduction in morning lap swim time on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, but a 30-minute gain on Tuesday and Thursday.
- Shift to a two-day-per-week swim lesson model: Rather than the current Monday/Wednesday/Friday model, lessons would be offered on a Monday/Wednesday block and a Tuesday/Thursday block. Scott Archer noted this was a direct response to strong community survey feedback expressing preference for a two-day-per-week schedule. While the number of individual lessons drops from nine to eight per session, this aligns with American Red Cross and industry standard models. Staff estimated this change could allow approximately two to three additional sessions per year, reaching roughly 300 more participants annually. The change was also seen as reducing the scheduling burden on families.
- Afternoon swim team allocations: The proposal retains swim team use beginning at 3:00 PM daily, but with modified lane allocations. On Monday and Wednesday, teams would have the full pool from 3:00 to 5:00 PM, then share lanes with lessons from 5:00 to 7:15 PM (four lanes for lessons, two for the team). On Fridays, teams retain full pool use from 3:00 to 5:00 PM and additional lanes through 6:30 PM. On Tuesday and Thursday, the split would be reversed, with the team receiving four lanes and staff retaining two from 4:00 PM onward.
- Sunday operations: Staff proposed beginning Sunday operations with a minimal-staffing model—open swim, open lap swim, and rentals from approximately

12:00 to 6:00 PM—requiring only three to four staff. Melissa indicated this lower-intensity approach was intended as a stepping stone, with the goal of eventually adding swim lessons on Sundays as staffing capacity grows.

- Weekend lessons expansion: Saturday lessons would be expanded, with two to three lanes dedicated to lessons from 9:00 AM to noon, even during time periods when swim teams also use the facility. Recreational family swim would be moved to mid-afternoon for better attendance, as current 12:30 PM times have consistently low participation.

Public Comment — Bryan Watt, OCHS Head Swim Coach

The Chair read into the record a written comment submitted by OCHS head swim, Bryan Watt. Coach Watt expressed strong opposition to the proposed changes, arguing that reducing the high school team from five days per week to three days and moving the 4:00–5:00 PM practice time would result in a loss of approximately 20 students (over 30%) due to the elimination of the after-school activity bus. He noted that the bus transports students directly from the high school to the pool immediately after school, and that losing this access would place the transportation burden on families. He further cited the team's recent historic success—the girls placing third at state, the highest finish in program history—and warned that the proposed changes would be "very detrimental" and would effectively undermine the program just two years after regaining school district funding. He also argued that the priority classification of swim teams as a Level 3 in the Master Plan should be reconsidered, noting that the swim team is the City's primary pipeline for qualified lifeguards and water safety instructors, making it a foundational enabler of the pool's Level 1 priorities.

The committee engaged in extended discussion across several themes:

Transportation and junior swim teams: Chair Tim Lainhart, who noted his own son participates in the junior swim team, flagged that moving junior swim team practice to 3:00 PM would actually create a hardship for younger swimmers, who rely on parent transportation rather than a school bus. He noted that the current 4:00 PM start time is what makes participation feasible for working families. Melissa Sebastian clarified that during the high school off-season, the club team currently uses the same afternoon time slots with the full pool, with parents and self-transport making up the difference.

Lane sharing and the 3:00–6:00 PM window: Erin McClellan sought clarification on whether swim lessons were truly displacing swim teams in that afternoon window or whether the bigger change was simply the internal reallocation of lanes between junior and high school swimmers. Melissa confirmed that the primary change in the 3:00–5:00 PM window involves junior/club team use, and that from 4:00 PM onward, lane access for high school swimmers would still be available, particularly during the high school season. Erin expressed concern that the transportation issue was being "glossed over" and suggested that a seasonal schedule adjustment during the high school swim season (November through February) could allow the high school team to retain its 4:00–5:00 PM time while the new lesson model is piloted during the rest of the year.

Seasonal flexibility: Scott Archer acknowledged the concept of a seasonal schedule adjustment, noting it would mean explicitly deprioritizing the swim lesson schedule during the high school season—approximately one-third of the year—in favor of the

swim team. He indicated this was a legitimate option but one that would require a conscious policy decision, and it would also require careful planning to align lesson session start and end dates with the seasonal transition. Melissa added that there was already precedent for seasonal adjustments in the current schedule.

Community priority rankings: Erin McClellan raised the concern that the priority framework from the Master Plan—which ranks swim teams as Level 3—may not have fully accounted for the ancillary benefits of the swim team to the pool's operations, including lifeguard and instructor recruitment. She noted that not all community input processes are perfect, and that the vocal community engagement seen across recent PRAC sessions reflected concerns not captured in that ranking. Scott responded that even if swim teams were reclassified to a higher priority, the core problem of competing uses for limited pool space would remain unchanged, and that the proposed schedule already represented a compromise rather than a full adoption of the operational assessment's more aggressive recommendations.

Revenue, fees, and subsidies: Kevin Cayson asked about the cost structure of Sunday operations and whether the budget would support additional staffing. Melissa Sebastian confirmed that operating a swimming pool is highly subsidized and that Sunday operations would add cost. Scott noted that the department plans to conduct a full fee study for Parks and Recreation later in the year, including a market analysis, and indicated that the city likely undercharges for a number of pool uses. He referenced the swim team use as having been identified in a 2020 fee study as the most highly subsidized program in the entire department. He acknowledged that the fee structure has not kept pace with costs, in part due to historical inertia and the difficulty of large fee increases. Ken Worcester noted the City is in year one of a two-year budget cycle, and that any new programming costs would need to be managed within the existing budget or brought to the commission as a budget adjustment request. Erin asked whether the pool-specific fee analysis could be accelerated ahead of the broader departmental study; Scott said this was a reasonable suggestion.

Sunday operations and swim lessons: Tim Lainhart expressed the view that the only compelling reason to open on Sundays would be to offer swim lessons, as that is what community survey feedback indicated as a priority. He was less persuaded that opening Sundays for open swim and rentals alone would meaningfully address community need and questioned whether the added operational burden was justified without lessons. Melissa responded that staffing constraints were the key limiting factor—many current staff are unavailable on Sundays, and building up a Sunday workforce capable of running lessons takes time. Erin McClellan agreed with this framing and asked whether Sundays with lessons could be phased in before implementing the broader schedule changes; Melissa indicated that staffing development was the prerequisite for either approach.

Water exercise classes: Karen Buehrig noted that the 6:15–7:15 PM water exercise block on two weekday evenings occupies prime time that might otherwise relieve scheduling pressure between swim lessons and swim teams. She suggested exploring whether that class could be shifted later. Melissa acknowledged the class is very heavily attended, typically drawing 50–60 participants, many of them older adults for whom it is their primary after-work fitness opportunity. Karen acknowledged this but

maintained that if each group is expected to shift slightly, this class should also be part of that conversation.

Timeline: Tim Lainhart noted that the committee does not meet again until August and suggested that no changes to the swim team schedule should be made at least until Spring 2027, allowing time for the fee study, further schedule refinement, and avoiding disruption to the upcoming high school swim season. Scott Archer supported this direction, acknowledging the original fall implementation target was no longer feasible given the complexity of the conversation. He noted that staff would refine the proposal and return in August with additional information, and that no changes would be made before a clear recommendation is in place. He also flagged that Fall programming publications were already being finalized the following week, making Fall implementation logistically impossible regardless. The committee reached general consensus that no pool schedule changes would be implemented before at least Spring 2027, and that the August meeting would be used to further refine the proposal.

b. Project Updates

Clackamette Park

Parks and Recreation Deputy Director, Tom Kissinger, provided an update on Clackamette Park. The community open house held in May generated strong feedback, and the online community survey had remained open since then. Staff had also been attending community events to gather input, including the Lamprey Festival hosted by the Yakima Nations Fisheries at Clackamette Park on the day of the meeting, where there was significant public interaction and engagement on-site.

Tom announced two major funding developments. First, the department applied for a Metro Nature and Neighborhoods Capital Grant for Phase 1 construction, focused on removal of the RV park and construction of a river amphitheater gathering space. The City was recommended for a \$1.5 million award, with approximately \$500,000 in matching funds coming from the City's WES Good Neighbor Agreement funds with Water Environment Services—monies that had been accumulating for several years and are restricted in use to this area. This grant would then serve as matching funds for a Land and Water Conservation Fund application in the Fall, with the potential to leverage the \$2 million into \$4 million. Both the Nature and Neighborhoods grant and the Community Choice Grants (described below) will be formally awarded at the Metro meeting on July 21st at the Concord Community Center.

Second, the Metro Community Choice Grants voting period closed June 15th, and seven Oregon City projects were recommended for funding, totaling \$882,000. Three of those projects are at Clackamette Park: an accessible river experience (improved access to the river), indigenous public art developed in coordination with tribal partners, and a nature play area. Community feedback most consistently highlighted excitement around the removal of the RV park, the amphitheater concept, and any play structure, as the park currently has only a swing. Demand for a boat ramp was also frequently mentioned, and staff are scoping a new hydrological study to confirm an appropriate location.

Aquatic & Recreation Center Planning

Scott reported that the first community open house for the Aquatic and Recreation Center planning process was held two nights prior on Tuesday, June 23rd, with excellent turnout and substantial feedback received. A community survey was released immediately following the open house and remained active on the City's website. A QR code linking to the survey was displayed on screen for any viewers watching the recorded meeting. A second open house is planned for a later date.

End of Oregon Trail Planning

Scott noted that the first community open house for End of Oregon Trail planning is scheduled for Tuesday, June 30th from 6:00 to 8:00 PM at the End of the Oregon Trail site. The format will mirror the aquatic center open house, with in-person feedback stations and a follow-up online survey to be released immediately after.

The Community Choice Grant funding for End of the Oregon Trail was also referenced, with improvements focused on the park's garden section and back areas recommended for funding under the Metro program.

Wesley Lynn Dog Park

Tom reported that an invitation to bid for the Wesley Lynn Dog Park is currently open through July 8th. City Commission approved the purchase of site amenities—including playground equipment, shelters, and benches—the prior week. Equipment is on order and will be installed by the selected contractor. The project remains on schedule, with a late summer/fall opening anticipated and substantial completion expected around November for the large-scale planting portion.

Other Projects

Tom noted the remaining Community Choice Grant awards: inclusive nature play at Chapin Park (with Metro funding covering natural restoration, shade trees, and stormwater infrastructure, freeing up existing city funds for the actual play structure); an educational pollinator garden at Tyrone S Woods; and inclusive nature play at Rivercrest Park. Committee members expressed enthusiasm at the breadth of funded projects.

c. Summer Recreation & Events Update

Tom acknowledged that July is nationally recognized Parks and Recreation Month, as designated by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and federally recognized by the House of Representatives. This year's theme is "The Power of Parks and Recreation." City Commission will issue a proclamation recognizing Parks and Recreation Month at their next meeting. Tom briefly highlighted NRPA's five thematic focus areas for the campaign: the power of connection, the power of play, the power of community, the power of nature, and the power of belonging.

Tom then reviewed the upcoming events calendar:

- June 27: Oregon City Heritage Days — "America 250 Years in Flags and Fashion" exhibit at the Ermatinger House, 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM; Pride Swim at the Oregon City pool.

- July 4th: Community Celebration at End of Oregon Trail — themed "OC Unity," featuring the laser light show, which Tom noted continues to expand and improve each year.
- July 9 – August 13: Thursday evening Concert Series at 6:30 PM. The July 9th opener will feature a special earlier start time for a "Hometown Night" doubleheader with two Oregon City-based performers.
- Movies in the Park: July 24th at Wesley Lynn Park; August 4th at End of Oregon Trail (in collaboration with Oregon City Police Department's National Night Out); August 14th at Hillendale Park; August 21st at Chapin Park. Full movie schedule is available on the city website.

Scott added that the summer recreation season officially launched that week, with all camps, swim lessons, and recreational activities underway. Pioneer Community Center programming is also in full swing.

d. Nationals Recreation & Parks Association (NRPA) Membership

Scott informed the committee that Oregon City Parks and Recreation holds a full agency membership with NRPA, which entitles all Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee members to individual NRPA membership. This would involve providing members' mailing and email addresses to NRPA, resulting in periodic mailings and email updates. Members were advised that they may opt out of any portion of this—or request that correspondence be routed through the Parks and Rec department address rather than their personal address—by notifying staff after the meeting or via email. No formal action was required.

5. Next Scheduled Meeting — August 27th, 2026

The Chair noted the next scheduled PRAC meeting is August 27th, 2026. There is no meeting in July.

6. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting.