

**PARK RIVER PARK DISTRICT, PARK RIVER, NORTH DAKOTA, REGULAR MEETING,
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2026 AT 5:30 PM.**

President Ashley Seim called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM confirming the presence of Commissioners: Joseph Fietek and Dante Irvine. Absent: Commissioners Josh Stromberg and Sara Freman. A quorum was established. Others present: Duane Berg and Ann Berg.

Seim asked for additions or changes to the agenda. Added item under New Business, Minute Taking

No comments from citizens were presented.

Commissioner Fietek noted two corrections to the January 20, 2026 meeting minutes. He clarified that when discussing "needing a lease," it was for items 2 and 4, not 2, 4, and 5. The second correction was to strike the "tree mowing agreement" as that would be between the board and the Legion at some point. Fietek motioned and seconded by Irvine to approve the minutes with these corrections. Upon vote, all voted aye, M/C.

The board was presented with the financial statements showing the checking account balance at \$94,559.33, with \$92,092.32 listed after accounting for outstanding checks. The complex account remained unchanged at \$38,007.64.

Bills presented for payment included: #7540 AE2S 8,000.00; #7541 City of Park River 20,000.00; #7542 Dale's Small Engine Repair 137.00; #7543 Lights & Water 247.15; #7544 Polar Communications 204.59; #7545 City of Park River 355.67. The reimbursement to the City of Park River for \$20,000 was for funds borrowed in December 2024. Praska's benefits totaled 355.67. Fietek asked if there was any interest charged on the \$20,000 borrowed from the city, and A. Berg confirmed there was no interest charged. Fietek motioned to approve the financial statements and bills, seconded by Irvine. Upon vote, all voted aye. M/C.

Old Business

Community Building Committee Update: President Seim reported that the next meeting regarding the community center project would be on Thursday with the public. This would be one of two planned meetings to discuss the pool and community center project to ensure the community has correct information rather than relying on rumors.

Fietek expressed concern that the perception in the community was that Parks and Rec is driving the community center, and that the pool project shouldn't be lumped together with it. He mentioned receiving feedback that some believe the community can't have a pool without the community center.

Seim clarified that they weren't necessarily packaging them together, but presenting information on both since community members had questions about both projects. She explained that the current plan sequence was part of the park's long-term development plan, with the community center as phase 3 after the campground and baseball facilities.

Irvine shared his reservations about the community center project, questioning its feasibility given the town's size and the challenges of getting various organizations to collaborate. He expressed concerns about the Park Board's role if current board members don't return after their terms expire, noting there may not be sufficient drive to continue the project.

The discussion reflected a shared understanding that while the community center project is still in the planning stages, there were legitimate concerns about its long-term feasibility, financial sustainability, and the challenge of getting community organizations to work together.

Splash Pad: Seim reported that she spoke with Jeremy Samdahl regarding the splash pad. My Aquatics has experienced personnel changes, but Samdahl has been in contact with new staff members who are reviewing the specifications. There appears to be confusion about the sizing and other aspects of the project. Samdahl is continuing discussions with them to resolve the issues before spring.

Lease Agreements on Land: Seim shared her reservations about the proposed 99-year lease agreements with the city. She expressed concern that such long-term agreements would lock the current and future Park Boards into maintaining land and facilities they don't own, particularly if major capital improvements become necessary.

She suggested exploring an intergovernmental agreement as an alternative to the 99-year lease, which would allow for cost sharing on major improvements while still providing the protections the Park Board needs. She referenced Lincoln, North Dakota as an example where such an agreement was implemented.

Fietek indicated he was comfortable with the 99-year lease as long as it included a just cause clause and no other entity was afforded better options than the Park Board.

The board noted that the city attorney, Dustin Slaamod, is currently drafting the lease and it will need to be reviewed at a future meeting.

Swimming Pool: The board briefly discussed the swimming pool, noting that at the previous meeting they had decided not to put more money into it based on its geographical location. Fietek mentioned he has requested a bid for filling in the pool, which he expects to receive within the next week.

Fishing Derby: Seim announced that the Fishing Derby would be held this coming Sunday. She will be purchasing prizes, and noted that Chris and Terry Nielsen are donating hot dogs, buns and other items. The event will include fires for roasting hot dogs and s'mores. Northdale Oil will be providing a donation, and chips have been donated as well. Seim is working with others to determine how to clear snow for the event, and confirmed the ice is thick enough for safety.

New Business

Park District Handbook: The board discussed the Park District handbook but decided more review was needed. Praska noted several sections that might need updating, including paid holidays and mileage reimbursement policies. She expressed a desire to have the handbook finalized before spring, especially since she was considering her future with the position.

Fietek motioned and Irvine seconded to table the handbook discussion until the next meeting, with a commitment from all board members to review the document more thoroughly. Upon vote, all voted aye. M/C.

Field User Agreement – Boosters: The board discussed the field user agreement with the Baseball Boosters, with particular focus on staffing the admissions gate during tournaments. There was clarification that the agreement states the Baseball/Softball program will staff gate admissions via the DIBs worker system, with assistance from the Park Board. Some discussion occurred about who bears primary responsibility when volunteers don't show up. Fietek motioned and Irvine seconded to approve the field user agreement with the Baseball Boosters. Upon vote, all voted aye. M/C.

Part-Time Help for Director (Peak Season): Director Praska raised concerns about her position, particularly during winter months when there are fewer Parks and Rec activities. She noted that when originally hired, there was discussion about hiring a grounds director, and she suggested that if additional help was needed, it should be for grounds maintenance rather than an assistant for her position. The discussion touched on defining appropriate winter tasks for the director position, with Praska expressing frustration at trying to find meaningful work during slower periods. The board acknowledged these concerns and noted they would address them in the handbook revisions.

Open Park Board Position: The board formally accepted Commissioner Sara Freeman's resignation. Seim motioned to approve the resignation of Commissioner Sara Freeman, seconded by Fietek. Upon vote, all voted aye. M/C. Fietek mentioned Bob Lundquist was interested as a potential candidate for the vacant position, noting his experience with the fire department, pool boosters, and grant writing. Seim indicated she had also spoken with other interested individuals. The board agreed to post information about the vacancy on social media with comments disabled, directing interested parties to contact Praska. They will request letters of interest by the next meeting, with the possibility of conducting interviews if multiple candidates emerge.

Minute Taking: The board discussed options for minute-taking formats, with the city offering to handle this task with the A.I. programs they utilize. Seim motioned and Fietek seconded to adopt the "medium" format for minutes and have the city handle minute-taking. Upon vote, all voted aye. M/C.

Motion to adjourn was made at 6:45 PM by Fietek.

ATTEST:

Ann Berg, City of Park River
Assessor/Deputy Auditor

Ashley Seim, Park District President