

City of Franklin  
Parks Commission Meeting  
January 13, 2025  
Minutes

Approved  
February 17, 2025

**I. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Chair Michael Wrench called the January 13, 2025, Parks Commission meeting to order at 6:30 pm commencing at 9229 W. Loomis Road, Franklin, Wisconsin.

Present was Chair Michael Wrench, Vice Chair Kristen Stanley, Commissioners Mary Remington, Cathrine Kosler and Susan Lance, Alderwoman Courtney Day, non-voting member Ex-Officio Michelle Runte, Principal Planner Marian Ecks, Department of Public Works Kevin Schlueter and Dale Borchardt and City Forester Tom Riha. Absent was Commissioner Karen Malecki. Excused was Ex-Officio Leah Voss.

**II. Citizen Comment Period.**

No comments received

**III. Approval of Minutes –**

**a. Parks Commission Meeting Minutes of September 9, 2024.**

Commissioner Remington moved, and Vice Chair Stanley seconded to approve the minutes of the September 9, 2024 meeting. On voice vote, all voted ‘aye’; motion carried (6-0-1).

**b. Parks Commission Meeting Minutes of December 9, 2024.**

Commissioner Remington moved and Alderwoman Day seconded to approve the December 9, 2024 meeting minutes. On voice all voted ‘aye’; motion carried (6-0-1).

**IV. Unfinished Business**

**a. Update on parks maintenance.**

Dale Borchardt, DPW, reported that there has been work on cleaning/removing Buckthorn at Franklin Woods and Lions Legend Park. The trails have been cleaned. A changing table was damaged at Kayla’s Playground and it has been replaced. Discussion only, no action taken.

**b. Park Facilities Reservation and Permitting Policies. Discussion of reservation policies for league sports and other groups, fees, rules and policies for parks.**

The Commission noted it currently is honoring the Franklin Recreation Department and Franklin School requests for facility usage. Principal Planner Ecks reported that she is not aware if Mayor Nelson had discussion with the Franklin School district or Recreation Department regarding compensation to the City for court use. Discussion only, no action taken

**c. Parks Marketing Materials. Marketing materials including maps, pamphlets, etc.**

No update.

- d. Community Event Engagement. Involvement in National Night Out, Trunk-or-Treat, Bike Rodeo and other City of Franklin community events.**  
Principal Planner Ecks discussed both d and e. There should be a placeholder to ramp up community engagement by the Parks Commission. Arbor day is the next city-wide event – plant materials and trees are distributed to participants, as well as presentations about nature programs. There is a City wide clean up event on the same day. Discussion only, no action taken.
- e. Friends of Park / Park Watch.** Discussion of the creation of park watch or park cleanup group.  
Keep a placeholder. Discussion only, no action taken.
- f. Park Signage. Maintenance and updates to park signage and kiosks in Lion Legend Park, Franklin Woods and Kayla’s Playground; “no motor vehicles’ signs.**  
Commissioner Kosler reported that she spoke with the Franklin Police department regarding ‘See Something – Say Something’ pamphlet that Commissioner Malecki created. The information was approved. Regarding the sample sign boards discussed at the December 9, 2024 Parks Commission meeting, Ex-Officio Runte has not reached out to her contacts at the Franklin High School regarding creation of a sign board. She commented that she did not want to do this prematurely. The Commission needs to first determine if we want this and at what locations. The Commission will look at the kiosks at the spring Parks Commission tour. Discussion only, no action taken.
- g. Victory Creek Trail Mowing and Natural Resources. Information about use of prescribed/controlled burns to maintain native vegetation and reduce invasive species.**  
City Forester Tom Riha reported that there will be a written plan on the controlled burn that will be sent to the Franklin Fire Department and personnel involved. Signs will be posted, information put in a City newsletter and nearby homeowners adjacent to the park will be notified prior to the burn. A site analysis was done in fall of 2024 – the area is heavily infested with Buckthorn. The plan is to do a controlled burn in 3 rotations of 18-25 acres per year. The burn will not impact the woodlands or impact run-off to neighbors. Pleasant View Park is under a flood plain conservancy. Tentative burn to occur in March or April, 2025. ‘Pheasants Forever’ will perform the burn. Commissioner Remington commented she believes Southwest Park may also need a controlled burn as Buckthorn is plugging the ravine. It is okay for Commissioners to provide this information to the public or refer them to the DPW with questions. Discussion only, no action taken.
- i. <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/foresfire/prescribedfire>**
- h. 2025 meeting schedule. February meeting date: change to February 17, 2025; Spring Tour of Parks.** All agree to move February meeting date to February 17, 2025. At the next meeting choose a date for the City Parks Tour.

**i. Discussion of creation of combined Parks and Environmental Commission. Scope and purpose of combined commissions, including areas of policy oversight, role in park administration, land conservation and natural resource protection.**

Principal Planner Ecks provided information: the current Environmental Commission consists of 3 members and 1 Alderperson. At the next Common Council meeting there will be discussion and a decision will be made to combine Parks Commission and Environmental Commission. If a change is made, then a change to the Municipal Code will be required. It was commented by Parks Commission, at times due to time constraints their meeting must end early. The scope would change and is outside the purview of Parks Commission. If Environmental Commission is added, meetings will last longer. Can a sub-committee be added? Members of Parks Commission can attend the January 21, 2025 Common Council meeting and provide their comments. Principal Planner Ecks gives annual training to Environmental Commission.

Commissioner Remington moved and Vice Chair Stanley seconded a motion to decline the consolidation of Parks Commission and Environmental Commission. On voice vote, 0 voted 'aye', 4 voted 'nay' and 2 abstained; motion failed (0-4-1).

**V. New Business**

- a. None

**VI. Adjournment.**

Vice Chair Stanley moved and Commissioner Remington seconded to adjourn the meeting at 7:28 pm. On voice vote, all voted 'aye', motion carried (6-0-1).

The next meeting will be held on February 17, 2025.