



City of Blaine

Park Advisory Board

March 25, 2025 | 7:00 PM
Blaine City Hall
10801 Town Square Drive NE
Blaine, MN 55449

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

The Blaine Park Advisory Board met in the Council Chambers of City Hall on Tuesday, March 25, 2025. Chair Lester called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

2. Roll Call

Members Present: Boardmembers Henderson, Lizakowski, Paulseth, VanBuren and Chair Lester.

Members Absent: Boardmember Neubert.

Staff Present: Jerome Krieger, Senior Parks and Recreation Manager and Amanda Alms, Manager of the Mary Ann Young Center.

Guest: None.

Oath of Office

City Clerk Sorensen administered the Oath of Office to Boardmembers Lizakowski, Paulseth, Tshakert and Chair Lester. A round of applause was offered by all in attendance.

3. Approval of Minutes

- 3.1. 2025-127 Approval of the January 28, 2025 Park Board meeting minutes.
Sponsors: Jerome Krieger, Sr. Recreation Manager

Senior Parks and Recreation Manager Krieger stated he had the last name for the individual who spoke during the Open Forum.

Motion by Boardmember Paulseth to approve the minutes of January 28, 2025 as amended. Motion seconded by Boardmember VanBuren. Motion approved unanimously.

4. Open Forum for Citizen Input

Chair Lester opened the Open Forum at 7:05PM.

Steve Carls, 10808 Quincy Boulevard, explained he was a member of the adopt a park program. He discussed how important the community parks were to the quality of life for the residents of Blaine. He reported as a representative of Quincy Park he understood the park was vibrant and active. He commented the park was used quite heavily during the spring, summer and fall, but had little activity in the winter months. He indicated the outdoor skating rink was not utilized by the neighborhood children and families. He discussed how the warming center was becoming a target for vandalism and may be difficult to staff. He suggested the City consider think about removing the warming house. In addition, he asked that the City consider adding more picnic tables within the park for families and groups using the park.

Chair Lester closed Open Forum at 7:08PM.

5. New Business

5.1. 2025-135 Mary Ann Young Center Presentation *Sponsors: Jerome Krieger, Sr. Recreation Manager*

Senior Parks and Recreation Manager Krieger stated Amanda Alms, Manager of the Mary Ann Young Center (MAYC), will give a presentation about the activities, programs and rentals being offered at the facility.

Amanda Alms, Manager of the MAYC, addressed the Board and discussed the programs, activities and rentals that occur at MAYC. She commented on the mission of MAYC and explained there was a wide variety of individuals attending events at the center. She reported she was constantly looking for new and fun ways to entertain the seniors in the community. She indicated the current offerings include volunteer opportunities, special events, recreational programs, educational programs, wellness programs, outings, trips and travel. She commented on how attendance in classes and programming was on the rise. She commented on how some senior programming has moved over to the bandshell, noting the outdoor space at the bandshell would be utilized this summer. She discussed the endowment and donation accounts that had been established for MAYC and thanked the Festival in the Park Committee for their yearly generous donations to MAYC. She commented on the work she has done with the Senior Center Advisory Council to improve the sound system within the Tom Ryan room. She reported a Volunteer Recognition event will be held at MAYC on Wednesday, April 16 at 11:00 a.m.

Mr. Krieger stated it has been fun to see how more and more seniors were visiting and taking advantage of the new senior center, which was assisting with keeping the seniors in the community socializing and engaged.

5.2. 2025-149 Quincy Park Building

Sponsors: Jerome Krieger, Sr. Recreation Manager

Mr. Krieger stated the Quincy Park building was constructed in 1973 to be used as a warming house for skaters in the winter and youth recreation programs in the summer. For the last 25-plus years, it has been used strictly as a warming house for skaters. In 2023, the building was deemed unusable due to failure of the grinder pump that moves sanitary waste out of the building. The building sat idle for the last couple of years and has become more of a vandalism magnet than anything else. The building still requires heat in the winter to make sure pipes don't freeze and the lights for skating are controlled off a timer, so no staff need to be onsite. Currently, the building provides no use for the city. Staff requested for a recommendation from the park board to eliminate the building at Quincy Park.

Boardmember Lizakowski asked if the city would be replacing the building. Mr. Krieger explained at this time the plan was to remove the building, level the site and plant grass.

Boardmember Henderson questioned what would happen with the concrete pad and sidewalks surrounding the building. Mr. Krieger reported all of this concrete would be removed.

Chair Lester inquired if the building was needed for storage. Mr. Krieger stated the city had other options for storing park materials and noted this building was no longer needed for storage.

Chair Lester asked if Mr. Carls had any other input on what should replace this building within Quincy Park.

Mr. Carls agreed that right now, the park building was an eyesore. He believed a shelter with picnic tables would be a nice addition to the park.

Chair Lester asked what the cost would be to remove the park building. Mr. Krieger indicated the building would be removed by city staff.

Chair Lester questioned what the timeline was for removing the park building. Mr. Krieger stated he would have to speak with the public works department to arrange a time to have the building removed. He anticipated the building could be removed this fall.

Motion by Boardmember Paulseth to removed the Quincy Park building be removed by city staff. Motion seconded by Boardmember Lizakowski. Motion approved unanimously.

5.3. 2025-129 **Priorities for Improvements to the Blaine Baseball Complex**
Sponsors: Jerome Krieger, Sr. Recreation Manager

Mr. Krieger discussed a list of improvements identified by the Blaine Area Little League and Blaine Area Traveling Baseball Association for the Blaine Baseball Complex. He commented on the ADA changes that were required for those utilizing the Challenger Field. It was noted staff had taken this list and had put it in order according to priority and requested feedback

from the board on how to proceed.

Chair Lester stated he supported the proposed changes to the Blaine Baseball Complex in order to accommodate up to date ADA requirements. Mr. Krieger explained he was happy to report someone from the Ham Lake Rotary Club would be donating \$5,000 towards this project.

Chair Lester recommended the door into the building be widened for ease of use for those entering the building in a wheelchair. He commented he supported the installation of the adult changing tables as well. He suggested staff look into installing adjustable changing tables.

Boardmember VanBuren asked if these improvements would be completed in 2025. Mr. Krieger stated this was staff's plan, if staff could get the funding in place.

Mr. Krieger commented on the score board replacements that were needed for Fields 2 through 6, noting this upgrade would improve technology and ensure that the scoreboards were able to be used through an app by any team using the field.

5.4. 2025-128 Review of the 2024 - 2025 Outdoor Ice Skating Rinks
Sponsors: Jerome Krieger, Sr. Recreation Manager

Mr. Krieger reviewed the 2024–2025 ice skating numbers and discussed possible changes for the 2025–2026 season. He stated the ice rinks were open for 51 days this year. He noted the city has eight rinks with boards and five general rinks that were lit and staffed. He reviewed the attendance numbers of each rink noting the total number of skaters was 17,778, which was a new record for the city. He commented on how the rinks at Austin, Ivy Hills, Deacons, Swan, Carrara East, Quail Creek and Xylite were unlit and unstaffed, noting these rinks were underutilized by the community. He reported after a thorough discussion with public works, staff was suggesting the following rinks be eliminated in 2025-2026: Austin, Deacons, Ivy Hills, Quail Creek and Swan. He stated the low use of these rinks does not justify the amount of staff resources required to maintain the rinks. He explained with the addition of the new rinks at Lexington and Peterson, these sites can accommodate additional skaters and offer visitors a lit rink and a warming house.

Chair Lester asked if the rink use would be evaluated again next winter after the skating season. Mr. Krieger reported this was staff's intent.

Commissioner Paulseth stated she supported staff's recommendation and asked that staff work to reestablish the grass where the ice rinks were being eliminated for the park users. Mr. Krieger stated he could speak to public works to see if the turf can be reestablished in these parks.

5.5. 2025-134 Park Updates
Sponsors: Jerome Krieger, Sr. Recreation Manager

Mr. Krieger provided the Board with an update on the following matters:

- Ivy Hills, Olympia and Austin Playgrounds will be removed and installed in May.
- Staff was working with the watershed district to get the permit to add an infiltration pond at Sunrise Pond Park. Once we have that finalized, we will hire a contractor to construct the pond, courts, irrigation and seed the site.
- Staff had a bid opening on March 20 for the lights at the Blaine Baseball Complex field 5.
- Summer registration started on Monday, March 10 at 8 am. Staff noted the city had a couple of Play Net programs that filled in four minutes.
- The community garden was full, noting the city would have 67 gardeners this year.
- The city's summer part-time staff positions are full for the year.
- Staff and volunteers served 200 lunches for the Liver and Onions luncheon at MAYC on March 13.
- MAYC rentals and programs are seeing record numbers at the facility.
- Our last craft fair had 44 vendors and a waiting list to get in. The city had 585 people attend the craft fair.
- Stantec presented the BWS trail project to the NRCB last week. Stantec would be presenting this plan to the city council on April 14.
- Staff commented on the puzzle-palooza puzzle competition that was held at MAYC.

6. Adjournment

Boardmember Henderson motioned to adjourn. Boardmember VanBuren seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

Chair Lester adjourned the meeting at 8:23PM.