

CITY OF FALCON HEIGHTS
Parks & Recreation Commission
City Hall
2077 West Larpenteur Avenue

AGENDA
October 6, 2025 at 6:30 P.M.

A. CALL TO ORDER:

B. ROLL CALL:

Joe Morseth _____ Eric Brenton _____ Tom Faust _____
Bob Haight _____ Wesley Goldberg _____ Erin Williams _____ Jerry Buckridge _____

COUNCIL LIAISON:

James Wassenberg _____

STAFF PRESENT:

Kelly Nelson _____

C. PRESENTATION:

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. August 4, 2025– Parks and Recreation Regular Meeting Minutes

E. AGENDA:

1. Fall/Winter Programming Update
2. Community Garden Discussion
3. Summer Music in the Park Discussion

F. INFORMATION/ANNOUNCEMENT

G. ADJOURNMENT:

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CITY OF FALCON HEIGHTS
Regular Meeting of the Parks & Recreation Commission
City Hall
2077 West Larpenteur Avenue

MINUTES
August 4, 2025

A. CALL TO ORDER: 6:32 PM

B. ROLL CALL:

Joe Morseth X Eric Brenton X Tom Faust X
Bob Haight Wesley Goldberg X Erin Williams X Jerry Buckridge X

COUNCIL LIAISON:

James Wassenberg X

STAFF PRESENT:

Kelly Nelson X

C. PRESENTATION: N/A

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. June 2, 2025 – Parks and Recreation Regular Meeting Minutes

Williams motions to approve the Park minutes;
approved 6-0

E. AGENDA:

1. 2025 Park Audit and 2026 Budget Planning

Commissioners discuss their individual park audits and share their findings.

Buckridge mentions that the mulch is compacted under the swings at Curtiss Field and wonders if we need to budget for mulch in 2026. He also shares that residents at 1666 Coffman have restored the Little Library that will be returned to The Grove soon.

Faust says that the Little Library at Curtiss Field is often empty.

Williams mentions the gap underneath the fence surrounding the tennis courts at Community Park.

Brenton suggests using 2x4 boards, which Wassenberg adds should be treated lumber.

Williams states that adding drinking water at Curtiss Field is still a priority.

Faust noticed that the picnic shelter near the playground at Community Park is rusting. Nelson says that she will ask Public Works if it is something that they can sandblast and restore.

Buckridge mentions algae growth in the southwest picnic pavilion at Community Park and says power-washing and a new coat of stain would help it.

Nelson reminds commissioners of the electrical issue that prevented there being a warming house at Curtiss Field last winter.

Wassenberg does not feel that the warming house is necessary.

Faust mentions the workout bench at Community Park that he thinks Public Works may have restored. He wonders if others like it could be refreshed also.

Williams adds that several are rusting.

Buckridge says that a garbage can could be added near the BBQ area at Curtiss Field.

Faust reminds the commission of a drainage issue near the basketball court at Curtiss Field, which is wearing away the paint under the smaller hoop.

Wassenberg says that tending to the drainage issue should probably be something we do sooner than later.

Williams mentions buckthorn in Community Park.

Nelson says that Public Works did a lot of weed and brush removal earlier in the summer, but that the city has not had a controlled burn in a few years and is due for one, which would also help further control overgrowth.

The commissioners conclude that 2026 might be a year for smaller projects at Curtiss and the Grove as Community Park is renovated. Then, this time next year, Phase 2 items may be identified at Community Park and other areas identified to be budgeted for in 2027.

2. Fall/Winter Programming

Nelson shares a summary of how programming has been in a downward tailspin since before the pandemic and has not really come back. Commissioners have discussed this topic at length and have tried a variety of things to no avail. It has been hard to find programming that residents respond to beyond the classes currently offered at City Hall.

Williams asks if a poll can be done to rank the top three activities that residents would like to see.

Goldberg mentions the pros/cons to doing concerts and movies in the park.

Commissioners decide that they would like to try holding a Friday night activity in early to mid-November at City Hall, where attendees can learn to play various card games.

Nelson will ask the Falconeers group if they would be willing to volunteer to instruct various games.

The evening can be promoted in the fall newsletter and at the fall festival. And, if it goes well, it can be done again in the winter.

2. Ice Rink Discussion

Brenton felt like the liner was a good addition to the ice rink at Curtiss Field last year and should be repeated again.

The commissioners are in agreement that a warming house is not needed, but that they would like a liner again under the ice this winter.

Wassenberg reminds Public Works to use a leaf blower before flooding to achieve the best ice possible.

Information/Announcement

Nelson shares that 450 ice cream treats were handed out at Ice Cream Social. Although some attendees maybe had seconds, attendance probably was close to 300.

After a recent call with the MN DNR, the timeline for the Community Park playground construction became clearer. Construction will likely not begin until spring 2026 now.

Nelson lets commissioners know that she applied for park benches at The Grove through Be Active! Be Green! and the city will receive three new benches to be installed before next summer.

G. ADJOURNMENT: 8:07 P.M.

Buckridge motions to adjourn the meeting;
Approved 6-0

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REQUEST FOR ACTION

Meeting Date	October 6, 2025
Agenda Item	E1
Attachment	
Submitted By	Kelly Nelson, Deputy Clerk / Admin. Services Director

Item	2025 Fall Programming Update
Description	<p>Fall Programming Update:</p> <p>During the August 4, 2025 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, commissioners determined they would like to try holding a card and board game night at City Hall for families to attend. They encouraged Staff to reach out to the Falconeers to see if they would like to help instruct game play.</p> <p>Commissioners suggested choosing a date in early to mid-November and determining it far enough in advance so that it could be included in the mailed biannual newsletter to all residents and promoted at Fall Fest as well.</p> <p>Staff looked at the ISD 623 calendar to help choose a date that seemed to have few conflicts and settled on Friday, November 8 from 6:00 to 8:00 PM.</p> <p>This is an opportunity for Commissioners to provide additional feedback and thoughts to help shape the upcoming event.</p>
Budget Impact	N/A
Attachment(s)	
Action(s) Requested	The Commission should discuss the upcoming game night at City Hall.

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REQUEST FOR DISCUSSION

Meeting Date	October 6, 2025
Agenda Item	E2
Attachment	See Below
Submitted By	Kelly Nelson Administrative Services Director / Deputy Clerk

Item	Community Garden Discussion
Description	<p>History: At the February 6, 2023 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, the commission defined how staff should prioritize gardeners waiting for a gardening plot to become available to be as such:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1). FH residents without access to land to garden 2). FH residents with land access 3). Non-FH residents <p>During the February 3, 2025 Parks and Recreation meeting, commissioners supported updating the gardening rules, which was last done in 2017, and to take another look at the City’s plot assignment procedures. Staff said that the current waitlist exceeds the number of available plots in any given year, and the waitlist is a time-consuming way to fill plots. The commission then discussed moving towards a lottery system before another gardening season begins.</p> <p>Steps to Take: Commissioners should now discuss any updates to be made to the selection process and the gardening rules prior to any materials being sent to returning gardeners for the 2026 gardening season.</p> <p>Areas to discuss include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-Falcon Heights residents are currently unlikely to qualify for a plot due to the length of the waitlist and to the priority given to Falcon Heights residents. Should the proposed lottery system allow non-Falcon Heights residents to apply? • Current gardeners are not granted a second plot while a list exists for those still waiting for their first plot. How does the commission recommend second plot requests be handled? • Should plot fees remain \$25 per plot?
Budget Impact	N/A
Attachment(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current Rules and Regs • Draft Copy of Friendly Governance

Action(s) Requested	Staff recommend reviewing the current Rules and Reg and the proposed updates to make any necessary changes prior to the 2026 gardening season.
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Falcon Heights Community Garden Rules and Regulations

1. Garden plots are assigned to one person only and are not transferable. Others may garden at your site, but the responsibility for payment of fees, cleanup and other duties at the site will be the responsibility of the individual whose name is assigned to the plot
2. You must tend your plot by May 30th. If the kind of plants you are growing must be planted later, weed your plot as needed before then. You are responsible for your plots for the entire season. Keep it free of weeds and harvested through end of season.
3. Plots that are untended or unweeded by the planting deadline are assumed abandoned and will be forfeited without a refund.
4. Gardeners must maintain plots (including adjacent aisles) throughout the growing season. Gardeners who do not maintain their plots will not be eligible for a plot in the following year. Gardeners will be given 2 week's notice to clean up their plot. After that time, the plot will be re-assigned or tilled in and any produce will be donated to charity.
5. **Attend to your plot while you are away.** If you plan to take a vacation or be absent for longer than a week, make arrangement with other gardeners to look after your plot while you are gone.
6. Gardeners understand that this is a community garden and in order for it to succeed gardener support is needed to maintain the site, manage compost, keep on top of equipment, make signs, deal with wildlife, obtain our donated transplants, plan and execute produce giveaways, help keep site picked up from debris, and plan celebrations.
7. **Gardeners agree to follow organic gardening principles.** I understand only fertilizers allowable under certified organic standards are permitted. I will not use fertilizers, insecticides or weed repellents that will in any way affect other plots, nor any product that is not allowable under certified organic standards.
8. Gardeners agree to keep the garden and garden edges free of weeds, diseased plants, insect-infested plants and over-ripe vegetables. The City of Falcon Heights will maintain the greater property.
9. Diseased and infected plants must be removed from the garden and disposed of properly.
10. Do not plant trees or shrubs. If it's woody and perennial, it's not allowed in your plot.
11. Be respectful, tall crops, spreading crops etc... should be planted to not shade or encroach on another garden.

12. **Don't bring in sand or gravel.** These materials are difficult or impossible to remove later, and the soil is already quite sandy and "well-drained".
13. Gardeners are expected to communicate with neighboring gardeners to work out borders, weed issues and size of plant issues. If you are not able to mitigate issues, please contact City Hall.
14. Gardeners will keep their garden free of garbage and litter.
15. Growing or using illegal substances in the garden will lead to immediate expulsion with no return of plot fee.
16. You are responsible for maintaining half of the *path* next to your plot. Paths must be kept clear of weeds, rocks, garden plants and other obstacles. You may use the landscaping cloth covered with wood chips to keep weeds from the path, but you may not use carpeting, roofing material or other non-organic materials on common pathways.
17. Gardeners need to be diligent in shutting the water off after their use. Please refrain from watering your garden with an open-ended hose. The use of a hose nozzle will conserve water and maintain sufficient water pressure for other gardeners. Additionally, if a watering ban is in effect, please comply with regulations.
18. Gardeners will not make any permanent changes to the garden, such as adding an underground watering system or drastically changing the fence, without permission from the City of Falcon Heights.
19. Gardens must be cleared and cleaned at the end of the growing season. All stakes should be pulled and piled in the designated location and the ground made ready for fall tilling by end of season. **If a garden is abandoned during the year, or the gardener fails to clean up their garden in the fall, no plot will be allocated to that gardener in the following year.**
20. Gardeners will not plant, weed, water or harvest from any other members plot without permission. Similarly, gardeners will only harvest their own crops unless given permission.
21. Children are welcome at the garden when accompanied and fully supervised by an adult.
22. Complaints, policies, and mediations are the responsibility of all gardeners with the City of Falcon Heights having final authority.
23. Respect everyone and their space.

1	Walkways	11	Walkways	21
2		12		22
3		13		23
4		14		24
5		15		25
			* Water	Entrance
6	Walkways	16	Walkways	
7		17		26
8		18		27
9		19		28
10		20		29
30	Walkways	33	Walkways	36
31		34		37
32		35		38

Falcon Heights Community Garden Friendly Governance

Governing principle: Gardeners understand that this is a community garden and working together, we can grow healthy produce and enjoy gardening.

Garden Rules:

- Plots must be at least partially planted or tended by June 1. Plots not planted or tended will be reassigned.
- No harvesting from others' plots without their authorization is allowed.
- Be respectful of other gardeners and their spaces and communicate with neighboring gardeners to work out issues of borders, weeds or the size of plants.
- Gardeners provide their own tools and seeds.
- Water and hoses with nozzles are available in the garden. Gardeners need to comply with city-wide or regional watering regulations and shut off water after each use. Water hoses must not cross other plots and must be always attended. Water sprinklers are not permitted.
- Gardeners must maintain plots throughout the growing season: keep annual weeds from going to seed, perennial weeds from becoming established, and trash out of their plots.
- Gardeners will follow organic gardening principles and not use insecticides or weed killers.
- Gardeners will not bring in sand or gravel or make permanent changes (e.g., adding an underground watering system or changing the fence).
- Place weeds in designated receptacles. **Because weeds are not heat-treated, they should not be used for mulch.**
- Plots must be cleared of weeds at the end of the season. Crop residue need not be removed unless they harbor insect or disease pests. Please store your stakes and frames neatly.
- If a garden is abandoned during the year or the gardener fails to clean up their garden in the fall, no plot renewal/request will be allowed for that gardener in the following year.
- Pets are not allowed in the gardens.
- Do not plant trees or shrubs. Perennials are not allowed without prior approval.

Garden Management:

The Falcon Heights Community Garden is a self-governing project of the City of Falcon Heights, which owns the property and which has authority and responsibility for its use. The garden is located in the Falcon Heights Community Park (corner of Roselawn and Cleveland avenues) and includes 38 plots, each approximately 10 ft by 12 ft in size. The implementation of garden rules is the responsibility of the Steering Committee, which is composed of three people, two gardeners elected by the gardener community and one Falcon Heights staff member. The Steering Committee makes decisions related to garden policies, rules and procedures, monitors the plots, mediates complaints, and enforces rules. Election of two Steering Committee members by the gardener community takes place in spring after plots are assigned. The City of Falcon Heights maintains the property and equipment – garden paths, fencing, hoses and hose nozzles. An annual rental fee is charged for each plot, and all monies are handled by the city of Falcon Heights. **Fees for 2025 are \$25 per plot and cover operating expenses.**

Plot Assignment Procedure

Returning gardeners will receive an application via mail in early January, and applications with \$25 fee per plot must be submitted to the City on or by February 1. Returning gardeners will be granted the same plot. If a returning gardener's application is received after February 1, the application is handled as a new gardener application. If plots remain unassigned after February 1, then application forms will be available to new gardeners online from February 4 to February 28. Open plots will then be assigned to applicants by lottery in early March. Those selected in the lottery will be notified by email and sent a request for payment of \$25 with a deadline for payment stated in the email. Garden plots are assigned to one applicant and are not transferable. Others may garden at your plot, but the responsibility for payment of fees, cleanup and other duties at the site will be the

responsibility of the individual whose name is assigned to the plot.

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REQUEST FOR ACTION

Meeting Date	October 6, 2025
Agenda Item	E3
Attachment	
Submitted By	Kelly Nelson, Deputy Clerk / Admin. Services Director

Item	Summer Music in the Park Discussion
Description	<p>The Parks and Recreation Commission has held many meetings over several years discussing the decline in participation numbers of its park programming, brainstorming alternative activities, and still not getting much traction or interest from residents. This fall, the city will host a game night at City Hall to determine how that is received.</p> <p>As Staff begins to look ahead to summer programming, one commissioner asked that the commission discuss holding music in the park this summer.</p> <p>There is currently a series of live music events (Music on the Front Lawn) that occur on a resident's front lawn in Saint Anthony Park. However, the concerts will end next month due to the loss of support from one neighbor to close the city streets for the shows.</p> <p>For Music on the Front Lawn concerts, bands are paid with tips gathered from the crowd. In an article from the September 30, 2025 issue of the Park Bugle, the generosity of the crowd typically results in bands being paid more than at a traditional venue, between \$1,100 and \$4,600, which creates demand from the bands wanting to perform.</p> <p>When Staff previously looked at bands to hire for annual events, the cost of the bands has been an issue, along with the time it takes to vet a band for quality, family-friendly music, and to inquire if a band is available on any given date.</p> <p>So, providing the example of Music on the Front Lawn is merely to show one way in which the process may be simplified and create less expenses for the city.</p> <p>This is an opportunity for Commissioners to share their thoughts on whether holding music in the park is a viable and supported option for summer programming, and, if so, how best to find musicians.</p>
Budget Impact	N/A
Attachment(s)	
Action(s) Requested	The Commission should discuss holding music in the park this summer.