

CITY OF VANDALIA
PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

August 20, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT: Corey Follick, Lenny Maenza, Holly Herbst, Rick Scherer, Lydia Baker

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Tara Landis, Larry Taylor

OTHERS PRESENT: Aaron Messenger, Rudy Wells, Sherry McConnaughey, Al Tuttle

- Chairperson Lenny Maenza called the regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to order at 6:34 p.m.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

- The minutes of the May 21, 2025, meeting were presented to the Board. Lydia Baker motioned to accept the minutes as presented, and Rick Scherer seconded the motion. Motion carried all ayes.

COMMENTS FROM INTERESTED CITIZENS

- Lenny offered his congratulations to Alicia on her promotion to P&R Director and Aaron on his promotion to Recreation Superintendent, commenting this is a good move for the City!

FACILITIES SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Rudy Wells presented the Facilities Superintendent Report.

- Robinette Playground installation is complete and in use. This has become a very busy Park and is requiring more work from Staff, as it is generating a considerable amount of trash.
- Preparations for fall soccer field use. Continued use of ball diamonds.
- The Parks Mechanic is modifying a Fire Department trailer to improve its use for carrying firefighting materials. He also works on the Fire Department small-powered equipment and Gator off-road transports. We like to help other Departments as much as possible.
- Cassel Hills Clubhouse domestic water line leak. The leak developed behind a cement block wall separating the upstairs restrooms. We had to bust through two walls to get to the leak. When fixing, this will be modified to make it easier to get to in the future.
- Installed the refurbished bronze plaque honoring James Robinette and placed it on the south wall of the new restroom / storage building at Robinette Park. Monubright completed the refurbishment.
- A Contractor had applied asphalt sealcoat, stop bars, dividing lines, and handicap stall painting at the Recreation Center last year, but the area failed after a 4' rain event. The west parking lot will be closed on Saturday for A to Z Asphalt to do the repairs.
 - Lydia asked about the plumbing and if we have a contract with a specific plumber for these issues. Rudy said we typically work with MSD and Heeter

Plumbing as they are dependable and have always been very fair to work with.

- Rick asked about an ongoing issue at the Rec Center with radiant heat in the Fitness Center and said it never turns off and it gets too warm. Rudy advised that he is aware of the issue and is working on a solution.
- Preparing a storage room and office area at the Municipal Building.
- VRC Pool annual shutdown has been completed. Issues with the UV system and some plumbing continue. The current system is 15 years old.

CITY TREE REPORT

Rudy Wells presented the Urban Forest Report.

- Landscape bed maintenance including mulch at our larger areas. Our six young Seasonal Staff Members helped aid us in applying 80 cubic yards of mulch this summer at areas including the Recreation Center, Justice Center, and Municipal Building. They were very helpful this summer and will all be heading back to school soon.
- Watering of young trees in our landscapes, including the street trees on National and Dixie. Watering a total of approximately 130 trees.
- Trimming of landscape plants, including low tree limbs and plant material in the landscaped medians.
- Planting four trees at Robinette Park between the parking lot and playground this fall. Eight trees will be removed along National, east of I-75, as part of the street tree program. New trees will be planted this fall in those locations.

BEE CITY REPORT

Al Tuttle presented the Bee City Report.

- Open houses continue, and seed packets are being handed out.

RECREATION SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Recreation Report – Handed out and presented by Aaron Messenger

Aaron shared that he is excited to be in his new role as Recreation Superintendent, after starting as an Intern, and spending the last 8 years in various P&R positions.

VRC

- Year to Date Active IBM (Insurance Based Memberships) = 1,425
- We had 226 IBM members visit the VRC 10 times or more during the month of July.
- VRC annual pool shutdown is complete, and the pool is now open to the public. This was a successful pool shutdown with the amount of work that was completed.
- Aaron Messenger has been working on getting quotes for several areas of improvement in the VRC. These quotes range from updated signage in the Facility, PA upgrade, cubicle space for offices, fitness floor upgrade, and water feature updates in the pool, as the water feature is original.

- New blinds have been installed in Ricky's Tiny Tikes to replace the original blinds.
- Starting October 1, the Vandalia Recreation Center will have new weekday operating hours. The VRC will be open from 5am-9pm year-round, Monday through Friday, excluding certain holidays. The VRC Aquatic Center will open during the weekdays at the same time at 6:00am, while the fitness floor, track, and gymnasium will be available for use starting at 5:00am. This has been well received from patrons and staff. We believe we will see an increase in patrons arriving at 5:00am to get their workout in. Alicia and Aaron did research on this change and found that only 0.2%-0.7% of daily scan-ins happened in the last 1 ½ hours of the winter hours. Staff are currently working on schedule updates.
- July Birthday Party Numbers: 16 total - 1 Resident/Member; 15 Non-Resident
- July 2025 VRC Visits = 17,815; July 2024 VRC Visits = 14,723
- July VRC Facility Rentals - Resident = 0; Non-Resident = 2
- July VRC Promotional Groups - Resident =1; Non-Resident =12
- July Cassel Hills Pool Parties - Resident = 9; Non-Resident = 0

Fitness

- August FREE Class Spotlight is Cardio Physique by Sue, Saturdays at 7:00am in the Studio.
- August Free Climb Day is August 12.
- August Inclusive Fitness Days –August 1, 15, 29, from 10:30am-11:15am.
- The 25 Days of Summer Challenge - 75 out of 100 participants were able to complete the challenge and win a free t-shirt, sponsored by Medicare Resource Center – Vandalia.
- Incorporating a 9/11 Challenge during the week of 9/11. Josh is working with the Fire Department, and this will involve patrons climbing 110 flights of stairs with the Stairmaster machines. They will record their time on a participation board.
- July Group Fitness Class Count - July 2025 = 1,576; July 2024 = 1,476
- July Senior Fitness Class Count - July 2025 = 1,690; July 2024 = 1,368

Program/Event Updates

- CampREC has ended for the summer, and we are heading into the last 3 weeks of contracted camps with Skyhawks, Brixilated, Art Adventures, and STEMILY Studios. There will be 2 camps running each week through the end of August. Each camp has 10-15 campers registered.
- Sara Moyer is starting camp preparation for the 2026 season. She has started to edit the training materials based on the feedback received from staff and observations made over the summer. She is also looking into bringing back the Counselor-in-Training Program to help with the younger CampREC group. She is working on camp names as the program continues to expand. It is evident with CampREC selling out in minutes that there is a greater need for CampREC. Sara is looking at expanding CampREC into 2 groups next summer: 6-8 year-olds, with a home base at the Rec Center; and 9-11 year-olds with a home base at the Sports Complex.

Completed Events

- **Vandalia Market:** On Wednesday, July 23 we hosted the Summer Vandalia Market near the baseball concession stand at the Sports Complex from 5:00-8:00pm. Local vendors, food trucks, and local musicians were present at the event to help create a fun evening for everyone!
- **Beginning Golf Camp w/ Skyhawks:** Skyhawks hosted beginning golf camp from Monday, July 28 to Friday, August 1 from 9:00am-4:00pm at the Sports Complex. This camp was for children aged 5-10 years old. This beginning program focused on fun and repetition with a games-based approach that can be played on any surface. Specialized equipment was used to ensure early success for young players. Key skills like putting and chipping were taught through engaging activities. There were 9 participants registered for this camp.
- **Campfire Story Night w/ Dayton Metro Library:** On Tuesday, July 29 we partnered with the Dayton Metro Library to offer a Campfire Story Night at Helke Park! 45 participants joined us at the park with their blankets to enjoy a campfire, stories, s'mores, and fun! Mrs. Stringer from the Vandalia Library led the story time before we ended the night with marshmallow roasting!
- **Flag Football Camp w/ Skyhawks:** Skyhawks hosted Flag Football Camp from Monday, August 4 to Friday, August 8 from 9:00am-4:00pm at the Sports Complex. This camp is for children aged 7-12. This program teaches passing, receiving, kicking, and flag pulling, all while emphasizing heart and spirit. Participants gain confidence and learn life lessons like teamwork and leadership in a fun, supportive environment. There were 12 participants registered for this camp.
- **ABC's are Yummy w/ Eat Pretty Darling:** On Saturday, August 9, Eat Pretty Darling will lead a preschool cooking class where participants explored the alphabet all while baking delicious ABC muffins! It was a tasty way to learn about letters and healthy ingredients through hands-on cooking. This program had 7 participants registered.
- **Dorie & The Daddy-O's:** On Saturday, August 9, Dorie & The Daddy-O's performed at Art Park! Families were entertained with fun and energetic Rock-a-Billy originals and classic tunes. This was a free performance that welcomed everyone to join in on the interactive performance! There were around 40 people at this performance.
- **Sunset Palm w/ Miss Elissa:** On Monday, August 11, Miss Elissa led a Sunset Palm adult art program at the Rec Center. Participants enjoyed the summer vibes and artsy atmosphere as Miss Elissa guided them step-by-step through painting a colorful ocean sunset with a palm tree silhouette. There were 6 participants registered for this program.
- **Lunchbox Legends w/ Eat Pretty Darling:** On Tuesday, August 19, Eat Pretty Darling led a youth cooking class where participants learned how to pack their own healthy and delicious school lunches. Participants learned the skills to create balanced, tasty meals for the whole school year! There are 4 participants registered for this program.

Upcoming Events

- **Art Outside the Box w/ Art Adventures:** From Monday, August 18-Friday, August 22, Art Adventures will host a weeklong art camp designed for young, creative explorers! This

camp is all about breaking boundaries, thinking creatively, and expressing oneself in new and exciting ways. Campers will engage in a variety of artistic activities that challenge their imaginations and encourage them to see the world through a new lens! 14 campers are currently enrolled.

- **STEAM Lab Camp w/ STEMILY Studios:** From Monday, August 18-Friday, August 22, STEMILY Studios will lead a STEAM Lab Camp that blends sciences, technology, engineering, art, and math into hands-on projects. Campers will have the chance to grow crystals, sculptures, and build squishy circuits. Each day is packed with exciting challenges that will spark curiosity and creativity! 11 campers are currently enrolled.
- **Summer Sunset with Adelee & Gentry:** Thursday, August 21 from 7:00pm-9:00pm at Art Park! Live music, food trucks, and kids activities will be available. This will be the last Music in the Park performance for the 2025 season.
- **Homeschool Takeover:** On Friday, August 29 from 11:30 am-2:00 pm, we will be hosting a Homeschool Takeover at the VRC. Homeschool groups and families are invited to come out and enjoy everything the VRC has to offer; swimming, climbing wall, gym activities, and Luther's Jungle.
- **Doggy Pool Paw-ty:** On Monday, September 1 from 6:00-8:00pm, we will be hosting a Doggy Pool Paw-ty at Cassel Hills Pool! This event is free, and only available to VRC Members, Cassel Hills Pool Members and Residents this year. Dogs will have a great time in the pool on the last day of Cassel Hills Pool season. From enjoying pup cups to other dog related activities, this event is a howlin' good time of all things doggy!

Senior Center

- 752 - Senior Center Members through July 2025.
- 9 new members in July 2025, 13 to-date in August 2025.
- Vantran – 1,030 One-way rides YTD. 209 - One-way rides in July 2025.
- August Newsletter is available.

Cassel Hills Pool

- To date, we have sold 574 Resident/Taxpayer passes and 446 Non-Resident passes for Cassel Hills Pool.
- Cassel Hills Pool is currently only open on the weekends, and the last day of operation will be Labor Day.
- July Cassel Hills Pool Visits: July 2025 visits = 5,855; July 2024 visits = 4,878
- Since moving the bookings for the Cassel Hills Private Pool Party online, the season 100% sold out.
- Rick asked about keeping the pool open longer since the schools are now opening after Labor Day. Aaron explained that we would love to do that, but the college kids that work at the pool leave in early August, and unfortunately, the Staff is not available to keep the pool open longer.

Athletics

- The Lollipop Soccer Program had its first session on Saturday, August 16. Each child was given their program t-shirt. 102 kids are enrolled in the Lollipop Program this year.



- Opening Day for Soccer will be on Saturday, September 6. We have 27 teams throughout the program. Maecie Burkhardt met with the Miami Valley Rec Soccer League on Wednesday, August 6 to schedule all the games for this season. She received the confirmed schedule on Friday, August 15. It will be sent out to the teams this week.
- The summer Monday Men's tournament finished on Monday, August 11. We had 14 teams participate, so we had a gold bracket and a silver bracket. Fricker's won the gold bracket and went undefeated this season. The Hit and Runners won the silver bracket.



- We currently have 8 teams in our Monday Men's Fall season and 6 teams in our Friday Coed league. 2 Friday Coed teams returned from the summer season and the other 4 are new. 5 Monday Men's team returned from the summer season and the other 3 are new.
- Flag Football fall registrations opened on Wednesday, April 2. Registration closed on August 1, but we are still taking last-minute registrations. Opening Day for Flag Football is set for Sunday, September 7. To date, 140 kids signed up for various age groups of the program. The coaches meeting will be held on Thursday, August 21. The coaches will get their equipment and team rosters at the meeting.
- On Tuesday, August 5, and Wednesday, August 6, Alicia and Maecie delivered sponsorship plaques to the sponsors who ordered them for the Baseball/Softball season. It was nice to see where they work and take them something tangible that they can display to the Community.

Recreation

- The ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Robinette Park playground was held on Friday, August 15 at noon. The Community has truly appreciated this playground upgrade and is looking forward to phase 2 with the splashpad and 80 additional parking spots. The bids for phase 2 were opened last week.
 - Corey commented that after being at Robinette Park for the ribbon-cutting and seeing the proximity of the playground to the parking lot, he would like to look into putting a fence around the playground. A picket fence would look nice and match the play structure. Rudy said that City Manager, Kurt Althouse, talked to him about it, and we are going to be looking at options.
- Registration is open for the September-December Program Guide.
- Sara Moyer and Aaron Messenger are developing more “series” programming at Art Park for the 2026 season. Alongside the Music in the Park series, they are establishing the Vandalia Cultural Nights series and the Children’s Entertainment series. Lydia commented that she is excited for the Cultural Nights series.
- VPRD Staff have been working diligently to learn the ClearGov budgeting software and have successfully uploaded Capital and Operation & Maintenance requests for 2026 into the system.
- Aaron commented about how P&R has a young Staff, with all the Program Coordinators being here for less than 2 years. Lenny added it is very impressive we have so much to offer for a City this size.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

- Vandalia Recreation Center and Vandalia Senior Center Rates – Aaron passed out a packet detailing the proposed rate adjustments.
 - The Senior Center rates will increase \$5 for Residents and \$10 for Non-Residents. The last rate increase occurred in 2011. Toni did research on the rates, and our increase will put us in-line with other Senior Centers in the area.
 - The Recreation Center Membership rates will increase by 5% in 2026. A Premium Membership will also be introduced, which will include unlimited Group Fitness Classes, Childcare, and Climbing Wall. The last rate increase occurred in 2009.
 - Holly asked if you purchase a Standard Membership, if you would still be able to buy add-on services separately? Punch cards will still be available, but the unlimited Fitness Classes and unlimited Childcare will no longer be available unless you purchase the Premium Membership.
 - Lydia asked if we would still offer a Military Discount, and the answer was yes, to both Active Duty and Retired.
 - The Recreation Center Daily Admission rates will increase by \$3 for both Residents and Non-Residents.
 - Aaron advised that the new rates would be published early, by October/November for the Patrons that get their Memberships early.

- Corey asked about what kind of checkpoints the Rec will have to prevent people from buying a Standard Membership, but using the Premium services. Discussion followed.
- Corey advised that, moving-forward, Council would like to see small increases implemented every year instead of a substantial increase every 5 or more years. Aaron stated that he and Alicia are reviewing all Rec Center fees and would like to increase every year.
- Corey commented that when he gets feedback about our amenities, like the Rec Center, should only be for Residents, he knows that having so many Non-Resident Members is why the costs are so affordable for everyone. And we are in an interesting situation because so many Patrons are Non-Residents, but are School-District Members.
- A vote was taken on the new rate proposal for the Recreation Center and Senior Center, and was met with all ayes from the Park Board.

OLD BUSINESS

- None.

NEW BUSINESS

- Lenny wanted to confirm when the next meeting was and where it was being held, since this was a meeting that was added to meet the Tree City requirements. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 1, at 6:30PM, at Cassel Hills Pool.

There being no further business to be brought before the Board, Lydia Baker made a motion to adjourn, and Holly Herbst seconded the motion to adjourn. Motion carried all ayes. Meeting adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

Lenny Maenza, Chairperson

Tara Landis, Secretary