

THE MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC RECREATION COMMISSION
February 17, 2026

The regular meeting of the Public Recreation Commission was held with the following Commissioners present: Messrs. West and Lee. Mmes. Rich and Bolton. Staff in attendance: Mmes. Riggins, Stewart, Webb, Swift, Sanders, Wright, and Jones. Messrs. Betts, Elliott, Sommer, Higby, Lubbers, Benjamin, Courtland, Heyl, Milton, and Ford. Mike Selker, representing Cincinnati Recreation Foundation.

Commissioner Rich called the meeting to order at 4:04 pm.

PRESENTATION

None

INTRODUCTIONS

None

RETIREMENTS

None

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

None

MINUTES

Commissioner Rich called for a motion to approve the January 20th, 2026, Regular Board Meeting minutes. Commissioner Bolton made the motion to accept the minutes, and Commissioner Lee seconded. The motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

CORRESPONDENCE

None

TEAM HIGHLIGHTS

None

DIRECTORS REPORT

HUMAN RESOURCES

April Jones provided an update on the vacancy report.

FINANCE UPDATE

Austin Lubbers provided a general finance update, noting that the City's financial reports were delayed, and updated information will be available next month. He also shared an update on the FY27 budget presentation, which received positive feedback. The Madisonville Pool project is now fully funded and moving forward, and the department is prioritizing spending COT funds in a more timely manner. Additionally, Austin provided an update on proposed budget reductions, including exploring adjustments to recreation center hours of operation to address underutilization and reduce personnel

costs. The budget reduction for FY27 is approximately 5% (about \$1.7 million). This reduction would include approximately \$1.1 million from the General Fund, \$160,000 from Infrastructure, and \$450,000 from Recreation Operations.

P-CARD IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE

Tiffany Stewart provided an update on the P-Card improvement plan. Reduced P-card holders, worked with ODPa to create the SOP and process. 6 training sessions with all P-card holders, plus city P-card training. The process is all digital. The IT department has provided all SACs with laptops and scanners. We have created a corrective action matrix March 7th will be the tentative date to reactivate p-cards.

RECREATION OPERATIONS UPDATE

Brandi Sanders provided an update on Recreation Operations. Before- and after-school programming is currently 80% full, while Summer Day Camp enrollment has reached 55% capacity, with two camps already full and operating with waiting lists. The Hirsch and Avondale communities will host Healthy Lifestyle programming, and the Reds Community Fund will support programming at Winton Hills this spring. Rec @ Nite has been expanded to two additional sites, with the team currently planning programming and securing vendors. CRC has also been intentional about bringing adult sports back to the department through a partnership with Mercy Health, with 91 participants currently enrolled in adult pickleball. Additionally, SACs are receiving professional development training, including an introduction to management.

BOARD PAPER DOCUMENTS

Commissioner Rich proposed transitioning Board of Commissioners meeting materials to a fully digital format beginning in March in an effort to support sustainability and reduce paper use. The other Commissioners agreed with the proposal. Moving forward, Commissioners will bring their own devices to meetings to review agendas, reports, and other documents electronically.

MERCY SITE

Kirby Sommer provided an update on the Mercy site Community Engagement Survey, sharing feedback gathered from residents about desired improvements to the Oskamp/Mercy site. Community members expressed strong interest in a new ADA-accessible concrete walking trail with marked paths, benches, trash cans, dog waste stations, and pollinator pockets with educational signage. Feedback also included mixed opinions about renovating the existing tennis and pickleball courts, with some residents suggesting maintaining the current configuration of two tennis and two pickleball courts while repairing the concrete and adding a practice board. There was significant interest in replacing the baseball field with a designated soccer field to support soccer, futsal, and mini-pitch play, as well as enhancing playground areas for ages 2–5 and 5–12 with climbing features, swings, shade, and ADA-accessible components. Additional ideas included shaded gathering spaces with picnic tables and grills, turf renovation for Field #1, improved landscaping, wayfinding signage, and potential future amenities such as outdoor fitness equipment, a spray ground, and additional sports courts.

PLANNING AND ENGINEERING - CAPITAL PROJECTS (UPDATE)

Kirby Sommer updated the Commission on the major capital projects underway currently:

Projects Under Construction:

- 2022-24 Projects from the Recreation Special Activities Fund 323 for the purpose of providing resources (\$1.5M) for improvements and renovations to recreation centers and outdoor recreation areas, security camera upgrades and installations at various sites and signage upgrades at various locations: \$700k is budgeted for CRC center requested improvement projects. \$350k is budgeted for security system improvements and \$450k for signage throughout all CRC sites. The Planning and Development Division completed a signage inventory at each CRC site. New sign designs, created by CRC P&D staff, have been approved. ETS requested the scope be changed to install the same type of camera system as CPD. **UPDATE:** Remaining funds are being used to finish up the signage projects and continue with the security cameras. Bush Recreation Center will be the first to get the new sign. The camera projects are in progress.
- As part of the 2024-25 capital budgets, improvements at various tennis and sport court hard surfaces improvements are being planned for 2025-26. **UPDATE:** Sport courts at Daniels, Madisonville, Hartwell, Evanston, Mt. Airy and Schwarz are being scheduled for 2025-26. We expect over \$600k of sport court improvements will be made in 2025-26. The basketball court renovation at Daniels has been completed. Turkey Ridge is completed. Since the city term contract has been eliminated, all future projects of this type will need to be bid out through the city procurement system. This will increase the project schedule significantly. A proposed design to convert one of the Hartwell basketball courts to a hard surface futsal court is planned to start spring 2026, this was requested by the community.
- As part of the 2024 to 2026 capital budgets, recreation center roof renovations are planned. Several roofs are out of warranty, renovating the roofs while they can still be brought back into warranty (10 to 20 years) condition is desired. The cost of replacing the roof is much more than the re-warranty improvements. CRC has had the roofs out of warranty inspected to create a prioritized list. 2025-26 roof projects are being planned. **UPDATE** The Millvale roof testing showed it will need replacement in most locations; funds have been approved. Work is being scheduled to begin December 2 and be completed by February 2026 for the HVAC. The Corryville Recreation center roof is scheduled for renovation along with a new HVAC unit. The Dunham gym and breezeway roof improvements have been completed. Price Hill recreation center roof work is complete. Emergency repairs at Winton Hills are in progress and, Hirsch is completed and Dunham Recreation center is being repaired with plans to replace a section in the Renovations of the Center.
- As part of the capital budget, several miscellaneous improvement projects are being planned from required emergency work to CRC and Community Budget Requests (CBR). **UPDATE:** Per community request, baseball fields at Dempsey, Mt. Echo and Boldface will be removed to fit in full size soccer/football fields. Dempsey, Boldface, and Mt. Echo are all completed. The 2026-27 CBR's have started, we worked with several community councils to select and budget the approved project requests. Twenty-Three sites were requested with over \$2.2M of requested improvements. Finance will be providing additional 2026 funding for some of these projects. **UPDATE:** The baseball fields at Dempsey, Mt. Echo and Boldface were all removed to fit full size soccer/football fields.

Projects in DEI and Purchasing:

- As part of the golf division funding proposal, a new Neumann clubhouse is being proposed. A proposed design and layout was developed by CRC staff. The RFP for the design-build contract is in progress. The current proposal is to construct a new clubhouse onsite and keep the existing one open until the new is complete. Funds to budget these projects were approved

9/5/24. **UPDATE:** RFP bid documents have been created by CRC P&D. The DEI goals as of now are MBE 20% and WBE 13.5%. The RFP was submitted to purchasing on 3/3/25. bid on hold while funding assessed. The existing clubhouse will be demolished after the new one is in use.

- As part of the golf division funding proposal, California Golf Clubhouse restrooms and kitchen renovations are being planned. **UPDATE:** An A/E firm has been hired to start the restroom renovation design. The design is complete. This work will be bid out.
- As part of proposed 2026 and 2027 COT funding, CRC will be receiving funding for the renovation of the Dunham Recreation Center. **UPDATE:** Scope of project TBD. CRC is studying what kind of space is needed. An RFQ for the full design is in progress and final submittal is due 10/21/25. A Site Assessment will be done before the RFQ is completed. Design Award Letter in submittal process.
- As part of proposed 2026-28 capital funding, the Madisonville Aquatic facility was selected by CRC staff to be renovated. The facility is in very poor condition and cannot be repaired without a major renovation. **UPDATE:** Scope of project TBD. CRC has completed a feasibility study to develop the project scope, a CSR was submitted. A proposed layout has been approved by CRC staff. An RFP is out for bid with a pre-bid meeting happening on 1/16/26. Project is in evaluation committee phase.

Projects in Design:

- As part of the capital budget, design work for ADA access to the Riverside Sports Complex boat ramp restrooms, a new boat dock and connecting walking loop is in progress. The renovation is being designed by CRC staff. CRC did not receive the grant, ODNr recommends applying for it again when available. An RFP is in progress for the design work. The existing rolling dock is no longer usable; a new one has been constructed. The new rolling boat dock is complete and installed. **UPDATE:** With the grant being denied, the process to hire an A/E firm is in progress for restroom improvements. Design work being scheduled with Verdantas, site meeting set for 12/17/25. Construction set will be sent to bid once completed.

COMMISSION BOARD COMMITTEE AND SUBCOMMITTEES:

BUDGET AND FINANCE UPDATE

Commissioner Rich provided an update. We reviewed golf funds, and golf is doing well and predicting a record-breaking year. The CFO hiring is on track; HR is vetting candidate and offer will be made soon.

GOVERNANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE UPDATE

Commissioner Bolton provided an update on the meeting. Due to organizational changes proposals. The committee has been reviewing the bylaws of all board managed departments. Formalize the director's evaluation process.

OLD BUSINESS

7.a None Currently

NEW BUSINESS

8.a Recommended Action

Board Approval

Background

Establishment of an Annual Director Evaluation Committee (CRC Board Members) with guidelines and details of how the committee will function to be presented at the March 17, 2026, board meeting. Commissioner Rich called for a motion to formally create a committee. Commissioner West made a motion to approve the policy, and Commissioner Lee seconded it; the motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

4:49 - 5:10 PM

Board Action:

The Board considered disciplinary action against the following employees:

Christopher Cain

Charge: Insubordination, Neglect of Duty, and AWOL.

Penalty: Suspension – 32 hours

Commissioner Rich motioned to accept the recommendation of the Human Resources and the Hearing Officer for a Penalty of a 32-hour suspension. Rollcall: Commissioner Rich-Yes, Commissioner Bolton – Yes, Commissioner West – Yes, Commissioner Lee - Yes. The motion carried. Passed unanimously.

Jailia Sturdivant

Charge: Neglect of Duty

Penalty: Dismissal

Commissioner Rich motioned to accept the recommendation of Human Resources and the Hearing Officer for a Penalty of Dismissal. Rollcall: Commissioner Rich-Yes, Commissioner Bolton – Yes, Commissioner West – Yes, Commissioner Lee - Yes. The motion carried. Passed unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 5:12 PM

NEXT COMMISSION MEETING

The next meeting of the Public Recreation Commission will be held on March 17, 2026, at the CRC Main Office.

Leslie M. Rich, President

Daniel E. Betts, Director

/ss Minutes prepared by Sonya Swift