

BEMIDJI PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA

Tuesday, December 9, 2025

Carnegie Library
426 Bemidji Avenue N
4:30 PM



- 1) **CALL MEETING TO ORDER**
- 2) **AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA**
- 3) **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - a) October 14, 2025 meeting minutes
- 4) **PUBLIC COMMENTS/AGENDA ITEMS**

(Comments limited to Agenda items only and a 3- minute maximum per speaker; 15-minute maximum per meeting regarding groups).
- 5) **PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION POSITION**
- 6) **RECREATION UPDATES**
 - b) Staffing
 - c) Loon Country Arts
 - d) Programs and Events
 - e) Region 2 Arts Grant
- 7) **PARKS AND TRAILS UPDATES**
 - f) Updates
- 8) **COMMISSIONER UPDATES**
- 9) **ADJOURN**
- 10) **NEXT MEETING**

Parks and Trails updates

Parks-

- Diamond Point bridge has been repaired
- Potential new dog park location discussed with planning department. With North Country Park being the most practical. (See map attached) The funding for such a project would need to come by grant and or fund raising.

Trails-

- Had discussions with residents on Lake Blvd in reference to the homeless encampments on the shoreline below the trail.

Grants-

- The ReLeaf Grant is due October 28 and would fund a tree inventory, 5-year management plan, tree ordinance review with a tree manual and 201 stumps to be removed. The funds would also go towards the tree purchase and install of 286 trees. The ask for the grant is \$489,575.00 and awardees will be notified in January of 2026. 🙌

Fee Schedule-

- Attached is the proposed fee schedule with **bold** being increased.



PARKS DEPARTMENT		
DESCRIPTION	CURRENT FEE	2026 FEE Note: new or increased fee is in BOLD print
Park Usage—Deposit (refundable)	\$250.00 (minimum)	\$250.00 (minimum)
City Park:		
City Park Building Rental	\$275.00	\$300.00
- Deposit (refundable)	\$300.00	\$300.00
Softball Field Rental	\$30/field/game	\$30/field/game
- Holiday Field Use Fee	\$50.00/day	\$50.00/day
Tournament Fees:		
*Includes use of Main Building & Complex		
- Tournament Field Rate	\$75.00/Field/Day	\$75.00/Field/Day
- Dragging Fee	\$6.00/time	\$6.00/time
- Chalking Fee	\$6.00/time	\$6.00/time
- Concession Fee (Daily Gross Sales)	5%-10%	5%-10%
- Fence Installation/field	\$100.00	\$100.00
- Deposit (refundable)	\$200.00	\$200.00
North Country Park:		
Baseball Field Rental	\$40.00 per field/practice/per day	\$40.00 per field/practice/per day
Diamond Point Park:		
Main Building Rental	\$275.00	\$300.00
- Deposit (refundable)	\$300.00	\$300.00
Pavilion Rental	\$135.00	\$150.00
— Deposit (refundable)	\$200.00	\$200.00
Jiigibiig Facility Rental	\$250.00	\$250.00
- Deposit (refundable)	\$300.00	\$300.00

South Shore Park:		
Building Rental	\$250.00	\$275.00
- Deposit (refundable)	\$300.00	\$300.00
Nymore Park:		
Warming House Rental	\$ 50.00	\$100.00
- Deposit (refundable)	\$100.00	\$100.00
Miscellaneous Rental Fees:		
Court Reservation/Rental Fees (Pickleball/Tennis)	\$7.00/court (up to 4 courts)	\$7.00/court (up to 4 courts)
Disc Golf Course League/Tournament	\$75.00	\$75.00
Birthday Party Rental (2 hours/staffed)	\$150.00	\$150.00
Tourist Information Center	\$100.00/2 hours	\$100.00/2 hours
Commercial Permit Fee:		
Annual	\$250.00	\$250.00
Month	\$100.00	\$100.00
Day	\$25.00	\$ 25.00

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Nov 30	Dec 1 2	3	4	5	6	
Fall Walking Challenge	10:30 AM Storytime at the Carnegie	3:30 PM Lego League Session 2	9 AM T shirt Pick Up			
Fall Walking Ends	3:30 PM Lego League				4:30 PM Puzzle Palooza	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	10:30 AM Storytime at the Carnegie	3:30 PM Lego League Session 2			12:30 PM Early Release - Imagination	5 PM Ugly Sweater Party
	3:30 PM Lego League					
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	10:30 AM Storytime at the Carnegie	3:30 PM Lego League Session 2		5 PM Parent's Night Out - Camping at		
	3:30 PM Lego League					
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	10:30 AM Storytime at the Carnegie					
28	29	30	31	Jan 1	2	3
	10:30 AM Storytime at the Carnegie					9 AM Snowshoe/Walk Club

Proposed Programs and Dates (2026)

Kids in Theatre – Two-week, half-day theatre camp with Bemidji Community Theatre.

Dates: June 8–12 and June 15–20

Final performance: June 20

Kids in Art (Visual Arts) – One-week, half-day painting camp in partnership with local artists.

Dates: July 6–10

Kids in Art (Fiber Arts) – One-week, half-day camp exploring weaving, felting, knitting, basketry, and more with local artists.

Dates: July 13–17

After School Arts – Six-week spring program offering 1.5-hour classes in visual and fiber arts.

Dates: April 13–May 22

Series/season proposal

We are seeking support for four arts activities in 2026 that expand access to youth arts education, strengthen local partnerships, and enrich the cultural life of the Bemidji community. These activities include Kids in Theatre, Kids in Art (Visual Arts), Kids in Art (Fiber Arts), and After School Arts. Together, they provide a mix of summer camps and afterschool programming designed to engage youth with theatre, visual, and fiber arts while connecting them with local artists and culture bearers.

Overview of Activities

Kids in Theatre is a two-week, half-day theatre camp presented in partnership with Bemidji Community Theatre (June 8–12 and June 15–20, 2026). Youth participants will develop skills in acting, stage presence, and collaboration, culminating in a public performance on June 20, 2026. This format provides both intensive instruction and a community showcase that celebrates participants' creativity.

Kids in Art: Visual Arts is a one-week, half-day painting camp (July 6–10, 2026) hosted at Jiigibiig in Diamond Point Park. Local artists will guide youth in exploring painting techniques, color theory, and creative expression, culminating in a showcase of their work for families and the community.

Kids in Art: Fiber Arts is a one-week, half-day camp (July 13–17, 2026) also held at Jiigibiig in Diamond Point Park. Local artists will teach skills such as weaving, felting, knitting, and basketry, introducing youth to both traditional and contemporary fiber arts practices. A community sharing at the end of the week will highlight participants' creations.

After School Arts is a six-week spring program (April 13–May 22, 2026) held at the Historic Carnegie Library. Students will attend 1.5-hour classes in both visual and fiber arts, taught by local artists. This format provides extended engagement over multiple weeks, giving youth more time to practice and build confidence in their skills.

Support of Mission and Goals

These programs align directly with the Recreation Department's mission, vision, and core

values, which emphasize access to programming for all community members. By providing affordable, high-quality arts education in both traditional and nontraditional settings, we are breaking down barriers to participation and ensuring that all youth have opportunities to learn, create, and connect through the arts.

Access, Equity, and Creativity

Accessibility and equity are at the heart of this programming. Camps are intentionally low-cost and located in community spaces like Jiigibiig and the Carnegie to ensure they are welcoming and easy to reach. By offering a mix of summer and afterschool options, families with varying schedules can participate. These programs encourage creativity and imagination while giving youth access to professional instruction that they may not otherwise experience.

Roles of Artists and Performers

Local artists, theatre professionals, and culture bearers will serve as teachers, mentors, and facilitators. They will design and lead workshops, teach technical and creative skills, and support youth in presenting their work publicly. Their involvement not only ensures high-quality instruction but also strengthens the cultural fabric of the community by fostering direct connections between artists and the next generation.

Intended Audience

The primary audience for these programs is Bemidji-area children and youth, particularly those who may have limited access to arts opportunities due to cost, location, or other barriers. Families and the broader community are also engaged through public performances and showcases, creating a wider ripple effect of participation and appreciation for the arts.

Timeline and Locations

- Kids in Theatre: June 8–20, 2026 – Bemidji Community Theatre and Carnegie Library
- Kids in Art (Visual Arts): July 6–10, 2026 – Jiigibiig, Diamond Point Park
- Kids in Art (Fiber Arts): July 13–17, 2026 – Jiigibiig, Diamond Point Park
- After School Arts: April 13–May 22, 2026 – Historic Carnegie Library

Contribution to Regional Cultural Life

These programs make a significant contribution to the cultural life of the region by cultivating the next generation of artists and arts appreciators. They expand arts access for youth, strengthen collaboration between local organizations, and bring families and community members together through performances and exhibitions. By teaching both contemporary and traditional art forms, the programming supports cultural preservation while also fostering innovation and creativity. Ultimately, these activities enrich public life in Bemidji by ensuring that the arts remain accessible, vibrant, and woven into the fabric of community life.

New and Expanded Programming*

Budget format

Remember, your season or series cannot be over 80% funded by Minnesota State Arts Board, Library Legacy, Historical Legacy, Department of Agriculture or other grant awards funded by the Clean Water, Land & Legacy Amendment and cannot become over 80% funded if awarded this grant. You signed off on this in the eligibility section of this form. There can be no **unallowable expenses** in this part of the budget.

Expense Categories	Description (Be detailed and specific - \$/hr. for number of hours worked, \$/night for lodging, etc.)	Estimated Expenses (\$ Amount)
Payment of Artists, Culture Bearers, Performers, Instructors, etc.	A <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Travel expenses for guest artists, culture bearers, performers, instructors, etc.	A <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Fees for Consultants, Vendors, Service Providers, etc.	A <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Equipment rental or purchase	A <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Materials and Supplies	A <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Venue Rental	A <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Promotion and Publicity Expenses	A <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Administrative Expenses (Up to 15% of Total Estimated Expenses allowed - MUST be project specific.)	A <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Other Expenses	A <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
TOTAL ESTIMATED EXPENSES PAID BY THIS GRANT	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Budget Narrative – Art Series Recreation Program

Artist Fees:

Artist fees were calculated based on the estimated hours required for program instruction and preparation. For **Theatre Camp**, artists are paid \$75 per hour for approximately 20 hours of instruction and technical support over the two-week program, totaling \$8,750. For **Art Camp**, artists teaching visual arts are paid \$75 per hour for instruction over two weeks, totaling \$3,320. The **After-School Arts Program** artist fees reflect instruction and planning over the six-week program at the same hourly rate, totaling \$1,092. These rates are competitive and reflect the expertise and experience of the artists.

Art Supplies – Visual Arts:

Art supplies for the visual arts component are calculated at **\$12 per student**. This covers all painting and fiber arts materials required for the camps. For fiber arts, this includes yarn, needles, and related materials. For painting, this includes paints, brushes, and canvases. Additionally, t-shirts for both the **Theatre Camp** and **Art Camp** are included at approximately **\$8 per student**, which serve both as a program keepsake and, in the case of Theatre Camp, a tool for color-coding participants. Many of these supplies are offset by registration fees.

Theatre Supplies:

Theatre supplies include the purchase of **3 scripts** for the program, which are used by the teaching artists for technical rehearsal, performance, and music coordination. Additional supplies include balloons, ink, paper, and other materials necessary to support the creative activities in the camp.

Interns:

An intern is included for the Art Camp and After-School Arts Program to assist with art instruction and coordination. This role is part of college coursework and is funded at **\$16 per hour**. Theatre Camp interns are funded separately through a private donation and are not included in the grant request.

Promotion and Publicity:

Funds requested cover printing, advertising, and related promotion costs to ensure adequate outreach and registration for all programs.

Scholarships:

Scholarships are provided through private donations to ensure program access for all participants and are not included in the grant request.

Summary:

This budget ensures that artist compensation is fair, students have all necessary supplies for a high-quality arts experience, and program administration supports smooth operation. By combining fee-based revenue, private donations, and the requested grant, the programs can provide equitable access and maintain high-quality instruction and materials.

Bemidji Parks & Recreation will review all surveys pre/post activity. They will compare the data collected to see if participants gained knowledge and skills from camp. Bemidji Parks & Recreation will summarize the results and present them to Bemidji Community Theater teachers in the post wrap up meeting.

Bemidji Community Theater has a pool of talented artists from which to draw. Artists/faculty are selected from those most experienced with the educational aspect of theater as well as those who are the best "fit" for the program. Teachers of drama, music, dance, scenic design, stage combat, and costume design are approached to determine their interest; if they are, they are asked to submit a resume. The BCT board makes offers from the submitted resumes contingent on funding.

here will be 15 scholarships available for participants. These scholarships will cover the full cost of the registration fee. Participants are asked to fill out a short application for the scholarship. To be eligible, participants must reside within the Bemidji school district or surrounding area and must explain why they would like to attend Summer Theater Day Camp. Bemidji Parks & Recreation will cover 5 scholarships, BCT will cover 5 and a request from the grant will cover 5 scholarships.

As a result of this program, youth ages 8-16 will experience an increase in knowledge and skills about performing arts through hands-on activities in dancing, singing, acting, painting, and stage combat.

valuation methods include surveys administered pre and post-activity to measure the knowledge they have before the activity and what knowledge they have gained after the activity in youth ages 8-16.

Adult – 160; youth 250

Ats expse = 1,500

The targeted audience for the Theater Summer Day Camp is youth ranging in age from 8-16. Basic Stagecraft will include ages 8-12, Out of the Box, Advanced Musical Theater and Tech will be available to ages 12-16. At the end of camp, there will be a final performance from all groups with an invitation to parents and families for viewing, with an anticipated full house for the performance, around 250 viewers.

Program Survey (Before & After)

Before Program

How excited are you? (Not at all / A little / Pretty excited / Super excited)

How much do you like art/theatre now? (Not much / Kind of / A lot / Love it)

How good are you at art/theatre? (Not good yet / Okay / Pretty good / Really good)

Do you know kids here? (No / A few / Lots)

What are you most excited to try or learn? (open) • How confident do you feel trying new activities in **art, music, or theatre**? Not confident / A little confident / Somewhat confident / Very confident

How much do you know about **visual arts, painting, fiber arts, music, or theatre**?

Nothing / A little / Some / A lot

How excited are you to **learn new art skills** in this program?

Not excited / A little excited / Somewhat excited / Very excited

After Program

How much do you like art/theatre now? (Not much / Kind of / A lot / Love it)

How good do you feel now? (Not good yet / Okay / Pretty good / Really good)

Did you make new friends? (No / A few / Lots)

Do you want to do more art/theatre? (No / Maybe / Yes)

What was your favorite part? (open)

One thing we could change? (open)

How much did your confidence improve in trying new activities in art, music, or theatre?

Not at all / A little / Somewhat / A lot

How much did you learn about visual arts, painting, fiber arts, music, or theatre during the program?

Nothing / A little / Some / A lot

How likely are you to try art, music, or theatre activities outside of the program?

Not likely / A little likely / Somewhat likely / Very likely

The Recreation Department has a strong record of planning and delivering accessible arts programming for children, youth, adults, and families. Our success comes from thoughtful planning, strong partnerships, and a focus on creating welcoming opportunities for creative expression. By working with local artists and nonprofit organizations, we bring diverse arts experiences to the community in ways that are affordable and inclusive. One example is Mini Musicians, a preschool program launched in spring 2024 in partnership with instructor Sarah Leach. Classes ran weekly from February 7 to March 29 and provided an introduction to rhythm, song, and movement for children and their caregivers. The program flyer (Upload 1) shows clear communication of details and affordability, while the photo (Upload 2) illustrates the hands-on, engaging nature of the program. Caregiver participation strengthened family connections and supported early childhood development. In 2025, the Recreation Department partnered with the Northern Artists Association to deliver Adult Art Classes at the Historic Carnegie Library. From January through April, weekly sessions gave adults time and space to build artistic skills in a supportive setting. The Recreation Department handled registration, staffing, and facility rental of the Lakeview Room, while the Association provided instruction. Upload 3 documents this program and highlights how partnerships expand our reach and make the Carnegie a cultural hub.

The Recreation Department also coordinates youth theatre camps with Bemidji Community Theatre. In 2025, the camp ran June 9–20 and culminated in a performance that highlighted singing, acting, and stagecraft. Video clips (27:38–28:38 and 34:00–36:00) show youth performing confidently, demonstrating both skills learned and personal growth. Similarly, the 2024 camp (June 5–16) concluded with a group performance that showcased two weeks of learning. These programs succeed because Bemidji Community Theatre provides artistic expertise while the Recreation Department manages registration, logistics, and promotion, ensuring smooth operations and strong participation. Arts are also integrated into the Recreation Department’s broader offerings. Day camps feature crafts, storytelling, and creative projects alongside recreation. After-school programs provide youth with opportunities in art and music while supporting social development. Special family events include art-making stations and performances that expand access to families who may not be able to attend formal classes. By coordinating with nonprofit partners, we avoid duplication of services while offering specialized programs that respond to community needs.

Several strengths support our ability to successfully plan and execute arts programming. First, partnerships are central. By working with local artists and organizations such as Sarah Leach, the Northern Artists Association, and Bemidji Community Theatre, we provide high-quality instruction and experiences. Second, accessibility is a priority. Programs are intentionally kept affordable and family-friendly to reduce barriers to participation. Third, strong planning and execution are built into our operations. The Recreation Department manages promotion, registration, staffing, and facilities across many programs, ensuring reliable delivery. Fourth, programs are designed with participant engagement in mind. Each culminates in an outcome such as a performance, exhibition, or shared family experience that showcases growth and builds community pride. Finally, our proven track record across multiple art forms demonstrates reliability, adaptability, and sustainability. In conclusion, the Recreation Department has consistently shown the ability to plan, promote, and deliver meaningful arts programming. Whether through preschool music, adult visual arts, youth theatre camps, or family events, our programs provide opportunities for residents to create, perform, and connect. These efforts strengthen cultural participation in the community and highlight the Recreation Department’s capacity to continue executing high-quality arts programming in the future.

The Recreation Department has a proven record of planning and delivering accessible art programs for all ages through strong partnerships and careful execution. Examples include *Mini Musicians* (2024), a

preschool music program with Sarah Leach); *Adult Art Classes*) at the Historic Carnegie Library with the Northern Artists Association; and multi-year *Youth Theatre Camps* with Bemidji Community Theatre, each culminating in public performances. Beyond these, day camps, after-school programs, and family events integrate arts through crafts, storytelling, and performances, reaching diverse audiences. Success is built on partnerships with local artists and nonprofits, affordability to reduce barriers, and strong planning of registration, staffing, and facilities. Each program concludes with a tangible outcome—performances, photos, or exhibitions—that highlights participant growth, builds confidence, and fosters community connection. These examples demonstrate our ability to consistently deliver high-quality, inclusive arts programs

It seems like I can't do more advanced data analysis right now. Please try again later.

In the meantime, I can still create the **grant budget table** in a clean text or Word-style format that you can copy directly into your application. Here's a version you could paste:

Grant Budget – Theatre Camp, Art Camp, After-School Arts

Expenses

- Promotion & Publicity: \$1,100
- Payment of Artists – Theatre Camp: \$8,750
- Payment of Artists – Art Camp: \$3,320
- Payment of Artists – After-School Program: \$1,092
- Administrative – Custodial: \$400
- Administrative – Registration Management: \$500
- Administrative – Insurance/Licensing: —
- Art Supplies: \$896
- Theatre Supplies (posters, printing, name tags): \$350
- Equipment (scripts): \$200
- Scholarships: \$2,000
- Total Expenses: \$18,258**

Revenue

- Theatre Camp Fees: \$4,412
- Art Camp Fees: \$896
- After-School Arts Fees: \$600
- Total Revenue: \$6,108**

Budget Summary

- Total Expenses: \$18,258
- Revenue (Fees): \$6,108

- Remaining Need: \$12,150
 - Maximum Eligible (80% of Expenses): \$14,606
 - **Grant Request: \$12,150**
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Parks and Trails updates

Parks-

- **Dog Park project-** The proposed dog park within North Country measures .45 acres (see map attached). This allows us to not cut down trees, move the current trail and not have to purchase property. I am waiting to hear back from the DNR if the dog park would be eligible through the DNR Recreation Grant.

Vendor	Item	Units	Cost per	Freight	Install	Cost
218 Fence	Fencing	1065'	\$16.50	\$0.00	\$15,442.00	\$33,014.50
Dog Waste Depot	Dog bag stations	2	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$13,237.00	\$13,439.00
Most dependable	Dog waterer	1	\$3,787.00	-	\$1,850.00	\$5,637.00
Willy Goat	Shade structure	1- 30'x30'	\$10,646.00	\$2,154.00	\$9,500.00	\$22,300.00
Local plumber	Waterlines	500'	\$23.75	-	-	\$11,875.00
Local concrete co	Trail extension	10' W x 70' L	\$10,880.00	-	-	\$10,880.00

EST Total cost	\$97,145.50
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- **Splash Pad within Nymore park-** A group of community members has approached the City as a funding source to install a splash pad at Nymore park. This is the very early stages of the process. The proposed location for the splash pad would be north of the playground. There would also need to be a parking lot installed to proper support the splash pad (see map attached).
- **Solar array at City Park-** The Planning and Zoning department recently was awarded grant funding to install two solar array systems at City Park. One will help to energize the Curling Club and the other to help energize the Warming House. (see map attached)

Trails-

- **Cameron Trail Grant update-** During the process of the Environmental portion of the post award. The state determined that there needed to be an archeological survey. The survey results showed that there needs to be archeological dig survey. Considering the frozen soils, that cannot take place until early 2026.
- Proposed timeline
 - Council approval for dig survey 1/2026
 - Dig survey 4/2026

- Dig survey results 5/2026
- Trail project bids 6/2026
- Project start 7/2026
- Project completion 10/2026







