

BEMIDJI PARKS AND TRAILS COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA

Tuesday, February 10, 2026

**City Hall Conference room
317 4th Street NW
4:30 PM**

- 1) CALL MEETING TO ORDER**
- 2) AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA**
- 3) APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - a) January 13, 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) REVIEW OF PARKS AND TRAILS BY LAWS**
 - b) By Laws update/changes
- 6) PARKS AND TRAILS UPDATES**
 - c) Updates
- 7) COMMISSIONER UPDATES**
- 8) ADJOURN**
- 9) NEXT MEETING**

MINUTES
PARKS & TRAILS COMMISSION MEETING
January 13, 2026

MEMBERS PRESENT: Vicky Beckmann, Tim Faver, Kristine Bommersbach, Mike Cronin, Debra Faver, Tom Anderson

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

COUNCIL & BOARD REPRESENTATIVE: Emelie Rivera

CITY STAFF & OTHERS: Scott Schroeder and Emma Realing

CALL TO ORDER:

Bommersbach called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA:

A motion was made by Tim Faver and seconded by Debra Faver to approve the agenda with a change in the continuity of Parks and Trails in the agenda and minutes headings. The motion was withdrawn after concerns were raised about losing the Recreation portion. The motion was then passed with no amendments.

APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 14, 2025 MEETING MINUTES:

A motion was made by Cronin and seconded by Beckmann to approve the October 14th, 2025 meeting minutes. The motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

No members of the public were present to address the Commission.

Commission Resignations and Appointments:

- Bethany Wesley resigned from the Commission.
- Debra Faver was appointed to the Commission.
- Emelie Rivera was appointed as the new Council representative to the Commission.
- The Commission discussed reviewing the bylaws to ensure transparency and continuity when appointing new members.
- The process for nominating new officers was discussed, including calling names for election and voting.
- The creation of a new Secretary role was discussed, with responsibilities including taking meeting minutes.
- Cronin nominated Kristine as Chair, Tim Faver seconded this motion. Motion passed and Kristine Bommersbach is now Chair of the Parks and Trails Commission.

- Tim Faver nominated Mike Cronin as Vice Chair, Anderson seconded. Motion passed and Mike Cronin is now Vice Chair of the Parks and Trails Commission.
- Debra Faver self-nominated for Secretary. The motion passed and Debra Faver is now Secretary of the Parks and Trails Commission.

Dog Park:

- Schroeder provided an update on the Dog Park at North Country Park.
- Potential funding sources were discussed, including a DNR grant and local donations.
- The Commission discussed the need for a dog park advocate or committee to help move the project forward and assist with securing funding.

Other Parks and Trails Updates:

- Schroeder provided an update on the Cameron Park Trails. Although funding had been received, the project required an archaeological survey due to potential findings.
- It was noted that any artifacts discovered could impact grant funding.
- Schroeder discussed other 2026 CIP items, including new garbage receptacles and tennis court repairs.
- Rivera offered suggestions for collaborating with local partners, specifically artists, to engage the community in upcoming projects.

Recreation Updates:

- Realing provided updates on recreation programming, including after-school activities and the Daddy-Daughter Dance.
- The success of recent events, such as the Holiday Run Series, was discussed.
- It was noted that the Recreation Department employed two part-time staff members to assist with program implementation.
- The Recreation Department was awarded the Region 2 Arts Grant to help fund summer camps for 2026.
- Loon Country Arts' rental agreement at the Historic Carnegie Library began in November, with the organization opening for business in December. This arrangement was reported to be going well.

Commissioner Updates:

- Cronin discussed his involvement in the Holiday Run Series and noted increased participation.
- Anderson suggested using storm slash piles for community bonfires.

Meeting Schedule:

- Schroeder discussed the need to review bylaws and ordinances to determine the meeting frequency moving forward.

ADJOURNMENT:

- The next meeting is scheduled for February 10, 2026.

A motion to adjourn was made by Beckmann and seconded by Anderson at 5:42p.m. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Emma Realing
Outreach Coordinator

Propose updates and changes to the Parks and Trails Commission. (Redlined or highlighted)

- The frequency of the meetings.
 - Proposed quarterly meeting (January, April, July and October)
 - Adding the following language, I. Meetings
 - In accordance with Bemidji City Ordinance, the Commission shall meet with such frequency, as the Commission deems appropriate but at least 4 (four) times annually. An annual meeting shall be held during the first regularly scheduled meeting of the year at a place designated by the Chairperson.
 - Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson, (Vice-Chairperson, in the Chairpersons absence) or on request in writing by four (4) members, then the Chairperson shall, within at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting, notify all members and call a special meeting after receipt of the request.
 - Remove “order of business”
 - I. Meetings, c) Add January to annual meeting (to be more defined)
 - I. Meetings, d) remove location of meeting
- III. Officers and Elections
 - Add January to annual meeting (to be more defined)
- IV. Duties of Officers
 - Add, The Secretary shall keep an accurate record of attendance, minutes of all meetings, promptly distribute minutes to members within a reasonable time, and retain a file of all correspondence and related resource material concerning this Commission. The secretary shall serve as correspondent for the Board. Copies of the minutes of all meetings shall be filed with the Bemidji City Clerk. The Secretary may delegate these responsibilities to Staff.

**BY-LAWS
PARKS AND TRAILS COMMISSION**

The purpose of the Parks and Trails Commission is to serve as an advisory board. The By-laws shall be constructed to assist the committee to make meaningful recommendations to the City Council, Mayor, City Manager, or department heads.

I. Meetings

The Commission shall hold meetings regularly at least **once each month**, and shall designate time and place thereof. It shall adopt its own rules of procedure and shall keep a record of its proceedings. All meetings, records, and accounts of the Commission shall be public.

a) General parliamentary rules, as given in Robert's Rules of Order, as modified by rules and regulations of the Commission shall be observed in conducting meetings of the Commission.

b) ~~The following shall be the order of business of the Commission, but the rules of order may be suspended and any matters considered or postponed by action of the Commission:~~

- ~~1. Call to Order~~
- ~~2. Consideration of minutes of last regular meeting and of any special meetings held subsequently and their approval or amendment.~~
- ~~3. Election of Officers (annual meeting)~~
- ~~4. Old Business~~
- ~~5. New Business~~
- ~~6. Report of Commissioners~~
- ~~7. Reports from Parks & Recreation Director~~
- ~~8. Public Comments~~
- ~~9. Adjournment~~

c) The January annual meeting of the Parks and Trails Commission shall be held within three weeks after the first of each year for election of officers and such other business as is necessary.

o In accordance with Bemidji City Ordinance, the Commission shall meet with such frequency, as the Commission deems appropriate but at least 4 (four) times annually. An annual meeting shall be held during the first regularly scheduled meeting of the year at a place designated by the Chairperson.

- d) The regular meeting shall be held on the second Tuesday of each month at the hour of 4:30 p.m. in ~~the Public Works Facility Conference Room~~ or a place designated in the agenda.

Notice of all meetings shall be mailed or emailed to each member of the Commission by the secretary prior to each meeting. Meetings may be called at any time by the Chair of the Commission.

Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson, (Vice-Chairperson, in the Chairpersons absence) or on request in writing by four (4) members, then the Chairperson shall, within at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting, notify all members and call a special meeting after receipt of the request

- e) The Commission may from time to time make and designate the rules and regulations under which the Commission shall be operated. These rules shall be kept in suitable records by the Secretary of the Commission.

II. Commission Members

The Parks & Trails Commission shall consist of seven (7) members. Commission Members are appointed by the Mayor and City Council.

III. Officers and Election

At the January annual meeting, the Commission shall elect by nomination a Chair and Vice Chair to serve for one year from date of election and until their respective successors have been duly elected.

In the event of a failure for any reason to elect any of the said officers, or in case a vacancy shall occur in any of the said officers for any reason, then an election may be held at any regular or special meetings, a notice of such election having been given in the notice of the call of the meeting.

IV. Duties of Officers

The Chair of the Commission shall preside at the meeting of the Commission, and shall perform the other duties ordinarily performed by the officer. Chair may vote on any motion presented to the Commission.

The Vice Chair of the Commission, in the absence of the Chair, shall perform all the duties of the Chair of the Commission. In the absence of both the Chair and Vice Chair, the Commission shall elect a Chair pro tempore who shall perform the duties of the Chair of the Commission.

The Secretary shall keep an accurate record of attendance, minutes of all meetings, promptly distribute minutes to members within a reasonable time, and retain a file of all correspondence and related resource material concerning this Commission. The secretary shall serve as correspondent for the Board. Copies of the minutes of all meetings shall be filed with the Bemidji City Clerk. The Secretary may delegate these responsibilities to Staff.

V. Quorum

Four regular members constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, but a lesser number may adjourn from time to time.

VI. Removal of Commission Members

- a) Any vacancy in the office may be filled by the Mayor for the remainder of the unexpired term.
- b) Any appointed member of the Commission who fails to attend three (3) regular meetings in succession without notifying the Parks & Recreation Director in advance or who does not attend at least sixty (60) percent of the regularly scheduled board meetings within a twelve-month period will be considered to have automatically resigned from the Commission.

VII. Vacancies

Vacancies in said Commission occurring otherwise than by expiration of term shall be filled in the manner herein set forth for the unexpired term of the Commissioner leaving the Commission.

To aid the Mayor in selecting members for appointment, the Parks and Trails Commission may suggest qualified and interested persons for appointment for each vacancy to be filled.

VIII. Committees

Ad-hoc committees as needed shall be appointed by the Chair of the Commission and serve until their successors are appointed and qualified, or committee's work is completed. Ad-hoc committees shall be made up of Commission members and other individuals for resource and advisory purposes. It is recommended that department heads be consulted by committees.

A record of the action of each committee shall be kept by a member of said committee and shall be reported to the Commission at its next meeting for action by the Commission if the Commission so desires.

IX. Amending Process

These By-laws may be amended at any meeting of the Commission by a majority vote of the Commission, providing previous notice of the nature of any proposed amendment shall have been given at least one meeting before the action thereon shall be taken.

X. Complaints

The Commission shall promptly investigate and make report to the Council, concerning all complaints referred by such Council or Mayor to the Commission relative to the administration of the parks and recreation program.

DIVISION 6. PARKS AND TRAILS COMMISSION

Sec. 2-351. Establishment and composition.

A parks and trails commission is hereby established. The commission shall be composed of seven members who shall serve staggered three-year terms. Furthermore, each commission member must reside within the corporate limits of the City of Bemidji and hold no official position with the city.

(Code 1986, § 2.54, subd. 1; Ord. No. 22, 3rd series,, § 1, 12-3-2007)

Sec. 2-352. Powers and duties.

- (a) The parks and trails commission shall advise the council and city manager in all matters relating to parks and trails, including but not limited to the following:
- (1) Plan and develop programs and activities within or beyond the corporate city limits on property under the custody and management of the city or on other public property under the custody of another public corporation, body or board with the consent of such corporation, body or board or on private property with the consent of its owners.
 - (2) Develop schedules of hours and fees, if any, for the use of recreational trail and park facilities within the city.
 - (3) Study possible government and private foundation grants available for acquisition and development of park and trail facilities.
 - (4) Develop plans for improvement and betterment of existing facilities.
 - (5) Develop plans for acquisition of additional facilities.
 - (6) Coordinate recreational trail and park activities with other community organizations and groups.
 - (7) Promote public interest and understanding of the city's parks and trails activities.
 - (8) Meet as necessary to perform its functions and keep a public record of its resolutions, findings and determinations.
- (b) The commission shall have no authority to dictate or direct that the city manager or any of his subordinates employ or remove any city employee. The commission shall have no authority to set salaries or expend city funds.

(Code 1986, § 2.54, subd. 2)

Secs. 2-353—2-370. Reserved.

Parks and Trails updates

DNR ReLeaf grant-

Back in October the City applied for a grant to fund a City wide tree inventory, stump removal and upwards to 286 trees be planted. The City is in preliminary conversations with the DNR regarding the acceptance of the grant.

Great River Greening-

This group is out of St. Paul, MN and they use funding from state and federal grants to assist communities with tree planting and maintenance of those said trees in following years.

- 200 trees planted by June 2027
- An additional 150 trees planted by 2029
- GRG will contract watering to take place

Lets Plant Trees-

Let's Plant Trees is giving away approximately 10,000 free native tree seedlings to Minnesota residents this weekend in Bemidji, with most pre-ordered online and any remaining available on a first-come, first-served basis. Volunteers will staff a tent with signage for pick-up and also support several local community tree planting projects. The group is hosting an event on May 16-17, 7:00am-6:00pm located at the Sanford Center parking lot.

Lake BLVD discussion-

In the fall of 24', Parks and Trail staff has put efforts to cleaning up the overgrowth of ground cover within 2'-3' of the railing along the trail. There are plans in the coming months to remove a select amount of trees damaged by the storm. Per the ordinance and regulations set by the state, the protection of the shoreline, there are limitations to what can and cannot be removed. The residents along Lake BLVD have been great with passing along information when issues arise.