

City of Excelsior
Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting

MINUTES

Tuesday, November 25, 2025

106 Center Street, Excelsior, MN 55331 – Entrance located on Center Street
6:15 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Sobiech called the November 25, Parks and Recreation Commission meeting to order at 6:17 P.M.

Present: Chair Sobiech, Vice Chair Wolfe, and Commissioners, Anderson, Bolles, & Schmidt

Absent: Commissioner Smith

Also present: Public Works Director Amundsen & Parks Manager Quinn

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) October 21, 2025 Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes

Wolfe moved, Bolles seconded to approve the October 21, 2025 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting minutes. Motion carried 5/0.

3. AGENDA APPROVAL

a) November 25, 2025 Parks and Recreation Commission Agenda

Wolfe moved, Bolles seconded to approve the November 25, 2025 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting agenda.

Motion carried 5/0.

4. CITIZEN REPORTS OR COMMENTS

None

5. NEW BUSINESS

a) End of Season Meeting with Community Gardeners

The Commission conducted the end of the season meeting with the garden plot renters that occurs annually. General comments and feedback include:

- Wanting more clarity on the soil testing results
- Requesting the city to briefly explain soil testing results in spring communications to garden plot renters
- The need for a deposit to be taken to be able to rent a plot
- Improving follow through with end of season garden clean out penalties
- A community garden committee should be formed to help improve the garden and communications with the city and gardeners

Manager Quinn discussed a new maintenance tactic implemented in the gardens this season to help improve nuisance plots which involved covering unusable plots with plastic and mulch to reduce weed presence. Manager Quinn discussed the concept of potentially installing a shade structure at Studer Park on an existing concrete slab and footings. Manager Quinn shared examples and discussed the proper way to clean out garden plots at the end of the season. Manager Quinn shared an excerpt from the Community Garden Application detailing plot clean out requirements and penalties for plot renters not following the requirements.

The Commission discussed amending the Community Garden Application to allow for raised beds and cages to be left on site.

The Commission discussed the gardeners potentially organizing a community garden clean-up day to clean up abandoned plots. The Commission discussed enforcement measures for plots which go unmaintained such as following through with penalizing renters and taking a deposit that is only returned if end of season maintenance is completed. The Commission discussed how unrefunded deposits could be put towards future maintenance of the gardens.

Director Amundsen discussed that the garden soil test results met the standards for the intended recreational use of the community gardens. Director Amundsen discussed that the community gardens and potential Studer Park uses will be discussed at a future City Council work session.

The Commission discussed other potential ways to improve the community gardens such as installing more raised beds to help with poorly drained plots and having smaller plots that are easier to maintain.

The Commission discussed how if a garden committee is formed, that committee leadership will be important to better form a more collective effort in improving the gardens.

6. Communications and Reports

a) City Council and Park Project Updates – Information only

Director Amundsen and Manager Quinn detailed the scope of the mini master plan and playground RFP. Director Amundsen provided an update on the ballfield project and the remaining work to be completed in the spring. The Commission discussed some expressed community concerns on the third base dugout roof and the views it obstructs. The Commission discussed both the positives and the negatives of having a dugout roof.

b) Flagpole in The Commons

Chair Sobiech and Manager Quinn provided an update that the new installation of a flagpole in The Commons and The Legion donation was approved by City Council.

c) Oak Hill Cemetery Committee

Director Amundsen and Manager Quinn detailed the scope and intent of the Oak Hill Cemetery historical designation and landscape treatment plan. Manager Quinn confirmed that Commissioners Anderson and Schmidt will be on the Cemetery Committee.

d) October Financials

No comments

e) City Council Liaison Feedback

Chair Sobiech discussed updates from Council Member Vogel on Studer Park and Cinema in The Commons. Chair Sobiech discussed that projects at Studer Park are currently tabled for the time being and that City Council would like the Parks and Recreation Commission to find funding for future Cinema in the Commons events.

Commissioner Anderson discussed how the So-Hi Community Park Organization thought having a PG-13 movie in The Commons would be a good idea.

Manager Quinn discussed how the City of Shorewood Parks and Recreation department would like to collaborate on cross promotional efforts for Shorewood's Movie in the Park event.

f) Winter Programming in The Commons – Excelsior Saunas Update

Manager Quinn discussed that Excelsior Saunas plans to present at the December 1st City Council meeting.

7. Miscellaneous/Commissioner's Comments

The Commission discussed how the December 9th meeting will be the end of season docks meeting.

8. Adjournment

Schmidt moved, Bolles seconded to adjourn the November 25, 2025 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting at 7:34PM. Motion carried 5/0.

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin Quinn, Parks Manager