



ST. CHARLES PARK DISTRICT BOARD MEETING

Pottawatomie Community Center

July 28, 2026 – 6:30 P.M.

MINUTES

Call to Order

The St. Charles Park District Board met for a Regular Meeting at Pottawatomie Community Center on July 28, 2026. At 6:30 p.m., President Peggy McCarthy called the meeting to order.

Roll Call

Administrative Assistant Jenny Santos called the roll.

Commissioners present: Bob Carne, Jim Cooke, Karrsten Goettel, Peggy McCarthy, Craig Newman and Bob Thomson

Commissioners absent: Steve Ward

Administrative staff present: Director of Parks & Recreation Holly Cabel, Superintendent of Parks & Planning Laura Rudow, Superintendent of Recreation Mike Kies, Superintendent of Finance and Administration Ashlee Wallace, Pottawatomie Golf Course Manager & PGA Pro Ron Skubisz, Public Relations and Marketing Manager Erika Combs and Administrative Assistant Jenny Santos

Other staff present: Sponsorship & Partnership Supervisor Carina Graham

Guests present:

Consent Agenda

Mr. Cooke moved and Mr. Newman seconded that the St. Charles Park District Board of Commissioners approve the Consent Agenda items, including the following:

- Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting on July 14, 2026
- Approval of Bills as of June 30, 2026

Account	Amount
CORPORATE FUND	\$ 359,316.56
RECREATION FUND	\$ 94,772.72
LIABILITY INSURANCE	\$ 226,159.83
SPECIAL RECREATION	\$ 18,780.56
DEBT SERVICE FUND	\$ 127,816.01
REVENUE FACILITIES	\$ 147,522.91
NORRIS REC CENTER	\$ 305,405.74
SPORTSPLEX	\$ 11,110.44
CAPITAL	\$ 346,931.94
Total	\$ 1,637,816.71

- Approval of Cash and Investment Report as of June 30, 2026
- Approval of Revenue Expense Reports as of June 30, 2026

A roll call vote was taken. Aye: Carne, Cooke, Goettel, Newman, Thomson and McCarthy. Nay: none. The motion carried.

Public Appearances

None.

Administration and Finance

Sponsorship & Partnership Mid-Year Report

Sponsorship & Partnership Supervisor Carina Graham reviewed partnerships developed and sponsorships received in the first half of 2026. The District has nine new sponsors this year. Donations are down from last year, but overall, the revenue and in-kind donations are comparable to the same period in 2025. Ms. Graham is reviewing how to improve the banner/advertising program to solicit businesses who might not have the staff to work at special events but would like to advertise their business. In response to questions from the Commissioners, Ms. Graham: shared that money from the dog park sponsors is directed to upkeep of amenities at the dog parks; she works with businesses to tailor our sponsorship opportunities to meet their advertising needs; and she collects testimonials from sponsors about the impact their sponsorships had on their business. The Commissioners thanked her for her report.

Carina Graham left the meeting at 6:40 pm.

FY 2026 Mid-Year Financial Report

Superintendent of Finance & Administration Ashlee Wallace presented the 2026 Mid-Year Financial Report. She summarized the revenues and expenses as of June 30, 2026 for each fund and department in comparison to the previous year's first two quarters. Operating revenues increased 2.1% and are at 54% of budget, while operating expenses increased 5.6% and are at 38% of budget. The biggest impact on revenue facilities thus far has been the various weather conditions and the average temperature being 10 degrees less in June 2026 than in June 2025.

Public Relations and Marketing Manager Erika Combs provided mid-year analytics of the District's website and social media platforms for the first six months of 2026. The District's website has 84,000 active users and had 3 spikes in views over 7,000 3 times this year. The District's social media channels have had an increase of 5.7% in followers. The District's Facebook page had 3 spikes in views over 75,000 this year, and its Instagram account had 3 spikes in views over 5,000 this year. Boosted campaigns have helped reach viewers. The Commissioners asked about capability of pushing out content to specific groups of users and about redesigning the website.

Pottawatomie Campus Improvements Financing Options

Ms. Wallace presented options for financing the proposed Pottawatomie Campus improvements. She explained the District's total debt capacity, current applicable debt and how a referendum of \$36 million would not increase overall taxes. Ms. Wallace shared the budget for the total proposed improvements and broke the projects down into different scenarios and corresponding funding options. The first option, no matter the project cost, would be to use committed land acquisition fund balance (\$2,020,654) and referendum the rest. The second, third and fourth options would be to use committed fund balance and issue \$5, \$10 or \$15 million in Alternative Revenue Source (ARS) bonds.

The Commissioners discussed the pros and cons of going for a referendum in spring 2027 versus fall 2028 and the impact funding through ARS bonds could have on other capital projects and maintenance needs over the next 15-20 years. Staff will bring back options for project selections with corresponding suggested funding that also shows forecasted impact on annual capital spending.

Proposed Name for Water Wall Sculpture

Director Cabel shared the name *Cascade on the Fox* was chosen for the water wall sculpture to be installed this fall in Mt. St. Mary Park through an online poll of park users. This online poll presented a list of six names from which 398 community members voted for their favorite.

Mr. Thomson moved and Mr. Newman seconded that the St. Charles Park District Board of Commissioners approve the name Cascade on the Fox for the new water wall sculpture in Mt. St. Mary Park. A voice vote was taken. Unanimous aye votes were cast and the motion carried.

Letter of Acknowledgement to the City of St. Charles

Director Cabel reviewed the letter of acknowledgement with the Commissioners and asked for feedback. Commissioners agreed that, at minimum, a Memo of Understanding or draft agreement that defines the responsibility of both parties would be the next step. Director Cabel also included City's next step of educating the City Council at their August 3rd meeting on certain amenities.

Mr. Thomson moved and Mr. Goettel seconded that the St. Charles Park District Board of Commissioners approve the letter of acknowledgement for staff to send to the City of St. Charles. A voice vote was taken. Unanimous aye votes were cast and the motion carried.

Recreation

Monthly Usage Reports

Superintendent of Recreation reviewed the June usage report for River View Miniature Golf, Paddlewheel Riverboats, Swanson Pool and Otter Cove Aquatic Park. As stated earlier in the meeting, the revenue facilities have been impacted by the lower-than-normal temperatures at the beginning of the season, high winds, flooding and then 100+ heat index at the end of June. Despite this, some highlights on the riverboats are the average number of passengers per cruise is up by 5 people, there were 6 specialty cruises and 16 private charters. Mr. Kies thanked the District's mechanics who kept the boats running without issue. At both aquatic facilities, senior pass sales are up 30% and lap swimming only admissions are up 24%. Mr. Kies recognized both facilities for recently receiving a five-star audit from Star Guard.

Bob Carne left the meeting at 7:48 pm.

Parks, Planning, and Facilities

2026-07-01 Resolution for 2026 OSLAD Grant Application

Superintendent of Parks and Planning Laura Rudow said that the resolution is part of the OSLAD grant application process and shows the IDNR that the District is committed to matching the awarded funds for the Cambridge Park renovations.

Mr. Thomson moved and Mr. Newman seconded that the St. Charles Park District Board of Commissioners approve Resolution 2026-07-01. A voice vote was taken. Unanimous aye votes were cast and the motion carried.

Monthly Usage Report

Pottawatomie Golf Course Manager & PGA Golf Pro Ron Skubisz reviewed the June usage report. The golf course was affected by the weather this spring, too, as flooding in April meant the course had to be reconfigured much of the month; May was a good month for the course and June had 18 days where rain was an issue. However, the total rounds played year-to-date is only 382 less than the same period in 2025. Cart rentals are 47 higher than five-year average. Mr. Skubisz addressed the decline of junior pass sales, attributing it to the challenge a group of friends have in just walking on to the course to play; golf being a tough sport that takes lots of patience and practice; and the variety of choices kids have to spend their time. He shared that the high school coaches are struggling to find players. Mr. Skubisz ended his report with the positive news that the 60% of the women's league players are using the new orange tees.

Requests for Use

Mr. Newman moved and Mr. Goettel seconded that the St. Charles Park District Board of Commissioners approve the request for use of Baker Community Center by Random Acts Matter for the purpose of hosting a gingerbread contest on Sunday, December 6, 2026. A voice vote was taken. Unanimous aye votes were cast and the motion carried.

Special Reports

Fox Valley Special Recreation Association

Mr. Thomson said this is the last week of FVSRA camp and that the Foundation is looking for a new coordinator.

St. Charles History Museum

No report.

St. Charles Park Foundation

Ms. Cabel reminded the Commissioners that the Night on the Fox fundraiser is this Friday evening and that there are a few more spots on the 6 pm cruise.

St. Charles Arts Council

Ms. Cabel reported that the Arts Council is preparing for the upcoming Plein Air event and fundraiser that will be held August 17-23 during which 65 artists will be painting in Pottawatomie Park and Mt St Mary Park, as well as hosting the open house at Baker Community Center.

St. Charles Business Alliance

No report.

St. Charles Housing Commission

No report.

River Corridor Foundation

Ms. McCarthy said the RCF is working on its mission and a vision for financing through legacy planning.

Baker Community Center

No report.

Correspondence

Ms. Cabel shared that a skate park user wrote in to ask why the concept plans for the skate park posted at East Side Sports Complex are different than what he believed to be the plan the community said they wanted. Ms. Rudow called the user and resolved the issue by sharing that the plans posted were the original concept plan and not what is actually being installed.

Director's Report

October 21st will be the Capital Workshop from 12-3 pm at Hickory Knolls Discovery Center. Election packets will be available August 18 and petitions can be circulated beginning August 25. 233 signatures are required this year.

Commissioner Comments

Jim Cooke: No comments.

Karrsten Goettel: No comments.

Craig Newman: Mr. Newman took his daughter to a birthday party at Otter Cove and was very impressed with the facility and the staff. He witnessed a lifeguard react quickly to a patron's need. He shared that two of the parents in the group said how lucky they felt to have access to Otter Cove and didn't know what they would do without the facility.

Bob Thomson: Mr. Thomson shared the feedback from disc golfers that they like the new course at Prairieview Pointe Park but are losing lots of discs. Ms. Rudow shared that staff spent almost three days last week mowing to widen the fairways. Mr. Thomson gave kudos to the lifeguards who are responding to swimmers in distress, which shows how good their training is. He asked if they are recognized for their actions and Mr. Kies said they are.

Peggy McCarthy: Ms. McCarthy said she asked a little neighbor of hers if he was excited about summer, to which he responded he wasn't because he didn't have much to do. She said that his spirits lifted once he attended summer camp at Pottawatomie!

Executive Session

Mr. Thomson moved and Mr. Newman seconded that the St. Charles Park District Board of Commissioners move into a closed meeting for the purpose of considering the following subject, per the Open Meetings Act, 5 ILCS 120/2: Section 2(c)(1) discussion of the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee to determine its validity.

A roll call vote was taken. Aye: Cooke, Goettel, Newman, Thomson and McCarthy. Nay: none. The motion carried.

President McCarthy moved the meeting into executive session at 8:14 pm.

Erika Combs, Mike Kies, Laura Rudow, Jenny Santos, Ron Skubisz and Ashlee Wallace left executive session at 8:14 pm.

The meeting returned to open session at 8:21 pm.

Adjournment of Meeting

Mr. Newman moved and Mr. Cooke seconded that the St. Charles Park District Board of Commissioners adjourn. A voice vote was taken. Unanimous aye votes were cast; therefore, President McCarthy adjourned the meeting at 8:21 pm.


Secretary

Date Approved: August 11, 2026