

SUPERINTENDENT'S AUGUST 2024 REPORT

COMMUNICATIONS TO BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

Park Superintendent's Monthly Report Summary

This month's report is a little shorter than normal given the original plan of a break from a normal meeting in August. We will be back on the normal schedule with a presentation to the Board in September. The month of July was a busy one for Parks as we celebrated National Parks and Recreation month and the 130th anniversary of our parks system. The Parks Foundation announced its establishment of a Parks for All Trust that is modeled after the Olin Trust, which still funds the parks system today 100 years after its establishment. It is exciting to have a partnership with MPF that is focused on long-term financial sustainability for our amazing parks system. The future of great public parks is partnerships and our relationships with the Parks Foundation, Olbrich Botanical Society, and Lakeway Partners is critical to us meeting our mission.

Future Commission Items

- 2025 Budget – We will continue to provide updates throughout the budget process. This will likely include an update to the BPC in October.
- Olin Houses – We will be working on a management plan for the Olin Houses as we acquire them. We own three of the houses at this point and would like to have a management strategy in place moving forward. We anticipate buying more of these and it would be good to begin developing the plan for holding strategy. We are hopeful to have a plan in place by the Fall.
- Parks Division Work Plan / Roadmap – Staff will present the Division's roadmap to the Board this Fall. The current plan is to have it on the October agenda. The work plan provides an overview of significant change initiatives that the Division is undertaking and/or working on in 2024. The roadmap elements each have an assigned manager who are leading the work associated with that element.
- Fees and Charges – Staff are beginning to work on the fee schedules for next year and will be beginning the formal process with Facilities Programs and Fees over the next two months. The BPC will begin to see fees in October.

Personnel Updates

Promotions/Hires:

- Adam Fink was promoted from Parks Maintenance Worker to West Parks Operations Leadworker. He started his new position July 21, 2024.
- Hannah Shipley was promoted from Public Works Laborer with the Streets Division to Parks Maintenance Worker in West Parks, effective July 22, 2024.
- Becky Schesny was promoted from Program Assistant 1 in the Community Development Division to the Parks Division's Payroll/HR Specialist position. She will begin her new position on August 5, 2024.

Section Reports

Parks Operations Conservation:

- Cleared downed trees and mowed and trimmed trails.
- Repaired trail at Owen where large tree had uprooted leaving a crater in the trail.
- Performed invasive species control including sprayed reed canary grass, bird's foot trefoil, and crown vetch. Mowed, pulled, or dug Canada thistle, Himalayan pokeweed, Japanese hedge parsley, sweet clover, and wild parsnip.
- Volunteers continued daily welfare checks on goats at Door Creek, Elver, Prairie Ridge, and Turville.

Construction:

- Completed the installation of a new playground at Richmond Hills Park.
- Continued work on the disc golf improvements at Elver Park.
- Installed a sandbox at Zook Park.
- Began construction of the new nature play area at Olbrich Park.

Facilities

- Replaced Warner softball bathrooms roof.
- A bridge was reconstructed for Olbrich Gardens that was in poor shape. It was completely rebuilt and made to be more robust than it was previously.
- Flooding issues at the Olin Park Offices were addressed and the sump pump system is working properly once again.
- Fire alarm and Sprinkler systems were inspected at Goodman Maintenance, Highland Manor, and the Olin Park Offices.

General Parks:

- Prepare parks for public events such as La Fete de Marquette, Opera in the Park and Disability Pride Fest.
- Performed summer natural area mowing and invasive control.
- Continued storm and water damage from May storm and heavy summer rains.
- Prepared parks for Fourth of July festivities and performed post-holiday cleanup. an
- Continue with monthly volunteer workdays

Mall Concourse:

- Continued summer event support with Concerts on the Square, Art Fair On and Off the Square, Mad Lit Concert series, and Peace Park events.
- Continued sidewalk power washing program, over ½ of the Square and side streets are now complete
- Maintaining and watering the summer annual planter program
- Continued summer maintenance including bus shelter power washing, mowing, weeding and overseeding lawns where needed.