

**SUPERINTENDENT'S MAY 2025 REPORT**  
**COMMUNICATIONS TO BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS**  
**Park Superintendent's Monthly Report Summary**

This month, the Parks Division has been keeping focus on the highest priorities as Eric has officially transitioned to Metro as Interim General Manager in early May. Spring also marks a time of growth and change in our park system, as leaves begin to grow, and mowing begins in earnest. Most of seasonal hires have been completed, and the Park Operations teams continue to work to open all facilities for the summer months. Park usage is increasing daily as the weather warms, reinforcing the importance of the work that the Parks team does. The Parks team takes great pride in being a big part of creating and maintaining spaces where so many people and families get to connect with nature and the outdoors.

A groundbreaking ceremony for the Imagination Center at Reindahl Park was held on Thursday, May 8. This project is truly a unique collaboration between the Parks Division and the Madison Public Library, as it will be the first library to be co-located in a park with a year-round shelter. Excitement is growing as the project progresses, as it will bring benefits to the surrounding community and make a well-used park even more welcoming to residents. Having a year-round shelter next to a library will open up opportunities for collaboration and programming in the space when it is not being used for public rentals and activities. The shelter is expected to be in high demand, year-round, for a wide variety of events, from birthdays and weddings to meetings and conferences. This has truly been a TeamCity effort with staff from Engineering, Library and Parks continuing to bring the project to fruition.

The first week of May was the City's Public Service Recognition week, an opportunity to say thank you and recognize the important contributions of the Parks Division's teams. Parks staff do an incredible amount of varied work serving the public, making Madison one of the best places in the country to live. We are grateful for each and every one of our staff who spend their time, talent and energy providing top-notch public service to our community.

May is also time for the annual Picnic in the Park, which will be held at Westmorland Park on May 17. This is another great opportunity to support Madison Parks!

Future Commission Items

- POSP – Long Range Planning Subcommittee has begun the full content review, with anticipated completion mid-summer following final public engagement. The goal is to have the adoption process occur in the Fall.
- The following items to the Commission over the next year:
  - o Pay to Park in Parks Pilot
  - o Olin Houses
  - o Marshall Houses
  - o Fall Work Plan Update
  - o Farm Leases

## Personnel Updates

### Promotions/Hires:

Ayanna Beckett will transfer from Engineering to be a Parks Worker in the Conservation section. Ayanna's first day will be April 28, 2025.

Steve Dray, Lead Ranger, who most recently served as the Interim Park Ranger Supervisor, was promoted to Park Ranger Supervisor. Steve officially began his new position on April 28, 2025.

### Departures:

Dominic Stenson, a Facility Maintenance Worker, transferred to Monona Terrace on April 14, 2025.

Dennis Grumke retired from his position as Park Maintenance Worker in East Parks. Dennis worked for Parks for 35 years.

## **Section Updates**

### **Planning and Development-** Adam Kaniewski

- The Planning and Development Section continues to fulfill ongoing, time-sensitive tasks with limited staff. As of April 14, three of four Landscape Architect positions were vacant. Accepted offers have been received to fill the three vacant positions. The new staff members are expected to come on board between mid-May and early June. In addition, the team will be adding an intern through the AASPIRE program for the summer. Staff capacity will continue to be limited while new staff members are trained.
- Through April of this year, the Planning and Development team has provided approximately 80 reviews of private development proposals. Proposals are reviewed for any existing park impacts, potential park land dedication, and assessment of park impact fees for new residential development.
- The Madison LakeWay project continues in the Design Development phase. A public input meeting for the Design Development phase is expected to be held in late June.
- The new shelter buildings at Country Grove Park and Tenney Park Beach are wrapping up construction and will be available for reservations starting in June.
- Bids were received for the Rennebohm Park East Tennis Courts project. Staff is recommending award of the contract to Parisi Construction for \$554,034.29. Construction is scheduled to be complete in the Fall of 2025.
- Bids were received for the 2025 Sport Court Resurfacings project. Staff is recommending award of the contract to Poblocki Paving Corporation for \$140,161.84. Construction is scheduled to be complete by the end of summer of 2025.
- Construction of the Rennebohm Sprayground project is now underway, with an expected completion date of July 2.
- Planning and Development staff held a public meeting on April 23 for the re-construction of the access drive and parking lot at Hoyt Park. The design includes accessibilities improvements and enhanced pedestrian facilities. The project is currently anticipated to be constructed in 2026.

- A new basketball court at Galaxy Park is under construction by Parks Construction staff. Planning and Development staff provided the design and have been coordinating the work.
- The return of warmer temperatures brings an influx of inquiries from the public as residents begin to make greater use of our park spaces. Staff do their best to respond to inquiries in a timely fashion. Common inquiries include requests for refreshed striping of courts, new memorial benches, and questions about the future plans for parks.

## **Community Services – Terrence Thompson**

### **Community Events (Kelly Post)**

- This spring, the Community Events team has been very busy responding to the current political climate, coordinating with city agencies and partners to support the safe facilitation of spontaneous and planned protests, rallies, and marches.
- In the next 4-5 months, the Community Event team will permit hundreds of annual and new special events in the City of Madison, guiding organizers on location selection, permitting requirements, and stakeholder coordination to support successful events with minimal community disruption.
- The Carts in Parks program is gearing up for another season of supporting local microbusinesses in Madison's vibrant food cart community. We continue to offer daily vending opportunities in Madison Parks and actively connect food vendors with special event opportunities throughout the city.

### **Parks Alive (Debra Alleyne)**

#### **Volunteer Software**

- City of Madison Neighborhood Resource Team (NRT) participants can now sign up for shifts using the Parks Volunteer software, which the Parks Volunteer Coordinator manages. This software includes several useful features, such as confirmation emails and reminders for staff who have signed up. If an NRT member cancels, the spot will become available for others, and if necessary, we can open the opportunity to the public if the NRT is unable to staff the event.

#### **Parks Alive Partner Meetings**

- Four informational sessions were held for both existing partners and interested parties to learn more about the origins of Parks Alive and the concepts behind its programming. We gained 2 new partners from these meetings who will host activities at this year's events. Additional sessions will be held in May for partners who could not attend.

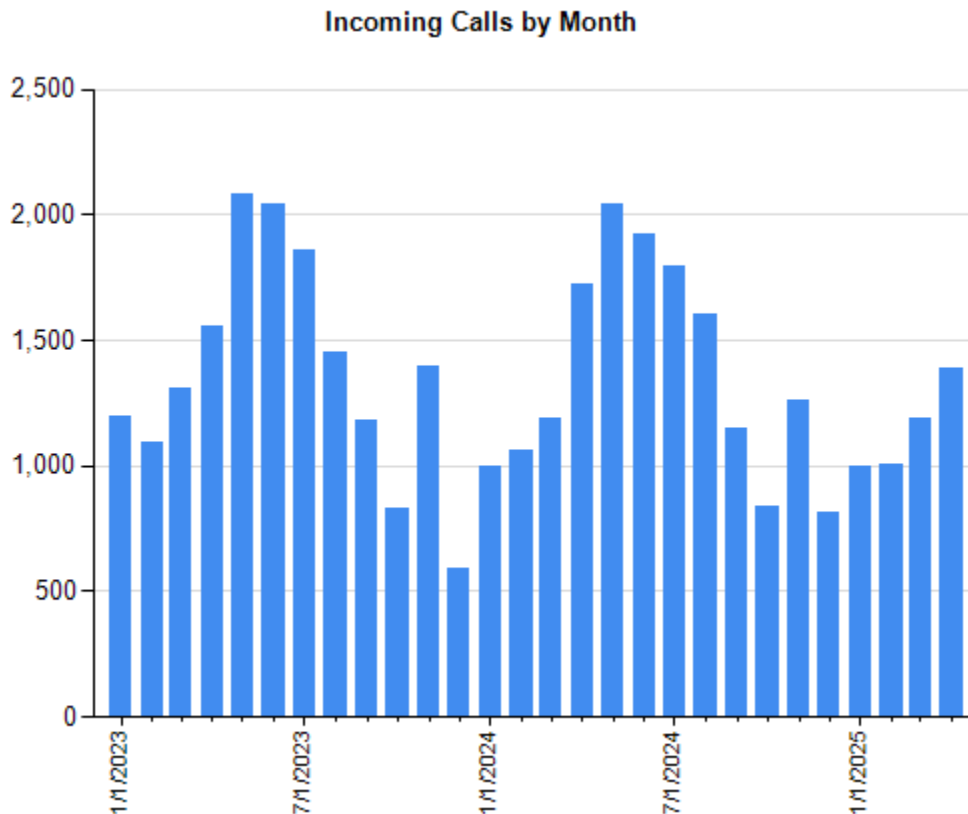
### **Customer Service (Joanne Austin)**

#### **Watercraft Storage**

- Parks currently offers 441 storage spaces for canoes, kayaks, and paddleboards at 17 different parks along three lakes. Currently, 362 of these spaces have already been filled for 2025. The old racks at James Madison Park have been replaced, allowing existing storage customers to move their watercraft to these new racks. We are also in the process of replacing some racks at Tenney Park.

#### **Incoming Call Summary**

- Spring has arrived, and shelter and athletic reservations are underway! This means our phones are ringing non-stop most days, and we expect this to continue into late summer. Mark your calendars, as we anticipate May will again be our busiest month for call intake.



## **Recreation Services & Aquatics (Shane Martin)**

### **Aquatics**

- Preparations for the upcoming Aquatics season are underway. We will be fully staffed this summer and do not anticipate any shortages of lifeguards or attendants.
- Starting May 2, we will host Aquatic events every weekend until Goodman Pool opens on Thursday, June 12, for its 19th season. The beaches and splash pads are scheduled to open on Saturday, May 24, weather permitting.
- John Hayes from Goodman Jewelers will proudly sponsor the first 500 admissions to Goodman Pool again this year.

### **Events**

- Preparations are underway for Ride the Drive, scheduled for Sunday, August 10. We will be showing 30 movies throughout the summer. Additionally, various Learn To Series events will occur in collaboration with our community partners over the summer.

## **Rangers & Volunteers**

### **Rangers (Steve Dray)**

#### **Recruitment**

- The Hybrid Ranger/Parking Enforcement position was open from April 17<sup>th</sup>-April 27<sup>th</sup>. We expect a large applicant pool and will conduct interviews in early May.

## **Enforcement Contacts**

- Rangers have made 18 enforcement contacts, resulting in 13 warnings, 3 citations, and 2 bans. Additionally, 14 parking tickets have been issued so far in April.

## **Lake Access**

- With the boat launch piers now in place, the lakes have become busy on warm, sunny days. There has also been an increase in contractors using the launches to work on piers and waterfront properties.

## **Disc Golf**

Rangers and Volunteer Coordinator, John Weichelt coordinated another spring clean-up of the Disc Golf courses. Clean-up events were held at Elver Park on April 5 and at Heistand Park on April 12. The Heistand Disc Golf Course opened on April 24. Elver is scheduled to open in early May. Special thanks to the Operations staff for helping the Rangers prepare the courses and make them more durable and beautiful.



## **Volunteers (John Weichelt)**

### **City of Madison Volunteer Website (Get Connected)**

- The City of Madison Volunteer Website exceeded our expectations, with 686 registered volunteers within two months. Since its launch, over 140 different volunteer opportunities have been posted.
- The Earth Day challenge served as the first major test for the new system designed for mass volunteer coordination, resulting in 406 volunteers registered for the event on April 26, 2025.
- Ongoing developments include creating training resources, certification tracking, user group formation, and automated communications.
- Madison Parks is the only city entity represented on the platform, but plans are in place to expand to Olbrich Gardens, Monona Terrace, and the Senior Center. The Volunteer Coordinator from Madison Parks and the Emergency Management Coordinator from the Fire Department recently held an initial meeting to discuss how the volunteer website might be utilized in emergencies that require volunteer support, such as disaster recovery and other potential roles for fire department volunteers.

## Volunteer Events & Participation

### Earth Day/Week/Month

- We held 12 separate group cleanup events during Earth Week, engaging over 400 volunteers. Additionally, on April 26, another 406 volunteers participated across 60 park sites.
- We implemented a new streamlined route system that improved efficiency and event oversight. The Disc Golf Course cleanups at Elver and Hiestand attracted over 100 volunteers. On April 5, our Dog Park Cleanups saw 115 volunteers who cleaned six dog parks.
- Our new ongoing event, Monthly Trash Removal at Elver, had a fantastic turnout of 30 volunteers in early April. Finally, the Bird & Nature Festival, held on Sunday, April 27, recorded a turnout of 1,200 attendees, with 20 volunteers assisting.

### Warner Park Community Recreation Center (Zach Watson)

- The KNOW Program partnership with the Madison Parks Foundation welcomed over 100 youth and families to our April 11 Family Fun Night.
- The WPCRC Expansion Youth Art Project, led by UW Professor Faisal Abdu'Allah, has successfully conducted 3 out of 10 sessions at the WPCRC. This group consists of 15 middle and high school student artists from the Madison Metropolitan School District and meets every Wednesday from 4:30 PM to 6:30 PM.
- The WPCRC Expansion Project has nearly completed the roof installation. We anticipate that all exterior construction of the new building will be finished by the end of May 2025.

## Olbrich Botanical Gardens

- **Barred Owls** – This spring, two barred owls have made Olbrich Botanical Gardens their home. They are frequently heard and seen in the gardens; however, no nest has been found yet. They typically are seen in the large white pines found by the Autumn Garden shed.
- **School Partnership** – Olbrich Botanical Gardens became a partner with Metro Shelter School through the Madison Public Schools Foundation's Adopt-a-School program. Olbrich staff will provide educational materials and plants for staff and students from the Metro Shelter School to use in their classes. In addition, since the Metro Shelter School is within walking distance of Olbrich Botanical Gardens, they can visit as often as they would like.
- **Alder Brunch** – On April 15, 2025, Olbrich Botanical Gardens was the host location for the Alder brunch. All leaving, new, and current Alders from the Madison Common Council gathered along with friends and family.

