



**AGENDA OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF
THE PARKS AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**CITY OF BIRCHWOOD VILLAGE
WASHINGTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA
AUGUST 18, 2026
6:30 P.M.**

Committee Members

Zach Michalk, Chair
Alan Mitchell, Secretary
Amy Hulett, Member
Bridget Sperl, Council Liaison
Kathy Weier, Council Liaison
Margaret Ford, Member
Mary Sue Simmons, Member

CALL TO ORDER

APPROVE AGENDA

OPEN PUBLIC FORUM

APPROVE MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

A. June 16, 2026 Meeting Minutes (no meeting in July 2026)* (pages 2-5)

COMMITTEE BUSINESS - MEETING AGENDA

A. Regular Agenda Items

- A. Discussion on Addressing Birch Tree Maintenance at Hockey Rink
- B. Proposal to repaint Center of Hockey Rink* (Page 6)
- C. Birchwood Memorial Donation Program
- D. Discussion on Updates to Elm Beach Clean Water Plan* (Page 7)
- E. Updates on Tighe-Schmitz Park Project
- F. 2026 Action Plan Review

- A. Table 1 - Action Plan* (pages 8-9)
- B. Table 2 - Budget Summary* (pages 10-11)
- C. Table 3 - Ongoing Projects* (page 12-13)

B. Confirm next month's meeting and identify agenda topics

ATTACHMENTS

ADJOURN

* denotes an attachment in the agenda packet

PARKS AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE
MEETING June 16, 2026
MINUTES

The June 16, 2026, meeting of the Parks and Natural Resources Committee was called to order in city hall at 6:32 p.m. by Chair Zac Michalk

Attendees: Committee Members Zac Michalk, Mary Sue Simmons, Amy Hulett, and Alan Mitchell. Council members Bridget Sperl and Kathy Weier. Also present were Birchwood residents Brian Kraft, Ellen Maas, Len Pratt, and Barton Winter and Ashley Petel with the Washington Conservation District .

Agenda. The draft agenda was approved unanimously.

Public Forum. Barton Winter asked if anybody had looked at the trees near the hockey rink that he had requested be removed or trimmed. Sperl responded that she had looked at the trees and that they were healthy and would not be taken down but they might be trimmed. Michalk also stated that he had looked at the trees and agreed with Sperl. Winter asked if anybody else on the Committee was going to look at the trees and the response was that no decision in that regard would be made as part of the Public Forum.

Winter then stated that he would like the City to take a look at trees on the city easement near his property to see if they might be taken down. Sperl answered that the City had prepared a list of trees to be taken down and the City would not be considering additional trees at this time. She also added that the City had a grant to take down dead trees in Polly's Park but that the grant money would not be available until winter 2027.

Winter advised the Committee that he had not obtained an estimate for the cost to paint the crown of the hockey rink. Weier said that if he could get an estimate to the City by next month, the matter could come to the Council for consideration at its August meeting

Minutes. The draft May 21 Minutes were approved unanimously.

Elm Beach Clean Water Plan. Simmons introduced Ashley Petel with the Washington Conservation District who would be taking Lori Tella's place with regard to this project. Simmons stated that she had not had a chance to talk to the neighbors adjacent to Elm Beach and explained that any work by them on their property might be eligible for a grant covering 50% of the cost. Simmons added that no work would occur on their property unless the owners elected to do so.

Maas said that their property along the easement was filled with vegetation and did not contribute to runoff onto the city's property.

Petel said that the Washington Conservation District people were on the site on Friday (June 12) to construct a survey of the easement. She said that the District was looking at a holistic approach to addressing water quality and the easement was just one of many projects that might happen. She added that the District was ready to move to the design stage for Elm Beach and was exploring funding options. Petel clarified that any plans by the adjacent owners would be considered separate projects. She also confirmed that she had replaced Lori Tella and that Rebecca Nestingen, also with the Washington Conservation District, would be the engineer.

Councilwoman Sperl asked who would pay the design costs. Petel said the District usually pays those costs. Petel added that with regard to projects on private property by a landowner, grants are available for half the cost of the project up to \$5000, and smaller projects might also be grant eligible. Councilwoman Weier asked if the City's share of its costs had to be actual expenses or could be covered by volunteer time. Petel said she would check on that and report back.

Pratt inquired whether it was too late to look at a larger area than just Elm Beach to help control runoff. Petel described that the Rice Creek Watershed District did offer grant funding for such broader work. Kraft added that when there is a heavy rain, stormwater is roaring down from nearby areas to the easement and that he had video of such an event. Pratt said that it was important to know where the water is coming from in order to figure out how to cut the flow. Kraft added that control of runoff at the street level was also needed. Pratt asked if the possibility of covering up the open pipe had been explored and emphasized that maintenance of any project was crucial. Simmons stated that she agreed and that maintenance is an important requirement of any grant that might be awarded. Pratt pointed to a map of the easement and asked a number of questions about what was shown and made suggestions for actions that might be taken to improve the easement and manage the flow. (Note: there are two maps that have been prepared for Elm Beach by the Washington Conservation District and the Rice Creek Watershed District, one dated 5/11/26 that was included in the May agenda packet, highlighting the city property, and one dated 5/26/26 that was in the June agenda packet and which more clearly identifies the Kraft and Pratt/Maas property adjacent to the Beach, but the maps are essentially the same.) Mitchell asked Petel to clarify what the timeframe was for undertaking any particular project on the easement. Petel

answered that work might possibly begin this fall but the timing is yet to be determined. At this point the discussion of the Elm Beach project concluded, and Kraft, Pratt, and Maas left the meeting.

Tighe-Schmitz Project. The Committee discussed the status of the Tighe-Schmitz Project. At the request of Council members Weier and Sperl, the Committee decided to attend the July Council meeting and provide an oral report on the status of the work, which is scheduled to begin in July.

Weier added that the City was trying to map the entire storm sewer system in the city and that the work should be completed soon

Picnic Tables at Tighe-Schmitz Pavilion. Michalk stated that the mayor had asked the Parks Committee to consider whether the picnic tables in Tighe-Schmitz Park should be replaced. The Committee discussed the fact that the tables at the Park are old and worn and very heavy. The Committee decided that the tables at Tighe-Schmitz probably got more use for picnic activities than the two tables at Dellwood Beach and that rather than buy two new picnic tables at this time, to switch the tables between the two locations. Michalk added that the grill at the pavilion was in sad shape and should be replaced, and the Committee decided to ask the staff to buy a new comparable grill for the pavilion and pay for it out of the Committee's budget. The Committee also raised the matter of the need for a second swim buoy at Dellwood Beach and decided to arrange for the City to buy a second buoy and have it installed.

Action Plan. Weier mentioned that the rope on the flag pole at Wildwood Park has disappeared and that a new one will be installed in time for the Fourth of July parade. The Committee expressed appreciation for the volunteers who put up the flags around the city for Flag Day. The flags will remain up through the Fourth of July.

Hullet reported that there was nothing new to report regarding plans at Curt Feistner Memorial Preserve. The Committee discussed that it would continue to maintain the memorial recognition in Wildwood Park and consider improvements at the Preserve on the lake.

The Committee scrolled through the rest of the projects on the Action Plan and determined that there were no updates or changes.

Bulletin Board and Social Media. The Committee decided that it was important to let the public know that work on the Tighe-Schmitz Project would begin in July

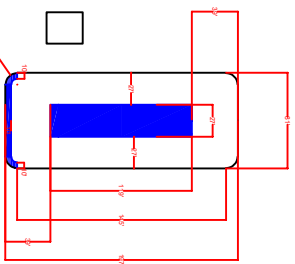
and decided to post that information on the City's Facebook page now in advance of construction.

Next Meeting. August 21, 2026.

Adjourn. 7:41

Respectfully submitted,

Alan Mitchell
Secretary



Warming house

Painted Area

$$119' \times 27' = 3213 \text{ sqft}$$

Area from corners

$$2 \times \text{pie} \times 26 \times 2 \times \frac{1}{4} \times 2 = 82'$$

$$82 \times 10 = 820 \text{ftsq}$$

Center area

$$(81 - 26(2)) \times 10 = 290 \text{ftsq}$$

$$\text{Total} = 3213 + 820 + 290 = 4485 \text{ftsq}$$

Plush 5 gallon acrylic resurfacer

\$81.33/five gallon container (approx 400-500 ftsq)
 approximate cost 20 containers total of \$1600 grey
 color, needs one or two top coats of a light color to
 finish another \$1600 TOTAL \$3200 ESTIMATE

From: Mary Sue Simmons marysuesimmons80@gmail.com
Subject: Fwd: RCWD stormwater grant program
Date: July 24, 2026 at 1:01 PM
To: Zachary Michalk zmichalk13@gmail.com, Jennifer Arsenault jennifer.arsenault@cityofbirchwood.com

Zach,

Here is some rather disappointing news from Ashley Petel. The grant is probably obtainable but will cost the City at the front end. We have much to consider now.

Mary Sue

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Ashley Petel** <APetel@mnwcd.org>
Date: Fri, Jul 24, 2026 at 11:04 AM
Subject: RCWD stormwater grant program
To: Mary Sue Simmons <marysuesimmons80@gmail.com>
CC: Angela Defenbaugh <ADefenbaugh@mnwcd.org>

Hi Mary Sue –

We met with the Rice Creek Watershed District staff members that manage their [stormwater grant program](#). They gave us an update on the timeline for the upcoming year's program, and I wanted to share it with you.

- Mid-October: RFP issued
- By Mid-November: RCWD pre-application meeting with interested groups who want to apply (that would be you!)
- End of December: Full application due
- January-February: Review, public hearing, board approvals
- April: Agreements
- May: Project start
- Dec. 2029: Final certification/project end deadline

The application materials require a conceptual design (30%) along with measurable outcomes (water quality benefits) and other supporting documentation.

For next steps, your team should discuss to what degree the application materials can be prepared internally and with the support of the city's engineer. If you would like WCD support in preparing the design and application, we will need to have a discussion about possibly putting together a small contract for the support. (We are basically out of technical assistance time for this watershed district for 2026, so unfortunately cannot dedicate much time to this project right now accordingly.)

FYI that I'll be out from 7/27-8/7. Let's try to touch base by phone in mid-August to check in about next steps. Then we can chat about capacity, a potential contract, and next steps.

Thanks!

Ashley

Ashley Petel | Landscape Restoration Specialist
Washington Conservation District

[455 Hayward Ave N. | Oakdale, MN 55128](#)

apetel@mnwcd.org | 651-315-8964 | www.mnwcd.org

Table 1: 2026 Parks Committee Action Plan

Item	Project	Description	Status (Last Updated April 2026)	Contact Person
Tier 1 – Priority Projects				
1.01	Tighe-Schmitz Water Management Projects	Various water control projects in and around Tighe-Schmitz Park	Construction scheduled to begin summer 2026.	City Staff
1.02	Elm Beach Erosion Control	Improve discharge area into White Bear Lake at Elm Beach	Planning in progress. Stakeholder meeting occurred in March 2026 to begin project and grant planning.	Mary Sue Simmons
1.03	Ash Beach Access and Safety	Improve the access area to Ash Beach	Scope to be developed.	Margaret Ford
1.04	Music in the Park	Summer concert series at hockey rink	Twelve Sunday evenings June – August.	Alan Mitchell
1.05	Birch Beach Rain Garden	Contractor required for proper cleanup of rain garden	Scheduled for this year.	City Staff
Tier 2 – Secondary Projects				
2.01	Improvements to Curt Feistner Memorial Preserve	Considering options at both the lake site and elsewhere in the city	No grant funding identified.	Amy Hulett
2.02	Hockey Rink Painting	Center portion of the rink requires painting	Barton Winter to develop cost proposal for committee to consider.	TBD
2.03	Lake Links Trail Amenities	Benches and exercise equipment along Lake Links bike trail, along with other non-park work on the bike trail	Committee input on specific locations for benches and other equipment may be requested.	Bridget Sperl
2.04	Landscaping at Lift Station	Plantings around the lift station on Wildwood Avenue – perhaps painting of facility	Kathy to see interest from local boy and girl scout troops.	Kathy Weier

Item	Project	Description	Status (Last Updated April 2026)	Contact Person
2.05	Village Hall Landscaping	Planting around Village Hall to improve aesthetics	Ongoing project.	Bridget Sperl
2.06	Swim Buoy at Kay Beach	Additional swim buoy for safety purposes	Spring/summer 2026.	Zach Michalk
2.07	Improvements at Tighe-Schmitz Pavilion	Replace grill and look into other pavilion upgrades	Replace grill in spring/summer 2026.	Zach Michalk
2.08	Upgrade playground equipment at Tighe-Schmitz Park and Bloomquist Park	Annual maintenance (Table 3) and possibility of acquiring new equipment	Ongoing every year. Mayor Arsenault and city staff are reviewing grant options.	City Staff
2.09	Additional rain gardens around playground at Tighe-Schmitz Park	More water control to minimize discharges to lake	Planning in progress.	Mary Sue Simmons
Tier 3 – Projects on Hold				
3.01	Polly's Park Runoff	Runoff from uphill flows into the park during rain storms.	On hold due to issues with grant.	TBD
3.02	Polly's Park – Large Tree Removal	Dead or diseased trees in the park need removal	On hold due to issues with grant.	TBD
3.03	Polly's Park – Small Tree Removal	Invasive and other species need removal	On hold due to issues with grant.	TBD

Table 2: 2026 Parks Committee Budget Summary

Item	Project	Total Estimated Cost	Special Revenue Fund	Grant Funding	City Funding	Contact Person
Tier 1 – Priority Projects						
1.01	Tighe-Schmitz Water Management Projects	\$82,500	\$7,500	\$75,000		City Staff
1.02	Elm Beach Erosion Control	\$8,000	\$800	\$7,200		Mary Sue Simmons
1.03	Ash Beach Access and Safety	\$3,000	\$300	\$2,700		Margaret Ford
1.04	Music in the Park	\$4,320	\$3,600		\$720	Alan Mitchell
1.05	Birch Beach Rain Garden	\$1,000			\$1,000	City Staff
1.06	Removal of Nominated Dead Tree	\$2,500	\$2,500			Zach Michalk
<i>Subtotal</i>		<i>\$101,320</i>	<i>\$14,700</i>	<i>\$84,900</i>	<i>\$1,720</i>	
Tier 2 – Secondary Projects						
2.01	Improvements to Curt Feistner Memorial Preserve	\$1,000		\$1,000		Amy Hulett
2.02	Hockey Rink Painting	\$2,000	\$2,000			TBD
2.03	Lake Links Trail Amenities	\$2,000		\$2,000		Bridget Sperl
2.04	Landscaping at Lift Station	\$250			\$250	Kathy Weier
2.05	Village Hall Landscaping	\$0				Bridget Sperl
2.06	Swim Buoy at Kay Beach	\$250	\$250			Zach Michalk
2.07	Improvements at Tighe-Schmitz Pavilion	\$1,000	\$1,000			Zach Michalk
2.08	Upgrade playground equipment at Tighe-Schmitz Park and Bloomquist Park	\$500		\$500		City Staff

Item	Project	Total Estimated Cost	Special Revenue Fund	Grant Funding	City Funding	Contact Person
2.09	Additional rain gardens around playground at Tighe-Schmitz Park	\$2,000	\$2,000			Mary Sue Simmons
<i>Subtotal</i>		<i>\$9,000</i>	<i>\$5,250</i>	<i>\$3,500</i>	<i>\$250</i>	
Tier 3 – Projects on Hold						
3.01	Polly's Park Runoff	\$0				TBD
3.02	Polly's Park – Large Tree Removal	\$0				TBD
3.03	Polly's Park – Small Tree Removal	\$0				TBD
<i>Subtotal</i>		<i>\$0</i>				
Total		\$110,320	\$19,950	\$88,400	\$1,970	

Table 3: Parks Committee Ongoing Projects

Item	Project	Description	Status (as of April 2026)
Playground at Tighe-Schmitz Park			
1	Replace plastic around the steps of the jungle gym	Plastic showing signs of tearing with sharp edges	Not yet completed
2	Remove balance beam		Not yet completed
3	Replace rotten landscape timbers behind the swing set		Not yet completed
4	New chains and s-hooks for swing set	One swing should be lowered for smaller children	Not yet completed
5	New seat on digger toy		Not yet completed
6	Refill sand next to slide		Not yet completed
7	Sand and paint picnic tables	Evaluate all city picnic tables for sanding and painting	Not yet completed
8	Fill crack in concrete under pavilion		Not yet completed
9	Remove wood pile behind the pavilion		Completed
Other City Parks and Open Spaces			
1	Remove wood pile at Dellwood Beach		Not yet completed
2	Remove wood pile at Elm Beach		Not yet completed
3	Remove buckthorn and treat stumps at Elm Beach		Not yet completed
4	Remove buckthorn and treat stumps at Birch Beach		Not yet completed

Item	Project	Description	Status (as of April 2026)
5	Remove buckthorn pile at Jay Path		Completed