

**PARKS AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE
MEETING SEPTEMBER 16, 2025
MINUTES**

The September 16, 2025, meeting of the Parks and Natural Resources Committee was called to order in city hall at 6:31 p.m.

Attendees: Committee Members Zachary Michalk, Mary Sue Simmons, and Alan Mitchell. Council Member Kathy Weier and Council Member Bridget Sperl. Absent Committee Members Amy Hulett and Margaret Ford.

Others: Birchwood resident Barton Winter arrived around 6:45.

Agenda. The draft agenda was approved unanimously with the addition of the following three items: the Tighe-Schmitz Project budget, the Birchwood Dock Association fall meeting on September 20, and the hockey rink netting.

Public Forum. No person was present to speak during the public forum.

Minutes. The draft August Minutes were approved unanimously.

Tree Stewardship Program. Simmons reported on a conversation she had with staff at the Washington Conservation District (Lori Maxfield) who manage the Tree Stewardship Program and learned that the District has trained volunteers available who are willing to work with communities regarding care of trees and that Birchwood could ask for assistance if interested. Simmons will follow up with the District about obtaining such volunteer help. Council Member Weier said that tree trimming on Jay Path was not necessary at this time but that there is lots of buckthorn along the path that needs attention.

Fall Clean Up Day Project List. The Committee discussed what projects might be able to be addressed during the Fall Clean Up Day scheduled for Saturday, October 11. One project the Committee thought could be addressed was the hockey rink. Weier indicated that the hockey rink needs to be power washed to clean up dirt and debris before it could be painted as planned. Barton Winter provided information he had gathered in talking with a company called SportMaster about the paint that is required on an outdoor hockey rink. Winter said that the initial estimate of \$500 to paint the center part of the rink was low and that at least two coats would be required. Winter stated that the paint is actually mixed with sand and water before application and there would be a cost for preparing the mixture. Winter said that the area to be painted was a rectangular area near the center crown of the rink, approximately 1/5 of the entire rink area, about 3000 square feet. Winter added that the company told him that the paint cannot be applied during a time when the temperature could drop below 50 degrees anytime within 24 hours after painting. The Committee decided that painting the

rink would have to wait until next year, given this temperature restriction and the fact that painting could not occur before October.

The Committee discussed whether the boards could be painted as part of the Clean Up Day. Winter said he would check on the cost of the paint to do the boards. The Committee thought that the \$500 that had already been authorized by the Council for painting the rink would be sufficient to cover the cost of this paint. Weier said she would coordinate the power washing of the rink around the boards so the boards could be painted on October 11 by volunteers.

Another task the Committee identified that could be addressed on October 11 was cleanup along the rights-of-way on city streets and the removal of any wood the city was responsible for from the storm damage a few weeks ago. The Committee also discussed whether some tree trimming might be undertaken at the tennis courts and the steps around city hall might be cleaned up. It was mentioned that the Dock Association should be advised at its fall meeting on September 20 about Clean Up Day and whether Association members might be available to do some tree trimming and other work on the easements. Sperl volunteered to take care of coffee and doughnuts for the Saturday work session.

Adopt-a-Park Initiative. The Committee decided to postpone this discussion until the October meeting since member Hulett was unable to attend this meeting and was the person heading up this effort.

Tighe-Schmitz Project Budget. This is the item that was added to the agenda. The Committee discussed the status of the \$75,000 grant for the work on Tighe-Schmitz Park. The Committee discussed that Lori Tella of the Washington Conservation District is handling all financial issues and payments and that the City will not be involved in actually paying the bills as they come in, and that Marcus Johnson, the city engineer, is now taking the lead on managing this project.

The Committee was also interested in the HELP Grant for \$10,000 that could be used for habitat improvement and other land-related projects. The Committee confirmed that while the City expects to get the grant, the actual application will not be submitted until 2026 and that Marcus Johnson will be filing the grant application. The Committee also discussed that the City will not have to pay any expenses incurred in carrying out work under the grant and then be reimbursed, but instead the grantee will pay the bills directly.

Draft Budget Memo. The Committee discussed the draft budget memo that Chair Michalk had prepared in advance of the meeting. A copy is attached as Attachment 1. The Committee reviewed the status of the Special Revenue Fund, where funds for park projects will come from, and then focused on the projects in the memo. The Committee recognized that a memorandum similar to the draft

memo is essentially the kind of quarterly report the Council directed the Committee to file, in a Resolution it passed last April. The Committee discussed that the next report should be filed with the Council in time for its December meeting. It was decided that future reports should include a column for the final cost for any completed project.

The Committee then discussed other entries in the memo, beginning with the replacement of a number of boards on the hockey rink; Winter said that he had paid the cost of the new boards. Winter also stated that he paid for one of the two new hockey nets for the rink, and the City paid for a second new net. With regard to the Curt Feistner Memorial Preserve, Weier mentioned that some local organizations have indicated an interest in helping with the funding of improvements to the Preserve but any work would have to wait until 2026. Weier also stated that grass seeding has started at the new Lift Station and that more work would be undertaken going forward. The Committee discussed the possibility of the Mahtomedi Garden Club or the Scouts funding or completing additional plantings at the site. The Committee thought that there should be an entry in the budget memo for playground equipment at Tighe-Schmitz Park and an upgrade of the pavilion, even if this work is likely to be a future project beyond 2026. The Committee discussed that perhaps the construction of a rain garden near the playground equipment should be considered to reduce flooding concerns in that area.

Mitchell suggested that the Committee might want to consider proposing amendments to chapter 804 of the City Code, the ordinance creating the Special Revenue Fund, to clarify what that money could be spent on. The Committee thought that was a good idea and Mitchell volunteered to draft some language for Committee consideration.

Weier advised the Committee that the Council would be discussing what to do about Hall's Marsh and Priebe Lake at a special meeting on September 30. The discussion would consider the possibility of grant funding. Weier stated that any work would probably not be undertaken until 2027.

Rice Creek Assistance on Beach Easements. The Committee confirmed that improvements at Elm Beach, in particular, but also at Ash Beach, were high priority projects going forward and that the Committee should explore the possibility that the Rice Creek Watershed District might have grant money available to do a broad survey of the condition of all five city beaches and fund various projects around the beaches that would reduce water quality impacts to the lake. The Committee decided to continue to explore this possibility.

Hockey Rink Netting. Michalk reported that city staff was ready to go with installing the netting but required further direction on exactly what to do Michalk said that he would check into this and clarify what is expected so that the staff could begin installation of the netting.

Dock Association Fall Meeting. Mitchell volunteered to attend the Dock Association meeting on Saturday, September 21, to learn what is of interest to its members and to advise them of the Committee's priorities.

Next Meeting. October 20, 2025

Adjourn. 7:50

Respectfully submitted,

Alan Mitchell
Secretary

Attachment 1



QUARTERLY BUDGET REPORT FROM
THE PARKS AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

CITY OF BIRCHWOOD VILLAGE
WASHINGTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA

TO	Birchwood Village Parks City Council
FROM	Birchwood Village Parks and Natural Resources Committee
DATE	XX
SUBJECT	Q42025 Budget Report

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

The Birchwood Village Parks and Natural Resources Committee is pleased to provide you with this quarterly budget report, summarizing important factors our committee has considered for ongoing and upcoming parks and natural resources projects. Funding for projects our committee is considering are made available through the city's Special Revenue Fund (SRF), grant awards, or from individual donations. Table 1 identifies available funds from the SRF as of this quarterly report.

Table 1 Available funding from the SRF

Source	Funds
2024 Dock Association Fees	\$17,000
2025 Dock Association Fees	\$14,000
TOTAL	\$31,000

Table 2 provides an overview of ongoing projects that are recently completed, in-progress, or scheduled to begin within the next two quarters. Table 3 lists planned upcoming projects that our committee is working to schedule and identify final costs.

Table 2 Ongoing Projects

Item No.	Project	Timeline	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
1	Tighe-Schmitz Water Management Projects	Q2 – Q3 2026	\$7,500 ¹	SRF
2	Hockey Rink Board Replacement	In Progress	??	Donation
3	Hockey Rink Netting	Q42025	\$1,500	SRF
4	Hockey Rink Surface Painting	Q42025	\$500	SRF
5	Annual Maintenance of Birch Beach Rain Garden			

Notes:

¹ Estimated cost is for the city's 10% match of a \$75,000 grant.

Definitions:

SRF = Special Revenue Fund

Table 3 Upcoming Projects

Item No.	Project	Estimated Timeline	Estimated Cost	Notes
1	Elm Beach Erosion Control	TBD	TBD	Top priority project for 2026. Will re the Minnesota Department of Natur
2	Ash Beach Access and Safety	TBD	TBD	
3	Runoff at Polly's Park and Tree Stump Grinding and Removal	TBD	TBD	
4	Improvements at Curt Feistner Memorial Preserve	TBD	TBD	Mayor Arsenault volunteered to res for this project.
5	Landscaping at Lift Station	Q22026	TBD	
6	Replace Grill at Tighe-Schmitz Pavilion	Q22026	TBD	
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