



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

**CITY OF BIRCHWOOD VILLAGE
WASHINGTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA
OCTOBER 21, 2025
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. September 16, 2025 Meeting Minutes* (pages 2-8)

COMMITTEE BUSINESS - MEETING AGENDA

A. New Agenda Items

A. Discuss Developing an Adopt-a-Park Initiative

B. Proposed Amendment to City Code Chapter 804* (pages 9-14)

B. Agenda Items Carried Over from Previous Month(s)

A. Discuss Draft Budget Memo

C. Confirm Next Month's Meeting and Identify Agenda Topics

ATTACHMENTS

ADJOURN

* denotes an attachment in the agenda packet

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 Rick 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	Project	Estimated	Estimated Cost	Notes
1	Elm Beach Erosion Control	TBD	TBD	Top priority project for 2026. Will require consultation with the Minnesota
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 research grant opportunities for this project.
5	Landscaping at Lift Station	Q22026	TBD	
6	Replace Grill at Tighe-Schmitz	Q22026	TBD	
7				
8				
9				
10				

804 PARKS SPECIAL REVENUE FUND

804.010. The City of Birchwood Village establishes a Parks Special Revenue Fund for the purpose of funding improvements to the land and facilities within the City Park System.

804.020. CITY PARK SYSTEM. The City Park System includes the following:

- (1) Four dedicated municipal parks known as Tighe-Schmitz Park, Bloomquist Field, Wildwood Avenue Boulevard, and Polly's Park.
- (2) Six public lake tracts owned by the City known as Curt Feistner Memorial Preserve, Ash Beach, Birch Beach, Elm Beach, Dellwood Beach, and Kay Beach.
- (3) Undeveloped areas known as Out Lot A, Lakewood Rearrangement, and Hall's Marsh.
- (4) Birchwood City Hall.
- (5) Existing trails known as the Ash and Grotto Street walkways.
- (6) Unimproved street rights-of-way known as Birch, Ash, Grotto, and Highwood rights-of-way.

Reason – just incorporate 607.120.A. to be the most up-to-date definition of the park system.

- (1) Four dedicated municipal parks known as Tighe-Schmidt, Bloomquist Field, Wildwood Avenue Boulevard, and Nordling Park.
- (2) Six public lake tracts owned by the City known as, Ash Beach, Birch Beach, Elm Beach, Dellwood Beach, Kay Beach, and Curt Feistner Memorial Preserve.
- (3) (3) Several undeveloped areas of open space known as Lakewood Rearrangement, Out Lot A, and Hall's Marsh.
- (4) Birchwood City Hall
- (5) Existing trails known as the Ash and Grotto Street walkways.
- (6) Unimproved street rights-of-way known as Birch, Ash, Grotto, and Highwood rights-of-way.

804.030. IMPROVEMENT DEFINED. An improvement includes the acquisition, development, maintenance, and enhancement of city park lands and facilities. Operating expenses shall not be considered a capital improvement.

804.040. FUNDING OF PARKS SPECIAL REVENUE FUND. There shall be accumulated in the Parks Special Revenue Fund the following monies:

- (1) The dock fees paid by the dock association.
- (2) The boat slip permit fees paid by residents.
- (3) All boat slip storage permit fees paid by residents.
- (4) Such other revenues as may be directed by the City Council to be placed in the Fund.

804.050. USES OF THE FUND. Monies in the Parks Special Revenue Fund shall be used, at the discretion of the City Council, only for the following purposes:

- (1) Acquisition of land or physical structures to be included in the Park System.
- (2) Development of facilities within the Park System including recreational facilities, access roads, parking lots, boundary fencing, signage, utilities, restrooms, and other similar permanent facilities.
- (3) Maintenance of existing facilities including preventing the deterioration of existing structures, removing structures not useful to park function, eliminating dangerous land forms or attractive nuisances, stabilizing or rehabilitating natural resources, and other similar long term enhancements.
- (4) Enhancement of existing facilities including capital expenditures that increase the value, improve the usability, or extend the useful life of a facility.

804.060. PAYMENT OF OPERATIONAL COSTS PROHIBITED. The monies in the Parks Special Revenue Fund shall not be used for or pay the general operating costs of any land or facilities within the Park System. General operating costs include utility bills, routine grounds maintenance such as lawn mowing, snow removal, or wages or benefits of city employees, and other similar ongoing expenses.

804.070. SPECIFIC DESIGNATION. The City Council may designate the fund proceeds or any portion thereof for use on a specific project or type of improvement and such designation shall have the same effect as the establishment of a separate fund for such purpose.

804.080. TRANSFER OF MONIES. The City Council may, at its discretion, transfer monies out of the Parks Special Revenue Fund to such other City fund or funds as it deems necessary and proper.

804.090. INVESTMENT OF MONIES. The City Council shall provide for the temporary investment of all monies in the Parks Special Revenue Fund in obligations in which investment of municipal funds is authorized by law and approved by the City Council

EFFECTIVE DATE: This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and approval and publication, as required by law.

“Adopted by Ordinance 2012-08, May 8, 2012”

EXPLANATION OF CHANGES

804.010. **CREATION OF FUND.** No changes.

804.020. **CITY PARK SYSTEM.** The change here is to simply incorporate the definition of City Park System from section 607.120.A of the existing code.

804.030 **IMPROVEMENT DEFINED.** The main intent behind eliminating this provision, and amending sections 804.040 and 804.050, is to clarify what expenses can be paid out of the Fund. The existing language has raised some confusion over whether certain action is an improvement and just what is the difference between maintenance that can be paid for out of the Fund and maintenance that is routine and is not eligible for such funding.

804.040. **FUNDING OF PARKS SPECIAL REVENUE FUND.** No change.

804.050. **PERMITTED USES OF THE FUND.** The title is changed to simply state that the expenses listed in this section are the ones that can be paid for out of the Fund. The reference to “improvement” is also deleted to eliminate the idea that “improvement” is a separate test for approved funding, in addition to the criteria specified in subparagraphs (1) – (4). Paragraph (5) is a new catch-all provision to recognize that the City Council can decide that certain action in the Park System is one that was not anticipated but in the Council’s view will benefit the public and should be funded by the Special Revenue Fund. Of course, even without this provision, the Council could decide under section 804.070 that these funds should be used to pay for a project that does not even impact the Park System.

804.060 **PAYMENT OF CERTAIN COSTS PROHIBITED.** The change here is to simplify and clarify that it’s the routine costs that are not to be paid out of the Fund. It is unnecessary to determine whether the costs are “operating costs” or not. Lawn moving is one type of routine cost that is not covered by the Fund. But if the City has to hire consultants and experts to restore the land or install a rain garden, those expenses are not routine and can be covered. Note also that the Council could act under one of the other provisions, such as 804.050(4) or 804.070, to authorize an expenditure that does not neatly fit one of the other categories if the facts warrant such action.

804.070. **SPECIFIC DESIGNATION.** This language has been revised to clarify that with specific action by the City Council, the Council could decide to take money out of the Special Revenue Fund and use it for city project that is not related to the Park System.

804.080. **TRANSFER OF MONEY.** No changes.

804.090 **INVESTMENT OF MONIES.** No changes.

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804.050. PERMITTED USES OF THE FUND. Monies in the Parks Special Revenue Fund may be used, at the discretion of the City Council for the following purposes:

- (1) Acquisition of land or physical structures to be included in the Park System.

(2) Development of facilities within the Park System including recreational facilities, access roads, parking lots, boundary fencing, signage, utilities, restrooms, and other similar permanent facilities.

(3) **Preservation** of existing facilities **in the Park System**, including preventing the deterioration of existing structures, removing structures not useful to park function, eliminating dangerous land forms or attractive nuisances, stabilizing or rehabilitating natural resources, and other similar long term enhancements.

(4) Enhancement of existing facilities including capital expenditures that increase the value, improve the usability, or extend the useful life of a facility **within the Park System**.

(5) **For any other project affecting the land or facilities in the Park System that the City Council determines will be a benefit to the public.**

804.060. PAYMENT OF CERTAIN COSTS PROHIBITED. The monies in the Parks Special Revenue Fund shall not be used **to pay** utility bills, routine grounds maintenance such as lawn mowing **and** snow removal, wages or benefits of city employees, and other similar **routine** expenses.

804.070. SPECIFIC DESIGNATION. The City Council may designate the fund proceeds or any portion thereof for use on a specific project **not related to the Park System and** such designation shall have the same effect as the establishment of a separate fund for such purpose.

804.080. TRANSFER OF MONIES. The City Council may, at its discretion, transfer monies out of the Parks Special Revenue Fund to such other City fund or funds as it deems necessary and proper.

804.090. INVESTMENT OF MONIES. The City Council shall provide for the temporary investment of all monies in the Parks Special Revenue Fund in obligations in which investment of municipal funds is **authorized** by law and approved by the City Council.