



Twin Falls Parks and Recreation Commission Minutes

Tuesday, July 14, 2026, 11:30 AM

City Hall Overflow Room, CH-116
203 Main Avenue East, Twin Falls, Idaho

Members: Micheal Metcalf, Chairperson; Christiana Sipe-Pauley, Vice- Chairperson; Debbie VanEngelen; Steve Hayes; Olyvia Meyer; Todd Shaw; Paul Melni; Tom Bixler; Mckenzie Redd

1) Confirmation of Quorum/Call Meeting to Order

Commissioner Metcalf called the meeting to order at 11:35 AM

A quorum was present.

Members Present: Micheal Metcalf, Paul Melni, Olyvia Meyer, Christiana Sipe-Pauley, Tom Bixler, Debbie Van Engelen, Todd Shaw, Mckenzie Redd

Staff Present: Wendy Davis, Chance Munns, John Pauley, Craig Hawkins, Kate Sullivan, Mable Shurtleff

2) General Public Input

No public was present.

3) Consent Calendar

MOTION: Commissioner Sipe-Pauley moved to recommend approving the consent agenda.

Commissioner Bixler seconded the motion. Roll call vote showed all members present voted.

Approved 6 to 0.

a) Approve the minutes from the following meeting: June 9, 2026.

4) Items of Consideration

a) Selection of Commission Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

The Commission discussed the selection of a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.

MOTION: Commissioner Sipe-Pauley moved to recommend Michael Metcalf to continue serving as Chairperson of this Commission. Commissioner Bixler seconded the motion. Roll call vote showed all members present voted. Approved 5 to 1.

Commissioner Meyer entered the meeting at 11:40 am.

MOTION: Commissioner Redd moved to recommend Christiana Sipe-Pauley to continue serving as Vice Chairperson of this Commission. Commissioner Bixler seconded the motion. Roll call vote showed all members present voted. Approved 7 to 0.

Commissioner VanEngelen entered the meeting at 11:43 am.

b) Continue Discussion of Parks and Recreation Master Plan and park project priorities, with focus on Morning Sun Park, Kenny Poe Park, and Pheasant Meadows property.

The Commission continued discussion of Parks and Recreation Master Plan priorities, focusing on Morning Sun Park, Kenny Poe Park, and the Pheasant Meadows property. Staff reviewed park service area maps, including areas currently served by neighborhood and community parks and areas identified as underserved or in need of future park development. The

Commission discussed how future growth, neighborhood access, walkability, drainage needs, and available funding should guide project priorities.

Pheasant Meadows Property

The Commission discussed the Pheasant Meadows area and adjacent parcels, including possible land acquisition, ownership questions, and existing playground equipment. Members noted that the site is limited by the need for a retention pond and utilities, and may not be large enough to function as a community park. Director Davis noted that the nearby Vista Bonita Expansion project may better serve that role, while Pheasant Meadows could function as a neighborhood park or trail-focused area.

The Commission discussed potential amenities such as a paved walking path, natural play elements, balance beams, benches, trees, grassy open space, and parking. Several commissioners expressed interest in a more natural park concept. Commissioner Metcalf noted the site may provide greater community benefit if used to connect with the trail system rather than serve as a stand-alone neighborhood park. The Commission generally supported developing Pheasant Meadows as a natural trail-type system with limited neighborhood park amenities.

Kenny Poe Park

The Commission discussed Kenny Poe Park, which also requires a retention pond. Commissioner Bixler noted that the public has expressed interest in a playground at the site. Commissioners discussed adding a playground, shaded picnic area, and other amenities if drainage design allows. Commissioner Redd asked whether the retention pond could function as a water feature, and Superintendent Munns explained that most retention ponds are intended to collect and dissipate water within approximately 48 hours. Commissioner Sipe-Pauley also noted the need for basketball courts in the area. Superintendent Munns noted that portions of Harmon Park are planned for resurfacing to add basketball court areas. Commissioner Metcalf suggested picnic areas as an enhancement, and Commissioner Sipe-Pauley raised concerns about weed control and maintenance at the site.

Morning Sun Park

The Commission discussed existing conditions and potential improvements at Morning Sun Park. Commissioner Bixler noted the site also requires a retention pond and has significant bedrock, which may affect construction costs. Because the park is located within a neighborhood and has a nearby playground, commissioners discussed whether shade, seating, and other smaller amenities may be more appropriate than a public restroom. Staff noted that portable restrooms currently serve the area and that restroom construction can be costly, with prior examples exceeding \$100,000 depending on size, design, and infrastructure. Commissioners discussed resident requests for shade trees, benches near the playground, and continued use of the open space for informal sports and recreation. Commissioner Meyer also noted that a walking path would be a valuable neighborhood park amenity.

Funding and Priority Discussion

Director Davis explained that the three projects were identified because the available data suggested they may be more attainable. She also noted that prior parks-in-lieu funding is no longer a continuing funding source, replaced by park impact fees. Use of park-in-lieu fees

could be used for eligible projects and may require City Council action if used across service-area boundaries.

The Commission discussed whether available funding should be focused on one larger park project, spread across smaller improvements at multiple parks, or prioritized for parks accessible to children and families by walking or biking. Commissioners emphasized that neighborhood parks should serve nearby residents and support safe access.

Commissioner Shaw expressed appreciation for staff identifying the projects and stated that Pheasant Meadows appeared to be a good starting point. The Commission generally agreed that Pheasant Meadows should be considered for development as a natural trail system, and a good candidate for parks-in-lieu fees.

Future Discussion

Commissioner Redd asked about adding the Evel Knievel site project to the August meeting. The Commission agreed to review additional parks for future priority discussion, including Evel Knievel Park, Dierkes Lake Park, and South Park / northern portion of the Oregon Trail Youth Complex. Staff will provide available plans, concepts, or related documents before the next discussion.

c) **Discuss lifeguards at Dierkes Lake Park**

Commissioner Melni asked for a quick synopsis of the history of having lifeguards at Dierkes Lake.

The Commission discussed the history, feasibility, costs, and risks associated with lifeguards at Dierkes Lake Park.

Director Davis stated that lifeguards had historically been provided at Dierkes Lake Park for many years, with 2019 identified as the last year lifeguards were present. Aquatics Supervisor Pauley noted that even prior to COVID-19, the department experienced difficulty recruiting and staffing lifeguards. It is difficult to recruit experienced lifeguards at the rate the City is able to pay.

Discussion included:

- Lifeguard recruitment and retention challenges.
- The need for experienced lifeguards rather than newly trained lifeguards due to the open-water environment.
- Visibility challenges in the lake compared with a pool.
- The size of the swim area and the number of lifeguards that would be needed.
- The need for on-site seasonal management or supervision.
- Potential staffing costs, with prior staffing budget estimates discussed around \$82,000, though current costs may differ.
- Whether lifeguards would be provided daily or only during higher-use periods such as Thursday through Sunday.
- Whether lifeguards would be intended as full coverage or as an enhanced safety presence.
- Broader risk management considerations.

Open Space Supervisor Sullivan noted her research and there was discussion on the possibility

of emphasizing Dierkes Lake more as an open-water lake environment rather than as a traditional guarded swimming area.

The Commission discussed other safety measures, including public education, safety signage, and potential life jacket stations.

No formal action was taken.

- d) Continue discussion of proposed Hydrowave project at Auger Falls Heritage Park
Open Space Supervisor Sullivan noted the last action taken was the Q&A to the Commission for review. The Commission noted they are not ready to discuss this and will defer to the next meeting.
Sullivan noted Merek would be able to provide a feasibility study with estimated cost for the project.

No formal action was taken.

- e) Continue discussion of proposed archery range at Auger Falls Heritage Park
No new information given. No formal action was taken.

5) Department Updates

- a) Parks and Recreation Department Update Presentation
Superintendent Munns provided an update on current and upcoming Parks and Recreation projects. He reviewed several projects that have been completed, are underway, or are planned for future work.
- Completed projects included the Fish Hatchery clean-up, Canyon Rim Trail access improvements and trailhead signage, and the City Park restroom. Staff noted that the Frontier restroom project still has irrigation and planting work remaining.
 - The City Park playground project is upcoming, with equipment ordered for installation. The playground will include accessible equipment, a gazebo designed to reflect the historic gazebo previously located in the park, and a trolley feature that reflects the historic trolley once in town.
 - Vista Bonita Park remains ongoing and on track, with rough grading nearly complete and infrastructure work underway, including drainage, water, utilities, and electrical components.
 - Baxter Dog Park may be out for bid before the end of the year.
 - It was noted that ticket booth and hot wash station concepts have been developed, but the hot wash station is not yet ready for construction.
 - Phase 2 of the way finding signage plan is moving forward, with Trademark approved to continue work on consistent regulatory, informational, and aesthetic signage.
 - Harmon Park lighting is anticipated in September, with conduit installed and lighting ready for installation at the parking lot and skate park.
 - Harmon Park court work is also progressing, with surfacing and fencing expected soon.
 - Frontier tennis court materials have arrived, and resurfacing is expected to begin next week.

- Staff also discussed soil remediation efforts at one park site, including the use of red clover and turnips to improve soil quality and reduce compaction.

The Commission expressed appreciation for the number of projects currently underway.

6) Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 01:17 PM

Mable Shurtleff

Mable Shurtleff, Project Coordinator
Parks and Recreation Department