



CITY OF OAK PARK

Department of Recreation

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Council Members
Solomon Radner
Shaun Whitehead
Stephanie Crawford
City Manager
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CITY OF OAK PARK

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING: February 18, 2026

I. Meeting called to order at: 6:36 pm By: Juanita Bell, Chair

II. Introductions:

Members Present: Juanita Bell, Mickey Alderman, Theresa Lorick – Henderson, Ajai Tice, Alexander Simpson, Jennifer Szonye

Members Absent: Carly Silverman, Carian Taylor and Beverly Wiggins

City Council Members Present: City Council Member, Shaun Whitehead

Staff Members Present: Laurie Stasiak, Recreation Director

Guests Present: None

III. Approval of Agenda for **February 18, 2026**

Motion: Ajai Tice Seconded: Alexander Simpson Approved: All

IV. Approval of Minutes of Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting of **January 21, 2026.**

Motioned by: Ajai Tice

Seconded by: Jennifer Szonye

Approved: All

V. Council Comments

Event Hub – construction on target and Winterfest was a great success.

VI. Recreation Updates:

Daddy Daughter 2026:

Daddy Daughter had 126 attendees all decked out in their finest! Dinner was catered by Topp Dogg, music by Kenny Valentino. Volunteers Jean Jones and Grace Raddon took responsibility for checking our dads and their dates in as well as distributing the flower and cupcake at the end of the dance. Juanita Bell was the perfect hostess while volunteers Amy Lumly and April Hughey -Jackson manned the beverage table.

Winterfest 2026:

Winterfest 2026 was postponed from January 25 to February 15 due to the extreme cold weather conditions in January. February 15 brought the crowds to enjoy the beautiful weather (45 degrees +) as well as the horse and wagon rides, the very popular reindeer pen with the new addition of the Scottish mini-moo cow. While the ice sculptures were beautiful, the sun was making them melt a little sooner than we wanted. Trevor and Jennifer created their Lego masterpiece once again, depicting winter fun and a moving train! Attendees of all ages were amazed by it!

Motor City Cruise, the sponsor for the donuts, was on hand to pass out the treats to the attendees, while at 3 pm, their mascot, Nitro made a special appearance.

Volunteers Bess Rosemond and Jean Jones were on hot chocolate duty and passed out over 400 cups of the steamy beverage.

Juanita Bell was the crowd control point person for the face painting station, and we could not do this without her! Alexander Simpson took charge of the S'more fire pits with assistance from several recreation staff.

Craft tables were provided by the Oak Park Library, Recycling Commission and Arts, Culture, Diversity Commission. The National Guard was also in attendance passing out information and interacting with our residents.

Topp Dogg volunteered their time to distribute the hot chili.

All in all, it was a great event!

Senior News:

The trips to the Outdoor Adventure Center continue to be very popular, and it sells out quickly.

February's topic was Ruin to Revival: the story of the Detroit Train Station, followed by lunch at The Daily Jam in Grosse Pointe.

Meadow Brook Theatre trip, "What The Constitution Means to Me" is scheduled for February 25 with 13 participating.

S'mores N More:

This Sunday, February 22, from 1-3 pm! Join us at the Community Center grounds for a fun casual afternoon to roast marshmallows, make your tasty s'more, and enjoy a fun make and take craft for kids!

Save the Date: Earth Explorers Spring Pop-up Event

Sunday, April 26, 1-3pm, Oak Park Community Center Grounds

Oak Park Recreation is teaming up with Oakland County Parks for an Earth Day celebration! Learn about local pollinators, and roll your own wildflower pollinator seed balls! These help bees and butterflies thrive in your garden. Join in on other nature related education and activities at this fun and educational afternoon!

Save the Date: Farmers Market Sneak Peek

Sunday, May 31, 1-5pm, Oak Park Community Center

Take a peek at what this year's farmers market has in store for you! Shop the vendors, learn about future nutrition education opportunities, experience a cooking demonstration, and learn how children and seniors can earn market bucks this season!

Sports

- **Basketball** – Basketball season has been rolling, after the delayed start to the season. Teams have been competing @ Ferndale HS/MS and have been playing hard and having lots of fun! We have a couple undefeated ball teams, and a few teams that are hovering .500. Overall, everything has been going solid. We may look into a new host site for next year, as communication with Ferndale has been poor, and directions for venue set-up have been ignored. Potentially considering Hazel Park schools, and maybe Oak Park-more to come.
- **Soccer** - Soccer sign-ups have officially been open for a month. We have close to 40 sign-ups, and a registration push has been communicated with the communications team to boost enrollment numbers. The tentative date for the first game day is Saturday, April 18. (Weather/field permitting)
- **Flag Football (Goal of Fall '26)** – Looking to reach out to neighboring community alliances to bring flag football for kids starting in the fall of '26 or the spring of '27. This is a growing sport across the region, and I believe that it could provide a great opportunity for Oak Park youth.

Day Camp

- **We are accepting applications for the positions listed below**
- **Camp Director** – We were recently informed that our Camp Director will no longer be returning.
- **Need an Assistant Director** – We were recently informed that our Assistant Director from last year will no longer be returning.
- **Need counselors** – We will need to hire a few more counselors for this upcoming summer.

Youth Programming

- **Hair Braiding** – We have a confirmed hair braider with supplies ordered and a date set. Hair Braiding will be offered beginning on Tuesday, April 7 @ 5pm in the community center. The course will be 8 weeks long. The first session will be for 10 kids for \$80.
- **TumbleBunnies** – TumbleBunnies is scheduled to begin the week of April 20. We will have two sessions, one for gymnastics and one for karate. This program is for the young kids of Oak Park ranging from 18-months – 7 years old. This program is a fun, engaging opportunity for the youth to explore different programs, stay active, and play with peers.
- **National Guard Bootcamp Fitness program** – There have been a few technical issues to work out, as the National Guard has an insurance policy that only covers them. We have discussed potential resolutions to this matter, but we are still waiting to hear back from legal. The original

start date for this program was Feb. 18, but that will have to be postponed. Instructor has a lot of availability and is willing to delay the start of the program as needed.

Special Events

- **Mother & Son Brunch & Games** – Planning for the mother & son brunch & games on Saturday, May 2 from 12-2pm
 - Emphasizes games which includes a limbo competition (moms vs moms, sons vs sons, winner of moms vs winner of sons) cakewalk, and a soul train style line dance competition
 - 2-3 designated slow dances
 - Brunch style eats – pancakes, eggs, bacon, etc.
 - Photo booth opportunity, and a rose for mom at the end
 - ****NEED VOLUNTEERS**** – Please save the date if you're interested!!

Erin – ServeSafe certification - a nationally recognized credential from the National Restaurant Association verifying a food service professional's knowledge of food safety, covering critical areas like preventing contamination, proper time/temperature control, hygiene, and sanitation to avoid foodborne illness, with different levels for managers (Food Protection Manager) and employees (Food Handler). It ensures consistent food safety training and is often required by employers and jurisdictions to protect public health.

City Counsel – Our Recreation Master Plan Proposal was passed – Giffels Webster -\$16,400, we will be getting started on that quickly with a December completion date. This Commission will be heavily involved.

Oak Park Woods at Shepherd Park – Shelter Rentals start on July 1

Shelter 1 – Improvements, new warming kitchen, electricity and near new bathrooms and playground area

Shelter 2 – improved with electricity

Shelter rental dates:

Resident date: March 2

Non - resident date: April 6

Event Hub – looking good inside nearing a little over 55% completion

Second interviews for our Event Hub Manager – on Monday

Picking out furniture, av equip for both event hub and amphitheater.

State of the City on June 30 – more to come concert and food trucks

Community Center location approved – ice arena area

Demo on Ice Arena, pool, locker rooms, cable building, bathrooms, concession stand. Starting in March through May.

State of the City: June 30 at the Event Hub, more information to come!

VII. Old Business – Commission

Dog Park:

Save the date for 2026: Dog Day Afternoon Sunday, July 19 from 12-3pm!

Current Dog Park #'s:

Humans: 35 Dogs: 39

Oak Park: 31

Huntington Woods: 3

West Bloomfield: 1

VIII New Business – Commission

Election results: Juantia Bell, Chair, Ajai Tice, Vice-chair, Theresa Lorick-Henderson, Secretary

Motioned by: Mickey Alderman

Seconded by: Alexander Simpson

Motion Passed: All

IX Announcements - None

X Meeting adjourned at: 7:19 pm

Motioned by: Mickey Alderman

Seconded by: Alexander Simpson

Motion passed: All

Respectfully submitted, Ajai Tice

Recording Secretary for the meeting