



**RECREATION COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
**March 10, 2026 \* 5:30 PM \* Park View Room**

13600 Juneau Boulevard  
Elm Grove, WI 53122

3/10/2026 - Minutes

**1. Call Meeting to Order/Roll Call**

**Chairman Hillmann** called the meeting to order at 5:32 pm.

Present: Trustee Hillmann, Trustee Olson, Allison Kelly, Stacy Barry Coffey, Dr. Susan Retzack

Also Present: Isabella Naughton

Excused: Trustee Sayas, Ryan Black, Patrick McNally

**2. Approval of Minutes**

**No action taken. Minutes will be approved at the next Recreation Committee Meeting.**

**3. Recreation Manager Update**

**A. Small Wins**

**1. Summer Recreation Guide**

**Recreation Manager Naughton** reported that the recreation guide was successfully distributed to residents at the beginning of March as planned. Registration will open on Monday, March 16th. Every resident should have received a physical copy by mail, with additional copies available at Village Hall and the library for those who did not receive one or misplaced theirs. The guide is also posted on the village website.

**Recreation Manager Naughton** explained that after consulting with other municipalities that attempted to transition to completely virtual formats, she recommends continuing with physical copies as other communities have not seen success with digital-only distribution and some have returned to physical mailings. **Chairman Hillmann** agreed that despite the cost of postage and paper, the physical format remains effective in keeping recreation programs visible to residents.

## 2. New Berlin Collaboration

The recreation guide includes two new collaborative offerings with New Berlin's recreation department - chess and dance programs. This partnership, which had previously existed but diminished in recent years, is being revived. Both communities will offer limited slots in selected programs to each other's residents. **Recreation Manager Naughton** indicated this collaboration has potential to grow in the future and noted there may be opportunities for partnerships with other municipalities as well.

## 3. CPO Licensing Course

**Recreation Manager Naughton** reported that she successfully completed her Certified Pool Operators licensing course in mid-February, ensuring the village is prepared for the upcoming pool season.

## 4. Summer Hiring

Hiring for summer positions is progressing well. All head guard positions have been filled, with Ava Hicks, Lauren Correa, and Molly Hickey returning in leadership roles. Nick Ripke will return as head camp counselor. The Village is actively working to fill remaining positions for desk attendants, tennis programming, and additional lifeguards. **Recreation Manager Naughton** expressed confidence that all positions will be filled, especially after the recreation guide distribution increases awareness of available positions.

**Dr. Retzack** asked about swim testing procedures for children at the pool. **Recreation Manager Naughton** confirmed that swim tests are conducted to ensure children are capable of being in appropriate areas of the pool, with tests typically administered by head guards though all lifeguards are trained in the procedure. Pool rules regarding swim testing are posted in the pool house.

Regarding staff training, **Recreation Manager Naughton** outlined the comprehensive safety preparation program. One large-scale in-service training will be conducted before the pool opens, involving EMS and fire personnel, with desk attendants participating in 911 calling scenarios. Two additional internal in-services will be held during the summer, with head guards running lifeguards through various emergency scenarios.

The pool is scheduled to open June 12th, which **Recreation Manager Naughton** explained is after public schools end for the year. While the pool could open earlier, the decision was made to wait until school lets out to ensure adequate staffing and attendance. The pool will close August 16th, with Monday the 17th beginning closing operations to prepare for pool liner replacement at the end of summer.

**Trustee Olson** expressed concern about the short season of just over two months given the pool's expense. **Recreation Manager Naughton** acknowledged this limitation but explained that this year's early closure is necessary due to the liner replacement project. She indicated the village will evaluate attendance data and staffing capabilities to potentially extend the season in future years. The committee noted that Wirth Park's pool operates from June 6th through August 23rd, approximately one week longer on each end.

The recreation guide includes programs from Skyhawks Milwaukee and Milwaukee Social Sports. Skyhawks operates on a cost-sharing arrangement where the village retains 25% and the organization keeps 75% of program revenue. These programs were successful last year in terms of participation numbers.

**Dr. Retzack** noted that a softball tournament between Milwaukee Social Sport teams and local teams had been organized late last summer but only attracted three teams due to short notice and Labor Day weekend timing. **Recreation Manager Naughton** agreed to reach out to Milwaukee Social Sports about organizing a similar event with better advance planning.

**Dr. Retzack** complimented the guide's bright, colorful digital appearance but noted that pages with dark backgrounds are difficult to read in print. She particularly appreciated the clear swim lesson level descriptions. **Recreation Manager Naughton** acknowledged the feedback about background colors affecting readability.

**Dr. Retzack** questioned whether Third Space paid for their full-page advertisement in the guide. Naughton clarified it was provided free of charge as it promotes the beer garden, which generates revenue for the village through their partnership.

#### 4. Recommendation for BOT to accept Knowles Nelson DNR Grant

**Recreation Manager Naughton** provided an update on the boardwalk project costs. **Village Manager Tom, Assistant Village Manager Ethan, DPW Head Richard, and Recreation Manager Naughton** met with Custom Bridges and Boardwalks, a specialized vendor who provided a much more promising cost estimate of \$96,000, significantly lower than previous bids and closer to the grant's maximum of \$112,000. The vendor will conduct a site visit later in March to finalize the route and provide a realistic cost estimate.

This is a matching grant requiring the village to contribute \$56,000 to receive \$56,000 in grant funding. The project must be completed by June 30, 2028, which the vendor confirmed they can meet.

The proposed 6-foot-wide boardwalk would connect from a service drive at the back of Tonawanda School property to existing paved pathways in the park, requiring approximately two creek crossings. The route will be ADA accessible and comply with all wetland, floodplain, and waterway regulations, with DNR involvement throughout the process.

Committee members expressed enthusiasm for the project, noting it would provide valuable access for the school to use the park and offer residents on the northwest side a different walking experience. **Dr. Retzack** suggested that if additional funding becomes needed, community members might be willing to donate to support the project.

**Trustee Olson** noted that **Assistant Village Manager Ethan** had cautioned that rejecting the grant could negatively impact future grant applications with the state program.

The committee agreed that while a \$100,000+ boardwalk project would not be wise for the village to undertake independently, the grant opportunity makes it feasible and beneficial.

Tomorrow, **Recreation Manager Naughton** and village staff will meet with Elmbrook School District Facilities Director **Rick Domach** and **Kristin Olson** Tonawanda's principal to discuss the project and ensure their input and cooperation with the pathway connecting to their property.

**Motion by Dr. Retzack seconded by Kelly to recommend the approval of the Knowles Nelson DNR Grant to the BOT.**

**Motion passed: 5-0**

#### 5. Other Business

The committee discussed Third Space's contract renewal, which is approaching. The general plan is to extend the contract for another year with status quo terms. **Recreation Manager Naughton** reported that in her recent conversation with Third Space owner Andy, he expressed satisfaction with current arrangements and requested no significant changes. The committee requested that usage and revenue numbers from the added Wednesday operations be provided at the next meeting to assess the success of the expanded schedule.

Committee members discussed concerns about the condition of grass in the beer garden area, which becomes muddy and trampled by late season. Various solutions were considered including rubber matting, crushed stone, or other ground covering, but concerns about maintenance, safety, and children playing in the area led to no definitive

solution. The committee agreed this could be part of contract renewal discussions if Third Space has concerns about the muddy conditions.

**Dr. Retzack** raised enforcement concerns about dogs being walked off-leash in the park and dogs being walked through restricted areas including the playground. She noted this appears to be an issue with new residents who may not be familiar with the park's dog policies, which were contentious when originally adopted and passed by only a 4-3 vote. **Chairman Hillmann** agreed to raise these enforcement concerns at the Public Safety meeting and suggested including park rules reminders in the village newsletter and newspaper, particularly for new residents as spring weather brings increased park usage.

The committee briefly discussed the potential for a dog park at South Park in the future, noting it would be an ideal location despite current use by Elmbrook United for fields.

## 6. Adjourn

**Motion by Dr. Retzack seconded by Barry Coffey to adjourn 6:16 pm.**

**Motion passed: 5-0**

**Minutes respectfully submitted by Recreation Manager Naughton. Minutes approved on**