

Board of Parks Commissioners
Tuesday, April 5, 2022 12:00 PM
Council Chambers
1369 25 Avenue
Columbus, NE 68601

1. **Statement of compliance with Open Meetings Act.**

Open Meetings Act

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1407. Act, how cited.

Sections 84-1407 to 84-1414 shall be known and may be cited as the Open Meetings Act.

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1408. Declaration of intent; meetings open to public.

It is hereby declared to be the policy of this state that the formation of public policy is public business and may not be conducted in secret.

Every meeting of a public body shall be open to the public in order that citizens may exercise their democratic privilege of attending and speaking at meetings of public bodies, except as otherwise provided by the Constitution of Nebraska, federal statutes, and the Open Meetings Act.

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1409. Terms, defined.

For purposes of the Open Meetings Act, unless the context otherwise requires:

(1)(a) Public body means (i) governing bodies of all political subdivisions of the State of Nebraska, (ii) governing bodies of all agencies, created by the Constitution of Nebraska, statute, or otherwise pursuant to law, of the executive department of the State of Nebraska, (iii) all independent boards, commissions, bureaus, committees, councils, subunits, or any other bodies created by the Constitution of Nebraska, statute, or otherwise pursuant to law, (iv) all study or advisory committees of the executive department of the State of Nebraska whether having continuing existence or appointed as special committees with limited existence, (v) advisory committees of the bodies referred to in subdivisions (i), (ii), and (iii) of this subdivision, and (vi) instrumentalities exercising essentially public functions; and

(b) Public body does not include (i) subcommittees of such bodies unless a quorum of the public body attends a subcommittee meeting or unless such subcommittees are holding hearings, making policy, or taking formal action on behalf of their parent body, except that all meetings of any subcommittee established under section 81-15,175 are subject to the Open Meetings Act, and (ii) entities conducting judicial proceedings unless a court or other judicial body is exercising rulemaking authority, deliberating, or deciding upon the issuance of administrative orders;

(2) Meeting means all regular, special, or called meetings, formal or informal, of any public body for the purposes of briefing, discussion of public business, formation of tentative policy, or the taking of any action of the public body; and

(3) Virtual conferencing means conducting or participating in a meeting electronically or telephonically with interaction among the participants subject to subsection (2) of section 84-1412.

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1410. Closed session; when; purpose; reasons listed; procedure; right to challenge; prohibited acts; chance meetings, conventions, or workshops.

(1) Any public body may hold a closed session by the affirmative vote of a majority of its voting members if a closed session is clearly necessary for the protection of the public interest or for the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of an individual and if such

individual has not requested a public meeting. The subject matter and the reason necessitating the closed session shall be identified in the motion to close. Closed sessions may be held for, but shall not be limited to, such reasons as:

(a) Strategy sessions with respect to collective bargaining, real estate purchases, pending litigation, or litigation which is imminent as evidenced by communication of a claim or threat of litigation to or by the public body;

(b) Discussion regarding deployment of security personnel or devices;

(c) Investigative proceedings regarding allegations of criminal misconduct;

(d) Evaluation of the job performance of a person when necessary to prevent needless injury to the reputation of a person and if such person has not requested a public meeting;

(e) For the Community Trust created under section 81-1801.02, discussion regarding the amounts to be paid to individuals who have suffered from a tragedy of violence or natural disaster; or

(f) For public hospitals, governing board peer review activities, professional review activities, review and discussion of medical staff investigations or disciplinary actions, and any strategy session concerning transactional negotiations with any referral source that is required by federal law to be conducted at arms length.

Nothing in this section shall permit a closed meeting for discussion of the appointment or election of a new member to any public body.

(2) The vote to hold a closed session shall be taken in open session. The entire motion, the vote of each member on the question of holding a closed session, and the time when the closed session commenced and concluded shall be recorded in the minutes. If the motion to close passes, then the presiding officer immediately prior to the closed session shall restate on the record the limitation of the subject matter of the closed session. The public body holding such a closed session shall restrict its consideration of matters during the closed portions to only those purposes set forth in the motion to close as the reason for the closed session. The meeting shall be reconvened in open session before any formal action may be taken. For purposes of this section, formal action shall mean a collective decision or a collective commitment or promise to make a decision on any question, motion, proposal, resolution, order, or ordinance or formation of a position or policy but shall not include negotiating guidance given by members of the public body to legal counsel or other negotiators in closed sessions authorized under subdivision (1)(a) of this section.

(3) Any member of any public body shall have the right to challenge the continuation of a closed session if the member determines that the session has exceeded the reason stated in the original motion to hold a closed session or if the member contends that the closed session is neither clearly necessary for (a) the protection of the public interest or (b) the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of an individual. Such challenge shall be overruled only by a majority vote of the

members of the public body. Such challenge and its disposition shall be recorded in the minutes.

(4) Nothing in this section shall be construed to require that any meeting be closed to the public. No person or public body shall fail to invite a portion of its members to a meeting, and no public body shall designate itself a subcommittee of the whole body for the purpose of circumventing the Open Meetings Act. No closed session, informal meeting, chance meeting, social gathering, email, fax, or other electronic communication shall be used for the purpose of circumventing the requirements of the act.

(5) The act does not apply to chance meetings or to attendance at or travel to conventions or workshops of members of a public body at which there is no meeting of the body then intentionally convened, if there is no vote or other action taken regarding any matter over which the public body has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advisory power.

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1411. Meetings of public body; notice; method; contents; when available; right to modify; duties concerning notice; virtual meetings authorized; emergency meeting without notice; appearance before public body.

(1)(a) Each public body shall give reasonable advance publicized notice of the time and place of each meeting as provided in this subsection. Such notice shall be transmitted to all members of the public body and to the public.

(b)(i) Except as provided in subdivision (1)(b)(ii) of this section, in the case of a public body described in subdivision (1)(a)(i) of section 84-1409 or such body's advisory committee, such notice shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction and, if available, on such newspaper's web site.

(ii) In the case of the governing body of a city of the second class or village or such body's advisory committee, such notice shall be published by:

(A) Publication in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction and, if available, on such newspaper's web site; or

(B) Posting written notice in three conspicuous public places in such city or village. Such notice shall be posted in the same three places for each meeting.

(iii) In the case of a public body not described in subdivision (1)(b)(i) or (ii) of this section, such notice shall be given by a method designated by the public body.

(c) In addition to a method of notice required by subdivision (1)(b)(i) or (ii) of this section, such notice may also be provided by any other appropriate method designated by such public body or such advisory committee.

(d) Each public body shall record the methods and dates of such notice in its minutes.

(e) Such notice shall contain an agenda of subjects known at the time of the publicized notice or a statement that the agenda, which shall be kept continually current, shall be readily available for public inspection at the principal office of the public body during normal business hours. Agenda items shall be sufficiently descriptive to give the public reasonable notice of the matters to be considered at the

meeting. Except for items of an emergency nature, the agenda shall not be altered later than (i) twenty-four hours before the scheduled commencement of the meeting or (ii) forty-eight hours before the scheduled commencement of a meeting of a city council or village board scheduled outside the corporate limits of the municipality. The public body shall have the right to modify the agenda to include items of an emergency nature only at such public meeting.

(2)(a) The following entities may hold a meeting by means of virtual conferencing if the requirements of subdivision (2)(b) of this section are met:

(i) A state agency, state board, state commission, state council, or state committee, or an advisory committee of any such state entity;

(ii) An organization, including the governing body, created under the Interlocal Cooperation Act, the Joint Public Agency Act, or the Municipal Cooperative Financing Act;

(iii) The governing body of a public power district having a chartered territory of more than one county in this state;

(iv) The governing body of a public power and irrigation district having a chartered territory of more than one county in this state;

(v) An educational service unit;

(vi) The Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council;

(vii) An organization, including the governing body, of a risk management pool or its advisory committees organized in accordance with the Intergovernmental Risk Management Act;

(viii) A community college board of governors;

(ix) The Nebraska Brand Committee;

(x) A local public health department;

(xi) A metropolitan utilities district;

(xii) A regional metropolitan transit authority;

(xiii) A natural resources district; and

(xiv) The Judicial Resources Commission.

(b) The requirements for holding a meeting by means of virtual conferencing are as follows:

(i) Reasonable advance publicized notice is given as provided in subsection (1) of this section, including providing access to a dial-in number or link to the virtual conference;

(ii) In addition to the public's right to participate by virtual conferencing, reasonable arrangements are made to accommodate the public's right to attend at a physical site and participate as provided in section 84-1412, including reasonable seating, in at least one designated site in a building open to the public and identified in the notice, with: At least one member of the entity holding such meeting, or his or her designee, present at each site; a recording of the hearing by audio or visual recording devices; and a reasonable opportunity for input, such as public comment or questions, is provided to at least the same extent as

would be provided if virtual conferencing was not used;

(iii) At least one copy of all documents being considered at the meeting is available at any physical site open to the public where individuals may attend the virtual conference. The public body shall also provide links to an electronic copy of the agenda, all documents being considered at the meeting, and the current version of the Open Meetings Act; and

(iv) Except as otherwise provided in this subdivision or subsection (4) of section 79-2204, no more than one-half of the meetings of the state entities, advisory committees, boards, councils, organizations, or governing bodies are held by virtual conferencing in a calendar year. In the case of an organization created under the Interlocal Cooperation Act that sells electricity or natural gas at wholesale on a multistate basis or an organization created under the Municipal Cooperative Financing Act, the organization may hold more than one-half of its meetings by virtual conferencing if such organization holds at least one meeting each calendar year that is not by virtual conferencing. The governing body of a risk management pool that meets at least quarterly and the advisory committees of the governing body may each hold more than one-half of its meetings by virtual conferencing if the governing body's quarterly meetings are not held by virtual conferencing.

(3) Virtual conferencing, emails, faxes, or other electronic communication shall not be used to circumvent any of the public government purposes established in the Open Meetings Act.

(4) The secretary or other designee of each public body shall maintain a list of the news media requesting notification of meetings and shall make reasonable efforts to provide advance notification to them of the time and place of each meeting and the subjects to be discussed at that meeting.

(5) When it is necessary to hold an emergency meeting without reasonable advance public notice, the nature of the emergency shall be stated in the minutes and any formal action taken in such meeting shall pertain only to the emergency. Such emergency meetings may be held by virtual conferencing. The provisions of subsection (4) of this section shall be complied with in conducting emergency meetings. Complete minutes of such emergency meetings specifying the nature of the emergency and any formal action taken at the meeting shall be made available to the public by no later than the end of the next regular business day.

(6) A public body may allow a member of the public or any other witness to appear before the public body by means of virtual conferencing.

(7)(a) Notwithstanding subsections (2) and (5) of this section, if an emergency is declared by the Governor pursuant to the Emergency Management Act as defined in section 81-829.39, a public body the territorial jurisdiction of which is included in the emergency declaration, in whole or in part, may hold a meeting by virtual conferencing during such emergency if the public body gives reasonable advance publicized notice as described in subsection (1) of this section. The notice shall include information regarding access for the public and news media. In addition to any formal action taken pertaining to the emergency, the public body may hold such meeting for the purpose of briefing, discussion of public business, formation of tentative policy, or the taking of any action by the public body.

(b) The public body shall provide access by providing a dial-in Open Meetings Act

number or a link to the virtual conference. The public body shall also provide links to an electronic copy of the agenda, all documents being considered at the meeting, and the current version of the Open Meetings Act. Reasonable arrangements shall be made to accommodate the public's right to hear and speak at the meeting and record the meeting. Subsection (4) of this section shall be complied with in conducting such meetings.

(c) The nature of the emergency shall be stated in the minutes. Complete minutes of such meeting specifying the nature of the emergency and any formal action taken at the meeting shall be made available for inspection as provided in subsections (5) and (6) of section 84-1413.

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1412. Meetings of public body; rights of public; public body; powers and duties.

(1) Subject to the Open Meetings Act, the public has the right to attend and the right to speak at meetings of public bodies, and all or any part of a meeting of a public body, except for closed sessions called pursuant to section 84-1410, may be videotaped, televised, photographed, broadcast, or recorded by any person in attendance by means of a tape recorder, a camera, video equipment, or any other means of pictorial or sonic reproduction or in writing.

(2) It shall not be a violation of subsection (1) of this section for any public body to make and enforce reasonable rules and regulations regarding the conduct of persons attending, speaking at, videotaping, televising, photographing, broadcasting, or recording its meetings, including meetings held by virtual conferencing. A body may not be required to allow citizens to speak at each meeting, but it may not forbid public participation at all meetings.

(3) No public body shall require members of the public to identify themselves as a condition for admission to the meeting nor shall such body require that the name of any member of the public be placed on the agenda prior to such meeting in order to speak about items on the agenda. The body shall require any member of the public desiring to address the body to identify himself or herself, including an address and the name of any organization represented by such person unless the address requirement is waived to protect the security of the individual.

(4) No public body shall, for the purpose of circumventing the Open Meetings Act, hold a meeting in a place known by the body to be too small to accommodate the anticipated audience.

(5) No public body shall be deemed in violation of this section if it holds its meeting in its traditional meeting place which is located in this state.

(6) No public body shall be deemed in violation of this section if it holds a meeting outside of this state if, but only if:

(a) A member entity of the public body is located outside of this state and the meeting is in that member's jurisdiction;

(b) All out-of-state locations identified in the notice are located within public buildings used by members of the entity or at a place which will accommodate the anticipated audience;

(c) Reasonable arrangements are made to accommodate the public's right to attend, hear, and speak at the meeting, including making virtual conferencing available at an in-state location to members, the public, or the press, if requested twenty-four hours in advance;

(d) No more than twenty-five percent of the public body's meetings in a calendar year are held out-of-state;

(e) Out-of-state meetings are not used to circumvent any of the public government purposes established in the Open Meetings Act; and

(f) The public body publishes notice of the out-of-state meeting at least twenty-one days before the date of the meeting in a legal newspaper of statewide circulation.

(7) Each public body shall, upon request, make a reasonable effort to accommodate the public's right to hear the discussion and testimony presented at a meeting.

(8) Public bodies shall make available at the meeting or the in-state location for virtual conferencing as required by subdivision (6)(c) of this section, for examination and copying by members of the public, at least one copy of all reproducible written material to be discussed at an open meeting, either in paper or electronic form. Public bodies shall make available at least one current copy of the Open Meetings Act posted in the meeting room at a location accessible to members of the public. At the beginning of the meeting, the public shall be informed about the location of the posted information.

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1413. Meetings; minutes; roll call vote; secret ballot; when.

(1) Each public body shall keep minutes of all meetings showing the time, place, members present and absent, and the substance of all matters discussed.

(2) Any action taken on any question or motion duly moved and seconded shall be by roll call vote of the public body in open session, and the record shall state how each member voted or if the member was absent or not voting. The requirements of a roll call or viva voce vote shall be satisfied by a public body which utilizes an electronic voting device which allows the yeas and nays of each member of such public body to be readily seen by the public.

(3) The vote to elect leadership within a public body may be taken by secret ballot, but the total number of votes for each candidate shall be recorded in the minutes.

(4) The minutes of all meetings and evidence and documentation received or disclosed in open session shall be public records and open to public inspection during normal business hours.

(5) Minutes shall be written, except as provided in subsection (6) of this section, and available for inspection within ten working days or prior to the next convened meeting, whichever occurs earlier, except that cities of the second class and villages may have an additional ten working days if the employee responsible for writing the minutes is absent due to a serious illness or emergency.

(6) Minutes of the meetings of the board of a school district or educational service unit may be kept as an electronic record.

(7) Beginning July 31, 2022, the governing body of a natural resources district, the city council of a city of the metropolitan class, the city council of a city of the primary class, the city council of a city of the first class, the county board of a county with a population greater than twenty-five thousand inhabitants, and the school board of a school district shall make available on such entity's public web site the agenda and minutes of any meeting of the governing body. The agenda shall be placed on the web site at least twenty-four hours before the meeting of

the governing body. Minutes shall be placed on the web site at such time as the minutes are available for inspection as provided in subsection (5) of this section. This information shall be available on the public web site for at least six months.

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1414. Unlawful action by public body; declared void or voidable by district court; when; duty to enforce open meeting laws; citizen's suit; procedure; violations; penalties.

(1) Any motion, resolution, rule, regulation, ordinance, or formal action of a public body made or taken in violation of the Open Meetings Act shall be declared void by the district court if the suit is commenced within one hundred twenty days of the meeting of the public body at which the alleged violation occurred. Any motion, resolution, rule, regulation, ordinance, or formal action of a public body made or taken in substantial violation of the Open Meetings Act shall be voidable by the district court if the suit is commenced more than one hundred twenty days after but within one year of the meeting of the public body in which the alleged violation occurred. A suit to void any final action shall be commenced within one year of the action.

(2) The Attorney General and the county attorney of the county in which the public body ordinarily meets shall enforce the Open Meetings Act.

(3) Any citizen of this state may commence a suit in the district court of the county in which the public body ordinarily meets or in which the plaintiff resides for the purpose of requiring compliance with or preventing violations of the Open Meetings Act, for the purpose of declaring an action of a public body void, or for the purpose of determining the applicability of the act to discussions or decisions of the public body. It shall not be a defense that the citizen attended the meeting and failed to object at such time. The court may order payment of reasonable attorney's fees and court costs to a successful plaintiff in a suit brought under this section.

(4) Any member of a public body who knowingly violates or conspires to violate or who attends or remains at a meeting knowing that the public body is in violation of any provision of the Open Meetings Act shall be guilty of a Class IV misdemeanor for a first offense and a Class III misdemeanor for a second or subsequent offense.

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1415. Open Meetings Act; requirements; waiver; validity of action.

No motion, resolution, rule, regulation, ordinance, or formal action made, adopted, passed, or taken at a meeting as defined in section 84-1409 of a public body as defined in such section shall be invalidated because such motion, resolution, rule, regulation, ordinance, or formal action was made, adopted, passed, or taken at a meeting or meetings on or after March 17, 2020, and on or before April 30, 2021, pursuant to a Governor's Executive Order which waived certain requirements of the Open Meetings Act.

2. Minutes of March 1, 2022, meeting.

BOARD OF PARKS COMMISSIONERS
MARCH 1, 2022

A regular meeting of the Board of Parks Commissioners of the City of Columbus, Nebraska, was convened in open and public session on March 1, 2022, at 12:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 1369 25 Avenue, Columbus, Nebraska.

Notice of this meeting was given in advance thereof by publication in the Columbus Telegram on February 24, 2022, with a copy of the proof of publication being on file in the office of the City Clerk. Availability of the agenda was communicated in the advance notice to the members of the Board of Parks Commissioners. All proceedings hereafter shown were taken while the convened meeting was open to the public.

1. **STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH OPEN MEETINGS ACT.** Chair Hansen announced that a copy of the Open Meetings Act is posted in the meeting room. Present were Members Jon Brezenski, Robbin Cutsor, Jack Gutierrez, Brad Hansen, Sandra Jochens, Nick Larson, Gary Puetz, Bruce Schmidt, and John Shadle. City staff members included Public Property Director Doug Moore, City Administrator Tara Vasicek, Park Superintendent Ron Dush, Park and Recreation Coordinator Betsy Eckhardt, Finance Director Heather Lindsley, Aquatic Manager Brook Tomka, Aquatic Supervisor Kara Martens, Lead Lifeguard/Program Coordinator Nola Garcia, Pool Operator Logan Erickson, Lifeguards Dartagnan Seamann and Jaylyn Spencer, and Account Clerk II/Records Clerk II Linda Nickeson. Also present was Mayor James Bulkley.
2. **MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 1, 2022, MEETING.** The minutes were approved as presented with a motion by Gutierrez and a second by Cutsor. Brezenski, Cutsor, Gutierrez, Hansen, Jochens, Larson, Puetz, Schmidt, and Shadle voted "Aye" and none voted "Nay".
3. **COLUMBUS AREA YOUTH FOOTBALL ORGANIZATION ANNUAL REPORT.** Lamont Braithwait, representing the organization, reviewed the 2021 season confirming that some teams included girls participating in both flag and tackle football. He noted that registration fees are used to cover the cost of uniforms, equipment, officials, and the end of season pizza party.
4. **COLUMBUS YOUTH BASEBALL LEAGUE ANNUAL REPORT.** No representative for the organization was present at the meeting.
5. **COLUMBUS MARINERS BASEBALL LEAGUE ANNUAL REPORT.** Cory Reeder, Columbus Mariners Baseball League vice president, reviewed the 2021 season pointing out that 72-74 teams participate in their annual tournament bringing approximately 3,000 people to Columbus and noted that the only fundraiser organized by the league is the sale of wreaths.
6. **COLUMBUS BASEBALL ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REPORT.** Tom Meays, Columbus Baseball Association president, stated the main objective of the

organization is to oversee and support the youth baseball leagues and provide financial support when needed to assure that all kids wanting to play are given the opportunity. He explained the two phases proposed for the renovation of Pawnee Park baseball field and that the organization intends to contribute financially through fundraisers and grants.

7. **ADVERTISING SIGNS LOCATED AT PAWNEE PARK, CENTENNIAL PARK, AND BERNE SQUARE BASEBALL FIELDS FOR THE 2022 BASEBALL SEASON.** The signs were approved with a motion by Larson and a second by Jochens. Brezenski, Cutsor, Gutierrez, Hansen, Jochens, Larson, Puetz, Schmidt, and Shadle voted "Aye" and none voted "Nay".
8. **UPDATE ON VAN BERG FAMILY LEARNING CENTER.** Tom Freimuth, representing the Columbus Golf Association, explained the background leading up to the creation of the Van Berg Family Learning Center and introduced PGA Golf Professional and Certified US Kids Instructor Brent McGrew. McGrew reviewed projects he hopes to complete that will enhance the family oriented center pointing out that costs for these projects will be paid for through grants, fundraisers, and sponsorships. He also explained the new youth, adult, and family programs he plans to implement this year in addition to the successful youth programs already in place.
9. **FACILITIES AND PROGRAMMING CHANGES FOR AQUATIC CENTER AND GERRARD PARK.** Vasicek explained that the city will be taking over programming and facilities management at Gerrard Park that was previously managed by the Columbus Softball Association. In reviewing the magnitude of assuming these responsibilities, staff determined that reorganization of the public properties division, along with a reduction of the hours of operation at the Aquatic Center, would result in an annual savings of approximately \$272,000. Aquatic Center hours would be adjusted to match peak usage and evening programs requiring limited staff would be offered. Aquatic Center members would have exclusive use of Pawnee Plunge from 8 am until noon Monday through Friday during the summer months when the Aquatic Center would be closed as well as the option of utilizing the Columbus YMCA pool. Tomka stated that she has managed the Aquatic Center for the past 17 years pointing out that during that time Aquatic Center hours have been adjusted several times due to the needs of the community and she feels this proposed adjustment would be hurting the community. She acknowledged that costs involved in operating a public pool do not result in profit; however, she feels it is important to look at ways to increase revenue and decrease the deficit. Andrea Hoessel, vice president of public relations and marketing at Columbus Physical Therapy, stated that Columbus Physical Therapy uses the Aquatic Center for patient therapy and that without it many of their patients would not be walking and confirmed that the YMCA is not equipped to provide this service for their patients. She also mentioned that she visited with Tomka regarding marketing strategies that could be used to

increase Aquatic Center revenue, including an increase in the cost of membership passes, and requested that the board look at other options for funding Gerrard Park rather than putting the burden on the Aquatic Center. Eckhardt pointed out that increasing the cost of memberships by eliminating the group pass rate would not generate enough additional revenue to cover the cost of two full time employees. Shadle expressed opposition to the proposed changes of the Aquatic Center hours and reiterated that public pools do not make a profit but are an amenity provided by thriving communities as a public service. He stated that reducing hours of operation by more than 40 percent will not have a minimal impact on patrons and believes there are other options to be looked at. Eckhardt pointed out that 70 percent of the patrons using the Aquatic Center will not be affected by the reduced hours; however, if programs were eliminated at Gerrard Park, 7,000 individuals, 500 hotel stays, and restaurant revenue will all be affected, ultimately affecting the city as a whole. She confirmed that all other avenues were looked at and that the Aquatic Center was the one city facility with the largest deficit. Aquatic Center patrons Bob Goodman, Alan Brown, Rocky Plettner, Jayne Fredrickson, Lynae Morales, Barbara Masilko, Mary Plettner, Kathy Moseman, and Rita Douglas expressed concerns with the following issues: the need to use the facility in order to maintain continued mobility; the unaffordable cost of the YMCA which includes services they do not use; the size and quality of the facilities at the Aquatic Center compared to that of the YMCA; concerns of not being able to swim at Pawnee Plunge due to morning temperatures, inclement weather, and lack of access for patrons requiring physical accommodations; their willingness to pay an increased fee for an Aquatic Center membership; elimination of a facility for kids or extended family to swim in the evening and/or weekends; elimination of the only recreational amenity for seniors; not all patrons are available to use the facility during the proposed hours; employment opportunities for kids would be reduced; and swim team members would have no place to practice on weekends. Logan Erickson and Dartagnan Seamann stated that if the proposed changes are made, both, along with multiple other high school and college students, would lose their jobs. It was requested that the park board and city council look at all other options before making a decision. A motion to table a recommendation on a decision of the public property division changes with instructions for city staff, including Aquatic Center staff, to seek additional options to fund Gerrard Park and to address budget concerns regarding Aquatic Center expenditures was made by Shadle and seconded by Puetz. Brezenski, Cutsor, Gutierrez, Hansen, Jochens, Puetz, Schmidt, and Shadle voted "Aye" and Larson voted "Nay".

10. **PUBLIC PROPERTY DIRECTOR REPORT.** Moore mentioned that extremely dry conditions have affected the condition of the golf courses and athletic facilities.
11. **ADJOURNMENT.** The meeting adjourned at 1:53 p.m.

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

: Linda Nickeson

3. **Pawnee Park baseball field scoreboard.**
4. **Facilities and programming changes for Aquatic Center and Gerrard Park (tabled at the March 1, 2022, meeting).**



The City of Columbus

RESPONSIBLE • RESPONSIVE • REPUTABLE

Administration Office (402) 562-4232

Fax (402) 563-1380

Memorandum

DATE: March 30, 2022

TO: Park Board & City Council Members

FROM: Doug Moore, Public Property Director
Tara Vasicek, City Administrator

RE: Park and Recreation Division Changes

DISCUSSION:

Beginning in 2022 the City of Columbus will be responsible for the programming, operation and maintenance at Gerrard Park. Gerrard Park fields are historically used by Mariners, Columbus Havoc (Combined Bullets and Fire&Ice), Outlaws, and all adult leagues. In prior years the Columbus Softball Association (CSA) facilitated the programming, operation and maintenance at Gerrard. Over the last year, it has come to the City's attention that the CSA was not operating the facility according to the operation agreement. The City has been obligated to pay a number of outstanding expenses of the CSA to maintain relationships with umpires, irrigation companies, tournament coordinators and staff. For these reasons, the CSA is not able to continue.

Gerrard park programming positively impacts thousands of residents every season. The City believes it is important to continue to offer the programming that has previously been taking place at Gerrard.

City Staff have estimated the operation costs of Gerrard Park. That information is attached here. You will see that the net expense to the City is conservatively estimated to be approximately \$67,000 just to operate Gerrard as it has been previously. The City does not have this expense budgeted, so we have been exploring any and all ways the existing general fund revenues can support this operation. In addition to staff required to maintain the facility at Gerrard, there will also be staff needed to assist with programming and coordination with users of this facility and others the City is working to increase utilization at. In exploring way to fund this operation, we believe we can 'right size' the hours at the Aquatic Center and effect minimal patrons, but create significant savings. Below are organizational charts illustrating staff currently and proposed. This includes adding Park and Rec positions.

The Aquatic Center budget for this fiscal year is \$543,538.00. The majority of that expense is maintenance and staffing. The Aquatic Center is mostly utilized in the mornings. There are many times when 1-4 city employees are at the facility and there are less patrons than staff. This is not an efficient use of taxpayer dollars. Because of these facts, we believe hours at the Aquatic center can be reduced, which would save significant operation expense. The reduction in hours will effect some users, but the mass majority of users

will be able to adjust to the new hours or not be effected at all by 'open hours'. The savings could then be utilized on the programming, operation and maintenance at Gerrard and additional Park & Rec staff.

Option 1 – No Change

- Hours: 16 yrs + 8 am – 4 pm, <5 yrs Noon – 4 pm, all ages 4 – 8 pm (6 – 8 pm Nov-Feb), Weekends: Noon – 4 pm

Option 2 includes expenses for the following:

- Right sizing hours to peak use times. Mon – Fri 8:00 am – 1:00 pm (all ages)
 - Having some funds included for afternoon and evening swim lessons.
- Closed on weekends.
- Closed during the summer while the Pawnee Plunge is open.
- No change in use to CHS Swim team or the one YMCA swim meet.
- Evening Programming. (Fitness classes) Does not require lifeguards on staff.

Option 3 includes opening evenings and Saturdays along with fee increases

- Hours: Monday – Friday 8:00 am – 1:00 pm
 - Monday – Thursday 4:00 pm – 7:00 pm closed Friday evening
 - Monday – Thursday 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm during high school swim season
 - Saturdays Noon - 4:00 pm
 - Sundays Closed
- Closed during the summer while the Pawnee Plunge is open
- Pawnee Plunge hours
 - Monday – Friday 8:00 am – 11:00 am programing and lessons
 - Daily – Noon – 7:00 pm open swim
 - Monday – Thursday 7:00 pm – 8:00 pm programming and lessons

Fees

	CURRENT	PROPOSED
DAILY ADMISSION		
Infant (3 and Under	Free	\$5
Individual	\$5	\$5
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP		
Individual	\$110	\$125
Group (Maximum of 6)	\$210	\$600
MONTHLY PASS		
Individual	\$25	\$35
COMBO MEMBERSHIP (AQUATIC CENTER AND PAWNEE PLUNGE)		
Individual	\$150	\$175
Group (Maximum of 6)	\$400	\$800
PROGRAMMING		
50 Punches	\$75	\$100
25 Punches	\$50	\$75
10 Punches	\$25	\$35
5 Punches	\$15	\$20

- Swimming Lessons
Staff is currently working on a new program for individual swim lessons called Face Up First which will allow us to teach more lessons with less staff increasing revenues.
- If everyone that uses the Aquatic Center at the current fee schedule would continue to use the Aquatic Center at the proposed fee schedule, revenue would increase by \$31,530.

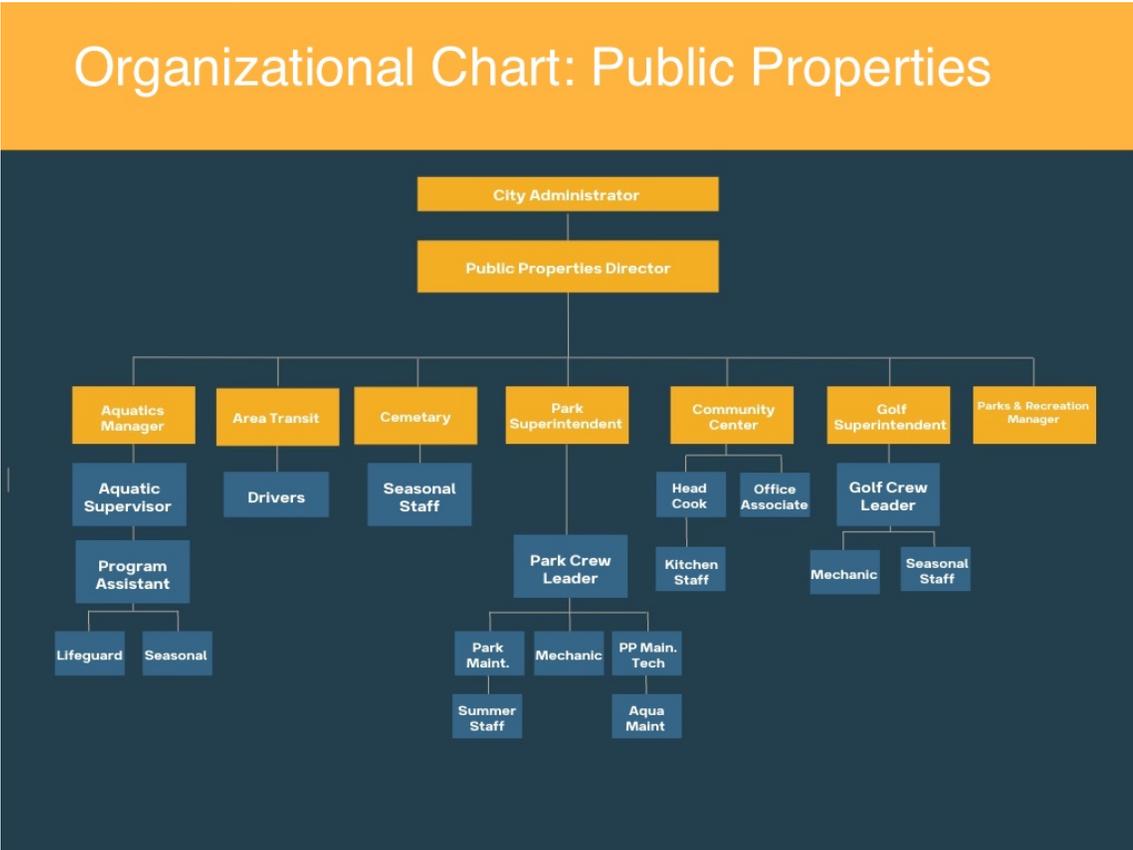
AQUATIC CENTER			
	OPTION 1	OPTION 2	OPTION 3
	No Change	Right size hours to match use of the facility.	Evening hours and Saturdays
Days Open	323	197	238
Cost to Operate	\$ 543,538	\$ 241,293	\$387,769
Cost per day	\$ 1,590	\$ 1,224.83	\$1,629.28
Net Operating	\$ (445,688)	\$ (173,443)	\$(246,969)
Operation Savings	\$ 0	\$ 272,245	\$155,769
Gerrard Operation & Park & Rec Positions			
Operation of Gerrard		\$ 66,408	\$66,408
New P&R Coordinator(s)		\$ 121,170 2 P&R Coordinators	\$70,595 1 P&R Coordinator
New Expenses:		\$ 187,578	\$137,003
Increase wages of Summer & Seasonal Employees			
Total Wages	\$251,846 (2021 actual)	\$330,000	
Change in total cost	\$ 0	\$ (36,513)	\$18,766

The bottom row in the above table represents an increase to summer and seasonal wages including: Lifeguards currently starting at \$10.25, increased to a starting hourly rate of \$14.00
All summer and seasonal wages will be increased, some more than others, based on ease or difficulty in filling the positions historically.

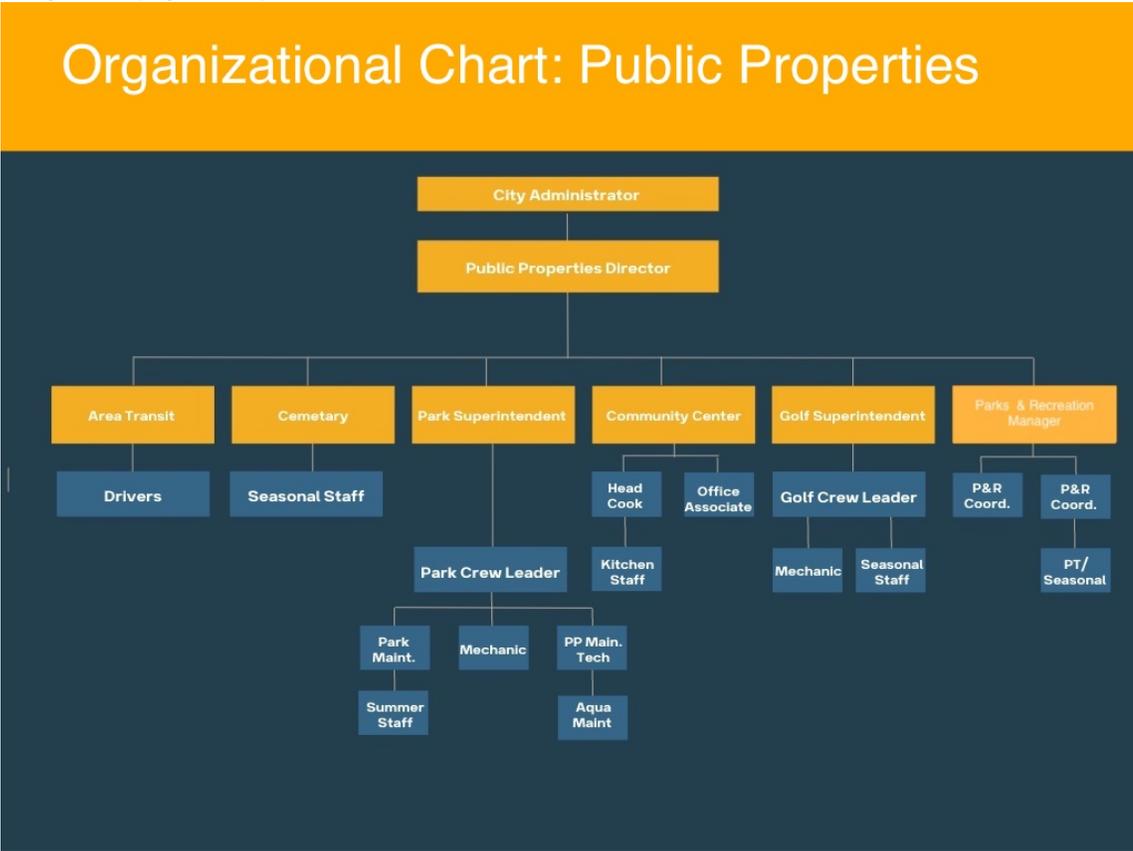
If approved, the described changes would take effect in May when the Pawnee Plunge opens for the summer season. Until that time, the Plunge will continue to operate as it is currently. When the Plunge opens in May, it will be open from 8:00 am – 12:00 pm for Aquatic Center members to utilize.

Organizational Structure

Current (Option 1):



Proposed (Option 2):



5. Public Property Director report.



The City of *Columbus*

PUBLIC PROPERTY DEPARTMENT

Director (402) 562-4240

Fax (402) 562-4265

April 2022

Monthly report

Taking applications in all departments for seasonal and summer staff

Park Department

- Starting to turn on irrigation systems
- Repaired scoreboard at Pawnee Park baseball field
- Have started turning on restrooms for spring
- Installed windscreens on tennis courts, checked lights and changed clocks
- Trimming trees throughout park system
- Had some vandalism damage in East Pawnee Park (posts and cable, restroom)
- Repairing and painting some benches in Frankfort Square that have been chipped
- Have completed repairs to Pawnee Park bridge (Waiting for inspection)
- Track meets, baseball, softball, soccer games and tennis matches have started
- Repairing damaged picnic tables
- Drainage work at Frontier Park completed, spring seeding planned
- Repaired Pawnee Park baseball field lights
- Received proposals for Pawnee Park baseball field lighting project
- Have started mowing athletic facilities
- Placed agri-lime on Gerrard fields D-E-F and Berne Field (purchased by Mariners)
- Accepted bids for armor coating at Pawnee Park baseball and football parking lots and Bradshaw Park

Park and Recreation

- Actively scheduling fields and facilities
- Applying for grants for facilities and programming
- Ordered field maintenance equipment
- Fundraising continues on Fitness Court at Sunset Park
- Gerrard Park and Berne Square games have started
- Concession stands at Gerrard and Berne Square stocked
- Informed by Nebraska Game and Parks didn't receive grant for construction of horseshoe courts at Frontier Park
- Youth sign up day on March 12 was very successful
- Park and Rec logos on van used to haul equipment, Betsy using it daily

Aquatics report

- Working with Sandy Creek Construction/JEO for construction of family slide at Pawnee Plunge
- Normal operations at Aquatic Center
- Contacting last year's staff at Plunge
- Starting lifeguard classes
- Installed new posts and rope at entrance to Pawnee Plunge
- Installing new entrance sign at Pawnee Plunge (destroyed during windstorm)

Staff working on new swimming lesson program (Face Up First)

Golf report

Have turned on irrigation systems

All equipment has been serviced and repaired, prepared for the season

Staff recently attended an irrigation/computer workshop in Omaha presented by Toro irrigation which is the system at Quail Run

Replacing posts and cable around Van Berg

Put in new fire door at Van Berg pro shop

Had new sheetrock installed at Van Berg pro shop

Met with Landscapes Unlimited to discuss Spring work, crews will arrive April 4

Seasonal staff has started

Aquatic Center Park Board Report

Aquatic Center - February Revenue Report

Description	Cash	Check	Credit/Debit	User Credit	Total
Passes	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 85.00	\$ -	\$ 85.00
Passes	\$ 375.00	\$ 1,295.00	\$ 125.00	\$ -	\$ 1,795.00
Admissions	\$ 713.00	\$ 194.00	\$ 336.00	\$ -	\$ 1,243.00
Programs	\$ 25.00	\$ 150.00	\$ 75.00	\$ -	\$ 250.00
Merch/Misc Sales	\$ 22.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 22.00
Building Rentals	\$ 120.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 300.00	\$ -	\$ 480.00
Equipment Rentals	\$ 30.50	\$ 6.00	\$ 7.00	\$ -	\$ 43.50
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 15.00	\$ -	\$ 15.00
Total:	\$ 1,285.50	\$ 1,705.00	\$ 943.00	\$ -	\$ 3,933.50

Aquatic Center - February Admittance Report

Membership

Item	Membership Check-Ins
Annual Memberships Aquatic Center Individual	84
Annual Memberships Aquatic Center Group	870
Program Admittance Memberships 50 Admissions	72
Monthly Memberships Aquatic Center Individual	25
Program Admittance Memberships 25 Admissions	5
Program Admittance Memberships 10 Admissions	8
Annual Memberships Combo (AC & PP) Group	34
Totals for Membership	1098

Admission

Item	Admission Check-Ins
Aquatic Center Admission Fees - Youth (4+)	103
Aquatic Center Admission Fees - Adult Admission (16+)	146
Aquatic Center Admission Fees - Senior Admission (55+)	13
Aquatic Center Admission Fees - Program Day Fee	40
Aquatic Center Admission Fees - Swim Team	122
Aquatic Center Admission Fees - Staff	4
Aquatic Center Admission Fees - 3&U	9
Totals for Admission	437

Totals for *AC Park Board Admissions Report*

1535

Aquatic Center Park Board Report

Aquatic Center - March Revenue Report

Description	Cash	Check	Credit/Debit	User Credit	Total
Admissions - PP	\$ 20.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20.00
Admissions - AC	\$ 1,708.00	\$ 48.00	\$ 648.00	\$ -	\$ 2,404.00
Passes - PP	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Passes - AC	\$ 150.00	\$ 570.00	\$ 415.00	\$ -	\$ 1,135.00
Programs	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 25.00	\$ -	\$ 25.00
Lifeguard/WSI (Red Cross Classes)	\$ -	\$ 175.00	\$ 350.00	\$ -	\$ 525.00
Merch/Misc Sales	\$ 9.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9.00
Building Rentals	\$ 9.00	\$ -	\$ 360.00	\$ -	\$ 369.00
Equipment Rentals	\$ 16.00	\$ -	\$ 3.00	\$ -	\$ 19.00
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total:	\$ 1,912.00	\$ 793.00	\$ 1,801.00	\$ -	\$ 4,506.00

Aquatic Center -March Admittance Report

Membership

Item	Membership Check-Ins
Annual Memberships Aquatic Center Individual	67
Annual Memberships Aquatic Center Group	1133
Monthly Memberships Aquatic Center Individual	11
Program Admittance Memberships 50 Admissions	75
Program Admittance Memberships 25 Admissions	2
Program Admittance Memberships 10 Admissions	6
Program Admittance Memberships 5 Admissions	0
Annual Memberships Combo (AC & PP) Group	42
Annual Memberships Combo (AC & PP) Individual	9
Totals for Membership	1345

Admission

Item	Admission Check-Ins
Aquatic Center Admission Fees - Youth (4+)	376
Aquatic Center Admission Fees - Adult Admission (16+)	270
Aquatic Center Admission Fees - Senior Admission (55+)	7
Aquatic Center Admission Fees - Program Day Fee	0
Aquatic Center Admission Fees - Swim Team	0
Aquatic Center Admission Fees - Staff	27
Aquatic Center Admission Fees Prerequisite Practice	10
Aquatic Center Admission Fees - 3&U	20
Totals for Admission	710

Totals for *AC Park Board Admissions Report*

2055

6. Adjournment.