

City of San Diego
Parks and Recreation Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, November 20, 2025

“TO PROVIDE HEALTHY, SUSTAINABLE, AND ENRICHING ENVIRONMENTS FOR ALL”

Meeting Held by In Person and Teleconference: This meeting was held at the Balboa Park Club Ballroom and remotely using the Zoom Webinar platform and was streamed online. The public was invited to join the meeting by phone or computer, as well as invited to submit Public Comments in writing via a webform. The form was made available on the Parks and Recreation website at <https://www.sandiego.gov/park-and-recreation/general-info/boards>.

Both verbal and written communication were used by Board Members, City staff, and presenters during the meeting. City staff also used the screen-share function to allow viewers to view content shared by the speaker which included PowerPoint presentations and websites.

Before the meeting was called to order, City staff read instructions to the public regarding technical procedures for making live public comment during the webinar.

| Members Present | Members Absent | City Staff Present |
|---|---|--|
| Nick Anastasopoulos Jeremy Bloom Marcella Bothwell (Chair) Dr. Andrea Dooley Daniele Laman Dr. Judith Muñoz Evelyn Smith Agatha Wein | Rick Gulley (Vice Chair) Allison Soares | Michelle Abella-Shon Jacob Basinger Kathleen Brand Marie Carriedo (Virtual) Benny Cartwright (Virtual) Brice Ciabatti (Virtual) Katelyn Cleveland (Virtual) Andy Field Ilisa Goldman (Virtual) Stephanie Green (Virtual) Ana Grow (Virtual) Karen Dennison (Virtual) Lin Keiser-Hua (Virtual) Louis Merlin (Virtual) Brian Schoenfisch Francis Marquez Jose Mendoza (Virtual) Justin Nguyen Kaitlyn Porter (Virtual) Elvi Ricafort Saba Raisesmaili Zina Rummani (Virtual) Scott Sandel (Virtual) Gabriela Verendia |

CALL TO ORDER – The meeting was called to order by Chair Bothwell at 2:06 pm.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 16, 2025

MOTION/SECONDED:

Ms. Laman/Dr. Muñoz

A motion was made by Ms. Laman to approve the minutes with corrections on page 2 and page 6. This motion was seconded by Dr. Muñoz. The motion was approved 7-0-0 with the following vote: Yea: Nick Anastasopoulos, Jeremy Bloom, Marcella Bothwell, Andrea Dooley, Daniele Laman, Judith Munoz, and Evelyn Smith. Recused: None. Abstained: None. Not Present: Rick Gulley, Allison Soares, and Agatha Wein.

NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT:

Gary Blume from Total Altruism Project provided an update on his efforts to reduce litter in the park system. His efforts have led to substantial reductions in litter in parks in the Navajo area that used to have significant litter and trash issues. Mr. Blume is also working in the City of Santee but looks forward to working in the City of San Diego again soon.

Meghan Foster, a resident of Allied Gardens, spoke about the proposed Foster Elementary Joint Use Facility. Ms. Foster is opposed to the proposed Play All Day joint use facility at this school location because of the inadequate mobility infrastructure between Waring Road and Estrella Avenue, as traffic delays can cause bumper-to-bumper traffic through the neighborhood. The neighborhood is circulated a petition signed by 60 neighbors to oppose the joint use field, especially sports fields coming to park in the neighborhood. Parking will create bottlenecks and challenges getting to and from the field. Dogs off leash are also a concern.

Libby Day, a resident of Allied Gardens, spoke about the proposed Foster Elementary Joint Use Facility. Ms. Day opposes the proposed joint use in the Allied Gardens area focusing on traffic impacts and safety issues. She noted the joint use gates would need to be locked overnight. Design is simple, but usage guidelines are not simple. The concern is that the joint use field will be used by people not from the neighborhood.

Ozzie Meneses from Groundwork San Diego spoke about advocacy for Chollas Creek and green spaces. There are severe access issues in Chollas Creek that prevent recreational opportunities. Residents should not be confronted with locked gates at Sunshine Berardini Fields. Mr. Meneses expressed concerns about the proposed Fairmount Fire Station, which is planned for construction on undeveloped land adjacent to Chollas Creek Open Space. Partnerships are needed to help build for the community and with the community. Chair Bothwell asked Mr. Meneses to work with San Diego Parks Foundation to share ideas on improving access in the Chollas Creek watershed.

Marianne Myers, a resident of Allied Gardens, expressed concerns with the safety issues that are likely to emerge if the Foster Elementary School Joint Use Area is built. She is concerned with traffic from adult leagues at 50th Street and Orcutt Avenue, similar to testimony received from Ms. Foster and Ms. Day.

Jerome Myers lives at 5010 Orcutt Avenue, which is a dead-end street leading to the back gate of Foster Elementary School. Another school shares the campus space with Foster,

which causes more traffic congestion. He expressed concerns with the overall campus planning efforts conducted by San Diego Unified School District. The proposed joint use field will create dangerous traffic issues and should not be built.

The Sixth Graders of Millennial Tech School (Nutrition Class) joined the meeting via Zoom to express support for the general development plan of Sunshine Berardini Field for soccer, baseball, and trails. Their teacher requested the gates at Sunshine Berardini Field be unlocked and made available for additional recreational uses. This reduces access to the park, which is needed for the community.

REQUESTS FOR CONTINUANCE: None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Balboa Park Committee – Ms. Soares was not present, and there was no update.
- Mission Bay Park Committee – Dr. Muñoz reported that the Committee received an update on the costs of projects under the Mission Bay Improvement Fund Oversight Committee, including how design and soft costs are charged to projects. The Oversight Committee sent a letter to the City earlier this month outlining concerns about the priority of projects, recommending a refocus on environmental projects. Chair Bothwell asked about the status of DeAnza Special Study. Director Field responded that the California Coastal Commission is working with the City to determine what studies are needed to finalize their review of the master plan amendment. It is likely that the general development plan process for DeAnza will be included in upcoming Mission Bay Park Improvement Fund Financial Outlook, as the general development plan will help guide DeAnza into 30% design status.
- Mission Trails Regional Park (MTRP) Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) – Mr. Gulley was not present, and there was no update.
- San Diego Parks Foundation (SDPF) – Chair Bothwell shared a summary of the recent *A Walk in the Park* fundraiser on November 6, 2025. The next major fundraiser will be this winter's Undertow golf tournament.

CHAIRPERSON COMMENTS:

Chair Bothwell had no additional report beyond the SDPF update.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Parks and Recreation Director Andy Field offered the following update on a variety of park-related topics.

Audit of Mission Bay Lease Revenues (Fiscal Year 2024):

As part of the annual audit of Mission Bay Lease Revenues, the Office of the City Auditor made several findings. This item will be on the agenda for a future Regional Park Improvement Fund Oversight Committee Meeting.

FINDING 1: Office of the City Treasurer could not formally issue potential audit findings from the required percentage lease revenue audits for FY2024 due to a City Management-directed moratorium on revenue audits, which increases the risk of loss of revenue and reduces transparency and oversight for the City.

FINDING 2: The Economic Development Department did not impose lease penalty fees for Mission Bay rental accounts for FY2024.

FINDING 3: Of 31 Mission Bay rental agreements, 11 (or 35 percent) are in “holdover” status, which may be leading to foregone revenue for the City and potential or perceived favoritism amongst lessees.

FINDING 4: The City should provide additional project information to the improvement fund oversight committees to strengthen transparency and maximize project delivery.

These findings resulted in the following recommendations. The Mayor’s Office agreed to implement all five recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION 1.1: The Chief Financial Officer or other City Executive leadership should issue a memorandum or other written guidance discouraging future moratoria and which requires promptly informing the Office of the City Auditor and the Chair of the Audit Committee if the ability to perform lease revenue audit functions is restricted in the future.

RECOMMENDATION 2.1: The Economic Development Department should develop and utilize a lease management process narrative that includes the verification of lease terms and agreements at least annually and a process for lease renewal. Additionally, a process narrative should be developed and utilized that includes a periodic quality control check of revenue received from lease concessions to ensure the revenue received is complete, accurate, and timely. The process narrative(s) should include, but not be limited to, the following lease agreement areas:

- Lease Terms
- Payment Terms
- Hold Over Terms
- Late Fee Assessments

RECOMMENDATION 2.2: The Economic Development Department should create and document procedures to reconcile REPortfolio payment data to SAP in accordance with the City policy process narrative #1 PN-0446, “Use of an Alternate Billing or Interfacing System” to strengthen internal controls and ensure revenue is accurately accounted for and received timely.

RECOMMENDATION 3.1: The Economic Development Department should ensure that lease agreements which have extended beyond lease agreement terms receive the required Council approval and appraisal to ensure lease agreements are binding and fair market rental rate is received for the leased property.

RECOMMENDATION 4.1: To ensure that the oversight committees have sufficient information to execute their responsibilities per City Charter, and that they are able to review and verify the allocation and use of improvement funds in compliance with City Charter, the

Parks and Recreation Department and Engineering and Capital Projects Department should work with both the Mission Bay Park Improvement Fund and San Diego Regional Park Improvement Fund Oversight Committees to reach an agreement and mechanism to specify which specific project elements should be provided and the frequency that the departments should generate and share the reports. For example:

- a. A well-defined project scope and, when a project scope has changed since the previous reporting cycle, an explanation on why the project scope changed.
- b. Project cost estimates and, when a project cost estimate has materially changed since the previous reporting cycle, an explanation on why the cost estimate changed.
- c. Estimated timelines for the current project phase completion and the final project completion and, when current project phase and final project completion timelines have been significantly extended, an explanation on why timelines were extended.
- d. Project expenditures to date, specifying total contractor, overhead, City personnel, and relevant permit or inspection expenditures.
- e. Project expenditures by project phase (i.e., Bid/Award, Construction, Design, Planning, Post-Construction).

Board Member Update: One Board vacancy remains. Candidates are being screened for consideration. Director Field will pass along more information as it becomes available. Also, several current members' terms will end in March 2026. Director Field will connect with Boards and Commissions Director Chida Warren-Darby to process requests for Board Members interested in continuing to serve for another term. Consecutive board terms cannot exceed eight total years or four two-year terms. Interested applicants can apply at the Office of Boards and Commissions onboarding webpage at: <https://onboard.sandiego.gov/board/3406>.

Balboa Park Paid Parking

- Balboa Park Paid Parking was approved by City Council on November 18, 2025, and parking fees will be collected starting on January 5, 2026. This does not include parking at the San Diego Zoo, which will determine its parking rates. Here are some key features of the approved paid parking program:

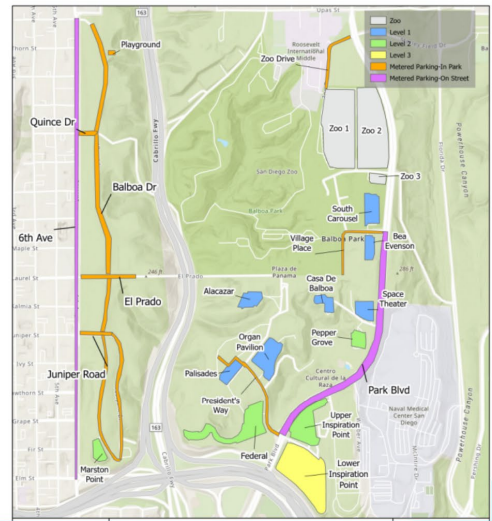
Balboa Park Paid Parking

Approved Rates

Rates contingent on:

- Resident Verification Portal Activated
- Annual/Quarterly Parking Passes Made Available

| Category | Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 | On-Street Meters |
|--------------|------------------------|----------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Resident | \$8/day \$5/4 hrs | \$5/day | \$5/day with first 3 hrs free | \$2.50/hr w/ \$10/day max |
| Non-Resident | \$16/day \$10/4 hrs | \$10/day | \$10/day with first 3 hrs free | \$2.50/hr w/ \$10/day max |



Balboa Park Paid Parking

Proposed Pass Rates

| Pass Type | Resident | Non-Resident |
|-----------|----------|--------------|
| Monthly | \$30 | \$40 |
| Quarterly | \$60 | \$120 |
| Annual | \$150 | \$300 |

- Staff is recommending three pass rates to meet the different needs of park visitors.
- Passes range from \$30 to \$300 depending on frequency and resident/non-resident verification status.
- Passes would be eligible for all lots, regardless of Level and on park roads (not eligible for parking spaces reserved by a special event).
- Passes would not be eligible in the San Diego Zoo parking lot, or on-street roads outside of Balboa Park (e.g. 6th Ave and Park Blvd).
- Passes be made available through portal in development via City Treasurer's vendor, IPS.
- Non-Resident passes are approximately double the price of the Resident passes.



Balboa Park Paid Parking

Portal Overview

Online Verification and Pass Selection

Online Resident Verification

- Drivers License, Utility Bill.
- One Time Set Up Fee (\$5)

Timeline for Resident Verification

- 24-48 hours
- Valid for three years

Pass Selection (tied to license plate)

- Daily Pass Option
- Frequent Parking Pass Option
 - Monthly Pass
 - Quarterly Pass
 - Annual Pass

Pass duration tied to date of purchase



Balboa Park Paid Parking

Special Event Fee Calculation

Fee Calculation Overview:

- Base Rate Formula: Number of spaces used × applicable rate adjustments × resident lot rate (or metered rate)
- Rate Adjustments:
 - Non-profit organizations: 50% discount (× 0.5)
 - Morning-only use (until 10 AM): Additional 50% discount (× 0.5)
 - 10 AM timing is subject to the discretion of the Special Event Office and Parks and Recreation
- Rates
 - \$8/\$5 per space depending on Lot level or space
- Example: Organ Pavilion Parking Lot - Non-profit organization uses 352 Level 1 lot spaces until 10 AM: $352 \times 0.5 \times 0.5 \times \$8 = \$704$ total fee
- New special event fees would apply to reservation of space applications submitted to the Special Event and Film Office on or after January 5th, 2026.
- Revenue from new special event fees is limited to approximately 30 special events held annually within the park.

| Parking Spaces Used | Rate (per spot) | Full Day Rate (all spots) | | Half Day Rate (all spots) | |
|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| | | For Profit | Non-Profit (50% Discount) | For-Profit | Non-Profit (50% Discount) |
| 352 | \$8.00 | \$2,816 | \$1,408 | \$1,408 | \$704 |



Winter Carnivals and Events: As we approach Thanksgiving and the holiday season, Parks and Recreation offers numerous events and activities, including [December Nights](#), which is held in Balboa Park on December 5 and 6, 2025.

- New this year:
 - Après Tavern in Plaza de Panama – European-inspired beer, wine and holiday cocktail garden
 - Murphy the Reindeer (live reindeer) at the Palm Stage in the Palisades Area
 - Food Truck Alley and Mini Golf at Village Place
 - Light Show in the Plaza de Panama
 - Home Depot Kids Craft Corner
- Returning this year:
 - Ferris Wheel in Palisades Plaza
 - Botanical Building including Poinsettia Display
 - Organ Pavilion Entertainment Stage

- International Cottages Ethnic Food Marketplace, Folkloric Entertainment, International Spirits Garden
- Movies on the Lawn near Palisades
- Food vendors, sponsor booths, etc.
- Family Zone in Municipal Gymnasium – free arts and crafts, Santa Claus, library resources, face painting

Please visit the P&R webpage to see the [event calendar](#), which is currently getting updated with the latest winter-themed events.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

Dr. Muñoz asked if the annual rate for paid parking in Balboa Park will be tied to the license plate rather than the driver license. Director Field responded tied into the car's license plate. Dr. Munoz next asked how payments can be made for paid parking. Director Field responded that the process is through two methods. The first option is to pay with coins or with credit card at one of the ±50 kiosks. Users enter the payment information and license plate number. The second option is to have an app on the phone and use parking app on the phone to enter payment and license plate information.

Ms. Laman asked about impacts of paid parking for attendance at both Parks and Recreation Board and Balboa Park Committee (BPC) meetings, since many participants are volunteers. She asked whether the BPC start doing hybrid meeting in January to help increase attendance at the meetings. Director Field responded that guidelines for paid parking during public meetings will be shared as they become available. Ms. Laman asked about making BPC meetings hybrid (both in person and virtual). Director Field responded that the Department lacks sufficient staff to support hybrid BPC meetings or at the same level given to Board meetings.

Chair Bothwell asked about the Mission Bay lease revenue audit. Director Field responded that the Office of the City Auditor (OCA) recently completed its annual audit, which was discussed in a recent Union-Tribune article. As part of the field work for this audit, the OCA asked questions of several Board members to gather information on the efficacy of the information provided to help them make decisions about the funds derived from Mission Bay lease revenues. He mentioned that the informational update provided to the Regional Park Improvement Fund Oversight Committee and Mission Bay Improvement Fund Oversight Committee in fall 2025 was explicitly to increase the amount of detail and useful information to Committee members, in response to Recommendation 4.1. Other findings, which were mentioned in the director's report, are associated with lease management and fall under the responsibility of other City departments.

Ms. Wein stated that Balboa Park parking is a bad idea that will prevent people from attending the cultural institutions and museums, disenfranchising numerous people.

Dr. Muñoz indicated the Mission Bay Park Committee remains concerned about the potential impacts of paid parking on people choosing not to come to the park.

Ms. Laman asked about land acquisition. She is interested in lobbying for acquiring parkland for a new park with support from local community recreation groups and the Board itself.

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She also announced that the House of Pacific Relations is welcoming House of Somalia on Saturday, November 22, 2025.

Mr. Bloom noted that MTS bus service is not available at December Nights and asked if that can be changed. Director Field suggested that if bus service is not available for this year's December Nights event, perhaps he could connect Mr. Bloom with Special Events Executive Director Christina Chadwick to get more background on why MTS historically reduces bus service and whether that decision can be revisited.

Mr. Anastasopoulos asked about alternate venues for Board meetings to help reduce the burden of parking in Balboa Park for the usual location at the Balboa Park Club. Director Field indicated finding a large enough room that is not a gymnasium is difficult, and most gymnasiums have routine activity that is difficult to reschedule in favor of a meeting.

Ms. Smith reported that several constituents support Option 2 regarding field access for Sunshine Bernardini Fields, which would eliminate the locked gates. Director Field asked Ms. Smith to clarify if the constituency would like additional sports beyond baseball, which is the only sport offered there currently. Ms. Smith responded affirmatively, they would like to play soccer and other sports. This aligns with earlier non-agenda public comment from the sixth graders at Millennial Tech Academy. Director Field reported that public outreach has been underway for the Sunshine Bernardini General Development Plan. This GDP was brought to the Board earlier this year, when a member of the Sunshine Little League expressed concerns that there was insufficient outreach. It is likely that the core issue is whether this park should be used solely for baseball or expanded to include other sports. This will eventually be a discussion item for the Board when the GDP returns to the Board in 2026.

Ms. Smith then asked if land that is reserved for a park in a community plan is required to be developed as a park. Director Field responded that if the land in question is owned by the City and under the control of the Parks and Recreation Department, there would be effort to work to develop the park if funds are available. However, if the park is privately owned, the owner of the parcel may have entitlements, zoning, and/or permits that could allow the property to be developed differently, perhaps for housing or other land uses. The process to develop private property is not an expertise of Director Field, who suggested that Development Services Department could help provide more information on how this process works.

REQUEST FOR CONTINUANCE: None

CONSENT ITEMS: None

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

101. Calendar Year 2026 Parks and Recreation Board Meeting Dates

Senior Management Analyst Elvi Ricafort presented the Calendar Year 2026 Parks and Recreation Board Meeting Dates.

Public Comments: None

Board Comments: None

MOTION/SECONDED: Mr. Anastasopoulos/Dr. Andrea Dooley

A motion was made by Mr. Anastasopoulos and seconded by Dr. Dooley. The motion was approved 8-0-0 and passed unanimously with the following vote: Yea: Nick Anastasopoulos, Jeremy Bloom, Marcella Bothwell, Andrea Dooley, Daniele Laman, Judith Muñoz, Evelyn Smith, and Agatha Wein. Nay: None. Recused: None. Abstained: None. Not Present: Rick Gulley and Allison Soares.

102. Harmony Park General Development Plan (GDP) and Naming

Senior Planner Jacob Basinger and Senior Planner Saba Raisesmaili presented the Harmony Park Development GDP and recommended naming Harmony Park.

Public Comments:

Justine Murray from the Government Affairs for the Downtown Partnership stated that they are in favor of this park project and support the activation of this area of Downtown San Diego.

Robin Kaufman asked when the pickleball games would operate? Project Officer Kathleen Brand and Director Field indicated that the site is open by default 24 hours per day and seven days per week. There may be interest in the future to establish operating hours and possibly a curfew to restrict overnight usage and prevent extensive noise issues from the pickleball court. Those decisions will be made as the park opens.

Board Comments:

Chair Bothwell asked about the pickleball element and expressed concerns that it might be difficult to operate given noise concerns.

Ms. Laman asked if the dog park is fenced. Mr. Basinger said yes. Ms. Laman asked if the park would be for all sizes of dogs. Mr. Basinger said yes. Ms. Laman asked if pickleball lights would be on all night long. Mr. Barr stated the lights would be on a timer.

Ms. Laman asked which entity would maintain the park. Mr. Basinger stated that once the ownership transfers to the City, the Parks and Recreation Department would take over maintenance.

Ms. Laman asked how the name was chosen. Mr. Basinger stated that the name comes from the Downtown Community Plan adopted in 2006.

Ms. Laman asked if there is a community recreation group assigned to Harmony Park. Ms. Brand indicated that role is provided by the Downtown Community Planning Group as there is no current recreation group in the downtown area. This may be reevaluated after East Village Green opens in 2026.

MOTION/SECONDED: Mr. Anastasopoulos/Mr. Bloom

A motion was made by Mr. Anastasopoulos and seconded by Mr. Bloom. The motion was approved 8-0-0 and passed unanimously with the following vote: Yea: Nick Anastasopoulos, Jeremy Bloom, Marcella Bothwell, Dr. Andrea Dooley, Daniele Laman, Dr. Judith Muñoz, Evelyn Smith, and Agatha Wein. Nay: None. Recused: None. Abstained: None. Not Present: Rick Gulley and Allison Soares.

103. Peñasquitos Creek Neighborhood Park Proposed General Development Plan (GDP) Amendment

Associate Civil Engineer Francis Marquez and Senior Architect Yuanchi Zhao presented the Peñasquitos Creek Neighborhood Park Proposed General Development Plan (GDP) Amendment.

Public Comments:

Lillian Barnes from the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) expressed concern that this project was not brought to the CAC for review. She asked the design team to come to the next meeting to present the proposed restroom to their group.

Board Comments:

Chair Bothwell asked Director Field to respond to Ms. Barnes' concerns. Director Field said the Rancho Peñasquitos Community Recreation Group is the appropriate recreation group to provide community feedback on the proposed changes to the park per Council Policy 600-33. However, given the canyon's location next to the park, it is preferable to advise the CAC of the future project. Director Field asked Mr. Marquez if his team could present the proposed project to the CAC, and Mr. Marquez agreed that it could be done at a future CAC meeting.

Dr. Muñoz asked for the estimated cost of the construction of the project. Mr. Marquez responded that the estimated cost would be \$1.5 million.

Ms. Laman asked if the project was fully funded. Mr. Marquez responded that there is funding for the design and additional funding is needed. Director Field indicated it has received State grant funds and is funded for design. The Department will need to identify any additional funds needed to complete the project if the State grants funds are insufficient to bring the project to construction.

MOTION/SECONDED: Mr. Anastasopoulos/Mr. Bloom

A motion was made by Mr. Anastasopoulos and seconded by Mr. Bloom. The motion was approved 8-0-0 and passed unanimously with the following vote: Yea: Nick Anastasopoulos, Jeremy Bloom, Marcella Bothwell, Andrea Dooley, Daniele Laman, Judith Muñoz, Evelyn Smith, and Agatha Wein. Nay: None. Recused: None. Abstained: None. Not Present: Rick Gulley and Allison Soares.

INFORMATION ITEMS: None.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 3:42 p.m.

Copies of the reports, attachments, PowerPoint presentations, and audio-video recordings can be found on the Parks and Recreation Department website at <http://www.sandiego.gov/parkandrecboard/reports>.

Next Calendared Meeting: January 15, 2026, at 2:00 p.m.

Submitted by,

Andy Field

Director

Parks and Recreation Department