

MINUTES
Goshen Parks and Recreation Commission
May 27, 2025 at 6:00PM
Goshen City Hall, 244 Clark Street

A meeting of the Goshen Parks and Recreations Commission was held on May 27, 2025 at 6:00pm at the Goshen Community Center

Call to Order: Danielle Edwards @ 6:00

Roll Call: PRESENT - Danielle Edwards, Mike Nimmo, Linda Moore, Day Crowne,
Not in Attendance: Nathan Snipes

Approval of Agenda: Mike Nimmo made a motion to accept the agenda as written; Linda Moore seconded
All in favor; None opposed

Approval of Minutes from April 22, 2025

A few items to change (grammatical); Danielle Edwards made a motion to approve the minutes with the edits;
Linda Moore seconded
All in favor; None opposed

Old Business

Progress on Park Projects -

Bids are open for the ARDOT TAP Grant - went with NEC (most cost-effective bid); waiting on Craft and Tull to finish the contract with them.

Trees were planted on the north side (south side of creek/trees and north side of creek where shrubs were planted) and 76 shrubs planted on Friday (5/23); 1 White Swamp Oak was removed from under the 3-phase power line and replanted along with 5 other trees going to the story book tree (also planted); 6 loads of chocolate gravel rock have been delivered down by the Spring House as well as by the chicken house pad; getting more delivered (18 tons) - buying in bulk saves 3x per ton.

Volunteer Day Update - 6 dump trailer loads of clean-up were hauled off (dead fall); in attendance were Andrew Eden, John Irwin, Curtis Vaughan, Mike Nimmo, Russell Stroud, Ivan (maintenance) and Danielle Edwards.

New Business

Maintenance Plan -

In regards to the Special Meeting that was held (Danielle Edwards was not able to be in attendance) there was a motion made by Councilman Colton Martin that there would be no spraying and no clearing w/in 25' of the riparian zone until an update to the maintenance plan was made (by Parks Commission) and brought to City Council and approved by them. This motion was approved by City Council. The result is, at the moment, we are not able to even mow the trails; there are several riparian zones and that includes (what has always been

mowed) the entire area to the story book tree and it also includes the salamander pond and some other areas where water drains through and the spring house. Danielle Edwards indicated that (in the meeting packet) there was a revised Comprehensive Maintenance Plan that she is hopeful to take to City Council next meeting.

Max Moore (Public Input/Question) - What was the reasoning of the moratorium on the spring? Mayor Stroud says there is a concern that the staff is spraying 24-D that they are not authorized to spray (which is not incorrect); Mayor is unsure why they voted on the 25' from the riparian zone; Mayor believes what they intended was 25' buffer from the stream. In Comprehensive Management Plan (for guidance) there's a 15' buffer from the streamside. Mike Nimmo believes that the Council doesn't understand that the riparian zone is a wider area than just streamside.

Danielle Edwards asked if everyone has had the opportunity to review the Comprehensive Maintenance Plan (revised) to bring to City Council. Mike Nimmo feels that 6' trail mowing is too narrow (the sides get so high that they flop over onto the trail making it difficult to walk). Mayor says they do 12' now; there are areas that are 6' because you can't get it any wider in those specific areas (which is why it's still in the revised maintenance plan). Suggested verbiage was to add "12' where possible".

Danielle Edwards made a motion to be able to take revised copy to Council with the changes of "12', where possible, for mowing". Mike Nimmo seconded
All in favor; None opposed

Danielle wants these things to be brought up to Council - 5 topics:

"The planting of non-native vegetation is not prohibited so long as it does not pose a foreseeable risk for becoming invasive"

All in favor; None opposed

"The Parks Commission recommends that we support the preference of native vegetation that is native to the northwest Arkansas region, including the Ozark region, when considering any future planting"

All in favor; None opposed

"The Parks Commission recognizes the need to help prevent streamside erosion and to plan for streamside management. We would recommend that, in general, a 15' to 25' buffer should ideally be preserved along the stream bank. This does not mean that this area cannot be managed in a way that promotes approved access points along the creek to further improve steps to mitigate erosion and promote healthy stream ecology."

All in favor; None opposed

"The Parks Commission recognizes the importance of riparian zones and desires to allow use of riparian zones at Mill Branch Park for public access and enjoyment. This can be accomplished through collaboration with the Arbor Board and City Staff." (stream side is very different than riparian zone)

All in favor; None opposed

"The Comprehensive Maintenance Plan that was provided by the Watershed Alliance for the City of Goshen, will continue to be utilized as a best practice document for guidance on the parks ongoing development and maintenance."

Mayor Stroud followed up with the only way of violating a HUD agreement/funds received from HUD (which has been expressed concern by Mary Smith, public), is if we go back in try to develop that property in a way that is not for parks purposes; or if we try to sell the property; or if we try to change the entire stream; if we are going

in and cleaning up things and trying to manage the park appropriately as possible, it doesn't violate our agreement just because we don't follow, to the letter, every detail
All in favor; None opposed

Walk-Thru Recap/Summary

Mike Nimmo and Day Crowne attended - Mike States it was contentious and heated statements being made upon his arrival; people are passionate about what they believe on both sides; there was not (initially) a lot of room for compromise. The expert in attendance (Nate Weston) was there to speak on behalf of the point of view that the park needs to be primarily a nature preserve; however, after listening to both sides, he believes that there was room for compromise in regards to parts of the park suitable for development for access and parts that are not. Items pointed out, as a group, areas that would be suitable for that type of development.

A parks commission colleague was called out for speaking out about the park, which was unprofessional, out of line, and off-base. Mike Nimmo wants to propose a resolution for the Parks Commission to recognize Day Crowne as an expert in the field of Horticulture, with the exception of voting rights until she is officially confirmed as a commissioner, is to be afforded the same opportunity to speak to issues concerning the parks commission as all others on the committee. Danielle Edwards seconded. Linda Moore asked if the parks commission needs to go before the Council to ask for this. Mike Nimmo added that currently Day is in an advisory position and that she officially cannot be on the commission until the annexation of her property (which is in the works) is completed, and should be official soon. Mayor Stroud has encouraged Day to be in attendance, supporting her future addition to the parks commission, following the completion of her property annexation.

All in favor; None opposed

Day Crowne (Input) - Was in attendance at the walk-thru (notated above); felt that several compromises were met and making sure that the park is the park for use and we protect what we can protect. Nate Weston (a Geo-Spatial Ecologist) identified 4-6 different areas that we all agreed upon and would be good access points for park use that would also be advantageous to not hurting the zones and creek itself. Also identified were NOT good access points, one being the road that's an easement through city property - Max wanted to use it as one of the spots but concerns about kids playing in it - so felt it was not a good access point to consider as a park option. Survey was discussed to figure out the corner (property boundaries) before the directional signs get put up. Day says that Nate should be used in the future as a reference; says Nate was a good balance and resource.

Linda Moore asked Day about surveying for private property - do your neighbors own down into the creek? Mayor says, no; only The Knolls has some ownership. Currently working with surveyors to have the park marked every 100'-200' for the boundary. Mayor says signs are ordered that indicate access point and boundaries (on our part of the creek). Mayor says we are also ordering signs for pollinating zones/special habitats.

Linda asked about making a butterfly viewing area in enclosed corral; Mayor says near the story book tree or the area between the spring crossing and spring house (a field area) and an overlook is being built there and may make a good place for both birds and butterfly pollinators in there.

Mike Nimmo added another topic that was discussed at the walk-thru was that dead standing trees that could pose a threat to people close to trail areas - a couple on the north side that are rotted at the base (a good wind/rain storm could blow them over). There's also a nesting redheaded woodpecker family right now (not currently in danger); General agreement was to wait, it doesn't come down on its own until the nesting season comes to fruition, they are gone, and then we can take those trees down.

Next Park Project Ideas

Danielle Edwards asked if the commission wanted to do a volunteer event/project or any ideas that anyone wanted to throw out. Mike Nimmo says there's a ravine that has a very steep embankment; Mayor talked about putting in a culvert down there to make it more level. Mike Nimmo gives credit to Andrew Eden, Arbor Board President, (who wants to make a bridge with utility/poles found) because they were at the chicken house pad and there is a bunch of old, used light poles that could be used to construct a bridge that would help with the bailing and mowing equipment and emergency equipment could also get across a lot easier. Max Moore (public) contributed that the poles may be an issue if they are creosote and being used in the ground. Mayor is ok with Mike Nimmo's proposal of a bridge (not disturbing the soil) but the City is over budget (for Parks Dept) as of right now. May adjust budget and ask for Council approval. Mayor asked commission to think about a new budget..... Mayor would like to see a future project of flat rocks to help create streamside entrance points and try to mitigate erosion. Linda Moore asked if that would have to be cleared through Fish and Game (Linda's understanding is that you can't do anything near any water source without the approval of Fish and Game) - Mayor says, yes, through Corp of Engineers - the larger entrance would need to be approved by the Corp (probably hold off until Spring of 2026); Mayor says you can't go in and disrupt the integrity of the stream side, that doesn't require approval from the Corp.

Linda Moore has two ideas for volunteer projects - help plant the butterfly garden area and another project of putting up trail signs.

Riparian Zone Discussion

Guide for Ozarks (riparian planning) that Beaver Watershed Alliance put out are guidelines for best practices. Mayor would like the commission to familiarize themselves with the document. In regards to riparian area, Mayor has ordered a bunch of different seeds and he went through them with Nate Weston. Nate will help identify the best areas to plant some of the seeds and the grasses and the sedges; we will continue to work with Nate and his guidance on this. Mike Nimmo asked about preparation for this work and a staged approach to the project(s) - Mayor says we start on the areas we can manage this year and maybe we plant other seeds along streamside that will come up and help mitigate erosion and then pollinating plants, and then we go back next year (or late this year) and we start identifying how we will remove the trees that we wanted removed and come up with a plan. Mike Nimmo asked about the trees being 'tagged' so there's no guesswork. Mayor further suggested (for future work in the park) that there are social media posts to indicate where we are working in the park as a means of notifying the public and why we are doing the work.

Mayor stated that we have a new mower that is making it easier to traverse the park terrain. Mike Nimmo added that it is a walk-behind mower and will lend itself well to mowing and surveying the area with small saplings, chinese privets, multi-flower rose - it will help us get rid of it a lot faster without killing everything around it as well.

Public Input: Kyle McGurk appreciative of the committee; feels it's important when you have a plan to do something to write it down and have it on the record so that the public knows what is going on and what the end

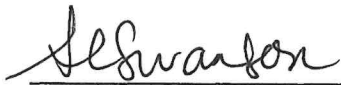
goal was. Was led to believe the whole creek was going to be made a beach.....which was never stated by anyone on the parks commission at anytime.

Mayor added that he is appreciative of the effort and time that has been taken to make sure everything is done; the volunteer hours that are put in and the patience that the commission has exhibited has been exceptional.

Mike Nimmo stated (personal opinion) we may need to consider taking a look at appropriating funds to hire another maintenance person in addition to Dave and Ivan.

Mike Nimmo made a motion to adjourn; Danielle Edwards seconded
All in favor; None opposed

Adjournment at 7:21pm



Gina Swanson
Recorder/Treasurer



Russell Stroud
Mayor

