



**City of Salem**  
**Salem Parks and Recreation Advisory Board**

May 14, 2026  
1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

**Hybrid Meeting**

In Person: City Operations Building, 1457 23rd St. SE, Room 146

Via Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89690478279>

Via YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@cityofsalempublicmeetings8184>

Si necesita ayuda para comprender esta información, por favor llame 503-588-6336.  
Para asistencia en español, llame al 503-540-2489.

**PARTICIPANTS**

Board Members

Rick Hartwig, Chair; Alan Holland, Vice-Chair; Chris Donaldson; Mauricio Flores; Sigrid Olsen; Delight Walker; Fraser Wick

City Council Liaison

Councilor Micki Varney  
Alternate-Councilor Linda Nishioka

Staff

Jennifer Kellar, Parks and Recreation Division Manager; Rob Romanek, Parks Planning Manager; Leann Moore, Parks and Recreation Staff Assistant

**AGENDA**

1. Welcome and Call to Order
2. Approval of Minutes from April 9, 2026
3. Public Comment - Appearance of persons wishing to address the Board on any matter other than those which appear on this agenda.
4. Board Items/Presentations
  - a. Wallace Marine Park Softball Complex Modernization Exploration – *Gretchen Bennett, Jennifer Kellar, Rob Romanek* (20 minutes)

**Summary:** Staff will provide an overview of a concept being explored to modernize the Wallace Marine Park Softball Complex through potential installation of synthetic turf fields and updated LED sports lighting. The effort is intended to expand “shoulder season” use of the facility, allowing for increased tournament play and visitor activity

during spring and fall months in a way that supports local businesses, hotels, and restaurants, and is being evaluated in connection with a potential Travel Oregon grant opportunity.

**Recommendation:** Review the concept for potential improvements to the Wallace Marine Park Softball Complex and provide input to staff to help inform ongoing evaluation and potential development of a grant application.

- b. Northgate Park Improvements Grant Application to the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department Local Government Grant Program – *Rob Romanek* (20 minutes)

**Summary:** Staff will present a proposal to apply for up to \$1 million from the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department Local Government Grant Program to leverage 2022 Safety and Livability Bond funding and expand planned improvements at Northgate Park. Potential project elements include reconstruction of the splash pad, sport court improvements, park entry enhancements, and accessibility upgrades coordinated with the bond-funded restroom and pathway project.

**Recommendation:** Review the proposed Northgate Park improvements grant concept and provide input to staff to help inform preparation of the City's application to the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department Local Government Grant Program

- c. Park Planning Practice Spotlight: Human Movement Data – *Rob Romanek* (15 minutes)

**Summary:** Staff will provide an overview of how human movement data is being used in park planning, including the City's use of Placer.ai as a contracted analytical tool to better understand park visitation patterns, timing, and user origins. This data-driven approach is being integrated into the update of the City's Comprehensive Park System Plan to support more informed decisions on park investments, programming, and service delivery across the system.

**Recommendation:** Information and discussion.

- d. Stella Park Interim Use Plan – *Rob Romanek* (15 minutes)

**Summary:** Staff will present a proposed Interim Use Plan for Stella Park, a City-owned park property purchased in January 2024 and located near the intersection of State Street and Cordon Road NE. The plan is primarily focused on addressing localized ponding water issues around a small grove of Oregon white oaks, while providing basic site stabilization through grading, establishing controlled

vehicle access for monitoring and maintenance, and seeding disturbed areas to support interim management as neighborhood open space pending future park planning.

**Recommendation:** Review the proposed Interim Use Plan for Stella Park and consider endorsing the plan.

5. Council Liaison Updates (10 minutes)
6. Board Member Updates (10 minutes)
7. Information Reports – written
  - a. Parks and Recreation Division Report
  - b. Mission Street Park Conservancy Board Meeting Minutes from March 18, 2026
8. New Business
9. Adjourn

**Next Meeting: June 11, 2026**

Interested persons may view the meeting online on [YouTube](#). Please submit written comments on agenda items, or pre-register to provide Public Comment on items not on the agenda, by 5 p.m. or earlier one day prior to the day of the meeting at [salemparks@cityofsalem.net](mailto:salemparks@cityofsalem.net).

Special accommodations are available, upon request, for persons with disabilities or those needing sign language interpretation, or languages other than English. To request accommodations or services, please call 503-588-6336 (TTD/TTY 503-588-6439) at least two business days in advance.

It is the City of Salem's policy to assure that no person shall be discriminated against on the grounds of race, religion, color, sex, marital status, familial status, national origin, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, source of income and housing status, as provided by Salem Revised Code 97. The City of Salem also fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and related statutes and regulations, in all programs and activities.



# City of Salem

## Salem Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (SPRAB)

April 9, 2026

[Hybrid Meeting](#)

### Draft Minutes

#### Members Present

Rick Hartwig, Chair  
Al Holland, Vice Chair  
Sigrid Olsen  
Mauricio Flores  
Frasier Wick (Via Zoom)  
Chris Donaldson  
Delight Walker

#### Members Absent

#### Staff Present

Rob Romanek  
Tammi Starrs  
Aaron Kimsey  
Leann Moore

#### City Council Liaison Present

Micki Varney

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#### 1. Call to Order and Roll Call

- Chair Hartwig called the meeting to order

#### 2. Approval of Minutes

- March 12, 2026 minutes
  - Motion by Vice Chair Holland, seconded by Member Donaldson
    - Motion approved

#### 3. Public Comment

- Patty Tipton – Lansing Neighborhood
  - Donated \$125 for a tree to be planted at Englewood Park to commemorate the park's 100 year anniversary
  - Would like city staff to notify her when the tree will be planted and would like photos to be taken

#### 4. Board Items/Presentations

- Fiscal Year 2027 Proposed City Budget – Rob Romanek
  - Budget for Parks and Recreation Division mostly unchanged from current year
  - Funding from levy has balanced support for Parks, Library and Center 50+
  - Also there are no increases in available resources

Salem Parks and Recreation Advisory Board  
Minutes from April 9, 2026

- Board Discussion
  - Concern about adequacy of funding for parks maintenance
    - a. Staff recognized that additional resources are needed but there is no funding available
  
- Fiscal Years 2027-31 Proposed Capital Improvement Plan – Rob Romanek, Tammi Starrs
  - 5-year financial planning tool for projects more than \$100,000
    - Annual update
    - Prioritization based on need and risk
  - Funding Sources
    - System development charges
    - State and Federal grants
    - Local bonds
    - Other City funds
  - Financial Overview
    - 118 citywide projects
    - Challenges include project delays or removal from 5-year forecast
  - Board Discussion
    - Grant stability
    - Alternative infrastructure solutions
    - ADA related expenditures
    - Board members expressed interest in advocacy efforts
  
- Park Path and Trail Rehabilitation Program – Aaron Kimsey
  - Focuses on repairing existing paved paths with \$4.1 million allocated by the 2022 Safety and Livability Bond
  - Prioritizing criteria include:
    - Hazard/condition
    - Park classification
    - Connectivity to transportation
    - Park utilization
    - Demographic/environmental factors
    - Project coordination opportunities
  - Findings include:
    - 4 miles of paths in poor or very poor condition
      - a. Englewood, McKay, Wallace Marine, Bush's Pasture
  - Strategy
    - Group the parks geographically for efficiency
    - Coordinate with other park projects and allocate funding for large parks
  - Current progress
    - Path improvements that completed include:
      - a. Hoover, Morningside, Sumpter, Highland and Livingston
  - Board Discussion

- Members questioned repair methods, preventative maintenance, and community input and outreach
- Motion by Vice Chair Holland to proceed with presenting proposal to city council, seconded by Member Donaldson
  - a. Motion approved
  
- Park Planning Practice Spotlight: Land Use and Development Review – Rob Romanek
  - Rob discusses staff practice of reviewing active land use applications in the city (subdivision, second commercial building on lots, etc.)
    - Maps used to identify areas served by parks
    - Park land is usually acquired through a subdivision development process
    - Increasing interest in requiring developers to build parks before transfer to city – rather than providing undeveloped land
  - Trail Planning and Easements
    - Developers must provide trail easements if planned routes cross properties
  
- Bailey Ridge Park Update – Rob Romanek
  - Development plan approved in 2022
  - Site includes Chambers Swale Creek
    - Phase 1 improvements to be constructed in 2026
    - Phase 1 scope
      - a. Stabilize eroding banks
      - b. Install natural features
      - c. Asphalt path through park
    - Site issues
      - a. Severe creek erosion creating safety hazards
    - Budget
      - a. Construction bids came in under estimate

## **5. Council Update**

- Councilor Varney announced \$300 million infrastructure bond from 2022 gets separated into three \$100 million solicitations, recent solicitation yielded favorable interest rate
- First budget committee meeting April 15
- Earth Day and Arbor Day events throughout the city

## **6. Board Member Updates**

- Chair Hartwig discussed resignation of board member Zachary Hammerle
  - Replacement may be in July
  - Board members need to take on additional neighborhood associations for outreach projects

- Vice Chair announced that he met with members of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde to look for information on indigenous leadership names to apply as new parks are developed

**7. Information Report**

- Chair Hartwig praised the Mission Street Parks Conservancy for their contributions

**8. Adjournment**

DRAFT

**FW: [EXTERNAL]Riverfront Park Project**

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**From** Parks and Recreation <parksandrecreation@cityofsalem.net>

**Date** Tue 4/21/2026 9:55 AM

**To** Robert Romanek <RRomanek@cityofsalem.net>

Hello,

I wasn't sure who to send this to but wanted to make sure to forward it on. Please feel free to send to additional recipients as needed.

Thank you,

[Michelle Leach-Rivera | 503-588-7272, x3409](#)

City of Salem | Enterprise Services Department | CSC

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**From:** killing field <elliottfeastman@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Thursday, April 16, 2026 5:06 PM

**To:** Info <info@cityofsalem.net>; Parks and Recreation <parksandrecreation@cityofsalem.net>

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]Riverfront Park Project

Dear Salem Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, and Parks and Recreation Department,

I just read the following article in the Salem Reporter:

<https://www.salemreporter.com/2026/04/08/riverfront-park-playground-to-be-transformed-for-accessibility-nature-play/>

Please change this plan to use real grass or at least a natural solution. This is Oregon, we care about our environment and we do NOT need synthetic grass in one of our busiest and highest profile parks (or ANY of our parks). What kind of environmental message does that send to our children and visitors? This is embarrassing. Please course correct this plan before implementation or I will not in good conscious be able to bring my kids to that park anymore. It is unfathomable to me that my tax money would be spent on artificial grass in Oregon. I, as a voter, didn't approve plastic grass in the 2022 infrastructure spending package.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,

Elliott F. Eastman







Board Meeting Minutes  
March 18, 2026

**In Attendance**

Julia Battle  
Gretchen Carnaby  
Kathy Savicki  
Patti Sieg  
Emily Standish  
Mike Weber

NOTES	ACTIONS
1. <b>Call to Order:</b> Julia called the meeting to order.	
2. <b>Minutes:</b> Mike moved and Gretchen seconded approval of the February minutes. Motion carried.	
3. <b>Financial Report:</b> The February report was distributed.	
<p>4. <b>REGULAR REPORTS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Garden Management:</b> Mike is developing a list of projects across the Park that are suitable for other volunteer groups. He will start reaching out to arrange work parties. We have donors for 5 new memorial trees to add. He and Joe will determine how to use the crabapples grafted for us by Lucille Whitman. Extras will go to the plant sale.</li> <li>• <b>Volunteer Coordinator:</b> We have had more than 20 volunteers for each of the first Tuesdays back in the Park.</li> <li>• <b>Rose Grant request:</b> Kathy moved that MSPC provide the \$1450 match for the grant submitted to Salem Parks Foundation by SCAN for rose bed renovation, using funds in our rose garden reserve. Patti seconded; motion passed (via e-mail).</li> <li>• <b>Plant Sale:</b> Preparations are underway for the April sale.</li> <li>• <b>Educational events:</b> On April 25, for Earth Day we will be inviting the public to help plant wildflowers and spread mulch along the hillside trail. .Old Rose expert Elaine Sedlack is coming to lead a tour May 31. Emily is organizing for Make Music Day on June 21.</li> </ul>	<p>Gretchen will consult Lucile about Crabapple tree ID.</p> <p>Julia will consult Jennifer about how we route the check.</p>
<p>5. <b>OTHER BUSINESS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Garden Conservancy:</b> We will offer access to our member benefits (credits toward on-line classes and garden tours) to the Tuesday Gardeners.</li> <li>• <b>Donor Party:</b> Annual event set for 2 pm, June 28, perhaps featuring the renovated island beds, serving strawberry</li> </ul>	<p>Patti will organize.</p>

Mission Street Parks Conservancy  
Board Meeting Minutes for March 18, 2025

<p>shortcake and blueberry cobbler.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Pruning Workshop and Fundraiser:</b> Amanda proposed a joint effort with MSPC and Salem Parks for a pruning workshop and fundraiser. We agreed to co-sponsoring the workshop, but don't believe we want a large number of added people pruning in the limited number of rose beds which have not yet been adopted.</li><li>• <b>Calendar of Blooms:</b> Julia requested that we develop a general guide to the timing of blooms in the Park to assist with event planning. Mike will help, and we may be able to access Wilbur Bluhm's historical records via David Craig at Willamette. .</li><li>• <b>Mapping Orchard Trees:</b> We need a user friendly map of the orchard trees. Gretchen and Emily will work on translating what's on our website to a larger, clearer digital map.</li><li>• <b>Park Photos:</b> Jim Schomaker has offered to put together a digital slide show featuring his many years of photos in Bush Park. We will also ask him for more photos to add to those we use for notecards.</li></ul>	
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**Next meeting:**

**April 8**

**9:30**