



New Brighton Parks, Recreation, and Environmental Commission
Agenda
Upper Level | Conference Room
New Brighton City Hall 803 Old Hwy 8 NW, New Brighton , MN
6:30 PM August 5, 2026

Members of the Parks, Recreation, and Environmental Commission will attend the meeting in person unless eligible to attend remotely per MN Stat. 13D.02.

To participate in this meeting, members of the public may:

- **Attend the meeting in person.**
- **Watch the meeting electronically.** Tune into CTV Channel 8023 (CenturyLink) or Channel 16 (Comcast). To observe the meeting as a livestream or a webcast, visit NBMN.info/View-A-Meeting

I. Call to Order

II. Roll Call

Chair Julia O'Rourke

Vice-Chair Abe McEathron

Commissioner Pauline Alfors

Commissioner Dawn Mikkelsen

Commissioner Irie Haig

Commissioner Kristin Hicks

Commissioner Becky Slabiak

Commissioner Laura Sokol-Kraft

III. Approval of Agenda

IV. Approval of Past Minutes

A. June 3, 2026

V. Business Items

A. Annual Presentation from Community Assets and Development Department on Projects

VI. Informational Items

VII. Announcements

VIII. Adjournment



MINUTES
Parks, Recreation and Environmental Commission
June 3, 2026 City Hall
6:30 p.m.

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

II. Roll Call:

Members Present: Commissioners Pauline Alfors, Irie Haig, Kristin Hicks, Dawn Mikkelsen, Julia O'Rourke (Chair) and Becky Slabiak.

Members Absent: Commissioner Abe McEathron and Laura Sokol-Kraft.

Also Present: Director Jennifer Fink and Councilmember Graeme Allen.

III. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Slabiak, seconded by Alfors to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried 6-0.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Chair O'Rourke requested the minutes be amended to reflect Commissioner Fallas not being listed as absent.

Motion by Mikkelsen, seconded by Hicks to approve the April 1, 2026 minutes as amended. Motion carried 6-0.

V. Business Items

A. Interpretive Signage in New Brighton Parks

Director Fink stated interpretive signage is designed to tell a story, create a connection, and help visitors better understand the natural, historical, cultural, recreational, or environmental significance of a place. Unlike directional or regulatory signs, interpretive signs focus on education, engagement, and creating a sense of place. Currently, interpretive signage within the New Brighton park system is limited. The most notable examples are signs installed at Totem Pole Park (discussing the former totem pole) and through partnerships with the Rice Creek Watershed District, which help explain water quality, habitat restoration, and ecological features. As the City continues to invest in parks, trails, public art, environmental initiatives, and community gathering spaces, there may be opportunities to expand the use of interpretive signage throughout the park system. Staff is

seeking Commission feedback regarding whether interpretive signage should become a more intentional element of future park development and renovation projects.

Discussion included:

- Staff described how a communication board could be utilized by children who were non-verbal.
- The Commission suggested signage be considered for the farmers market and mural on the Community Center.
- It was noted the City was considering creating stormwater restoration signs for educational purposes.
- The potential of having QR codes on interpretive signs was discussed.
- The Commission suggested more information be provided to the public regarding trees and the fact New Brighton was a Tree City USA.
- The Commission suggested public art be incorporated into the proposed interpretive signage.
- The Commission suggested the City consider putting a public art policy in place.
- The Commission supported the City having an education walking loop in place with interpretive signage posted along the loop with a natural resources focus.

VI. Informational Items

Director Fink reported Park Discovery Days begin on Tuesday, June 9 at Lions Park. She noted a Safety Fair would be held on Tuesday, June 16. She explained the City was the proud owner of two lots around Vermont Park. She indicated the City was meeting with Kraus Anderson to discuss the potential of a new Community Center/Civic Campus. She noted the golf course has been busy already this spring. She reported the City signed an agreement with The Beard Group for the redevelopment of the golf course clubhouse.

Councilmember Allen provided further information on the public/private partnership that would be in place with The Beard Group. He indicated the golf course would be impacted minimally through the proposed new housing and clubhouse.

Director Fink reported the grand opening for Hansen Park would be held on Tuesday, July 21.

VII. Announcements

Chair O'Rourke reported the summer concert series has begun and the next event would be held on Thursday, June 11 at Veterans Park from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Councilmember Allen discussed the Old Highway 8 railroad bridge refurbishment that would occur in 2027. He commented on the great work that was being done by the Youth Community Connectors on behalf of the City. He provided the Commission with information on the firefighter appreciation dinner that was held last month. He stated the Council has held discussions regarding housing, short term rentals, multi-family housing and the zoning with respect to the City's housing. He discussed the survey that was recently conducted with City staff members. He was pleased to report the City received funding to assist with the environmental reiteration of Jones Lake.

VII. Adjournment

Motion by Slabiak, seconded by Haig to adjourn the meeting at 7:31 p.m. Motion carried 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Fink". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jennifer Fink
Director of Parks and Recreation

Agenda Section:	Business Items
Meeting Date:	August 5, 2026

REQUEST FOR COUNCIL CONSIDERATION – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ITEM DESCRIPTION: Annual Presentation from Community Assets and Development Department on Projects

Action Requested: Discussion

Form of Action: N/A or Other

Votes Needed: N/A

**Summary
Statement:**

As a part of the PREC Commission's annual work plan, the Director of Community Assets and Development attends to share project updates as well as updates on the Climate Action Plan.

Recommendations:

None

**Applicable
Deadlines:**

N/A

**Community
Impact:**

N/A

**Legislative
History:**

N/A

Strategic Priority:	<u>City Assets</u>
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Fiscal Impact:	Financial Consideration?	<u>No</u>
	Revenue/Expenditure Amount:	\$
	Financing Source:	<u>N/A</u>
	Notes:	

Attachments:	
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