

VERMILION PARKS & RECREATION BOARD
Minutes of November 18, 2025 - 6:00 p.m.

Tina Swinehart, Chairperson called the meeting of November 18, 2025, to order.

Roll Call: Tina Swinehart, Liz Elden, Connie Laughlin, Karen Viterna, Mark Musial, Phil Dombrowski

Also, Present: Marc Weisenberger, Parks Operation Manager; Mayor Forthofer; Chad Kuhns, Recreation Director; Melanie Wood, Clerk of Council.

Approval of Minutes:

L. Elden MOVED; T. Swinehart seconded to approve the meeting minutes of October 21, 2025. Roll Call Vote 5 YEAS; 1 ABSTAIN (Dombrowski). MOTION CARRIED.

Correspondence/Presentations: None.

Community Event Group Use Permits:

- Kate Repola – Movies in the Parks – 6/26, 7/31, 8/28, 9/25/2026 – Time: 5:00 p.m. – 11:45 p.m. (Showse Park & East Exchange Park)

Kate Repola of Main Street Vermilion said that many of them might remember years ago, Main Street Vermilion used to host Movies in the Park at East Exchange Park. A couple of months ago she had some new volunteers come to her to say they would like to bring it back. Mark and Kim Zander brought it back to her desk and said they would take their children there and now they would like to take their grandchildren to Movies in the Park. At the same time, the exciting Showse Park Revitalization and Transformation Committee had Movies in the Park on their radar. Their committee and Main Street Vermilion volunteers got together to do a joint project. They would like to present “Movies in the Parks” and are asking for four dates. They will show two movies at East Exchange Park and two movies at Showse Park with the dates listed on the application.

L. Elden asked if they would be held on Fridays. K. Repola answered yes. T. Swinehart said she saw the timeframe and asked if they would be changing the start times based on the month. K. Repola said they thought they would cover all bases with the timeframe, the movies in the summer (June, July, and August) will all start around 8:30 or 8:45 p.m. and then in September, they might move it up a little bit. T. Swinehart asked how much set up there would be. K. Repola answered there is quite a bit of setup, but they are partnering with FunFlicks, which is a professional movie projector equipment business that comes and sets it all up and makes sure it is running and then tears it all down. Main Street and Showse Park are the committees, and they will each take two of the days to be the point person to make sure someone from the committee is there as well as fundraising to cover the cost of them.

T. Swinehart asked if there would be any rain dates. K. Repola answered not as of yet, rain dates get difficult and if there is a rain out, they will handle it as it comes. Their committees are working really well together in

combining their funds and resources. It will be advertised all together as “Movies in the Parks” so that everyone is clear there are not two organizations doing it, but they are working together as one.

L. Elden MOVED; M. Musial seconded to approve the use of Showse Park and East Exchange Park for “Movies in the Park” on the dates and times as presented. Roll Call Vote 6 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

- Vermilion Chamber of Commerce – Santa on the Boat and in the House – 11/29, 12/6, 12/13/2025 – Time: various times (Exchange & East Exchange Park)
- Vermilion Chamber of Commerce – Fish Festival – 6/17-6/21/2026 – Time: 6/17/26 all day through 6/21/26 4:00 p.m. (Exchange Park, Friendship Park, Mains Street Beach & Park, Village Green, Victory Park, City’s Parking Lot Greens, East Exchange Park)
- Vermilion Chamber of Commerce – Shop and Dine – April 25, 2026 – Time: 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (Victory Park)
- Vermilion Chamber of Commerce – Prayer Day – May 7, 2026 – Time: 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. (Victory Park)
- Vermilion Chamber of Commerce – Corks & Kegs – November 7, 2026 – Time: 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (Victory Park)
- Vermilion Chamber of Commerce – Prayer Day – May 7, 2026 – Time: 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. (Victory Park)
- Vermilion Chamber of Commerce – Third Thursday – 5/21, 6/18, 7/16, 8/20, 9/17/2026 – Time: 4:00 p.m. – Sunset (Exchange Park, Friendship Park, Main Street Beach & Park, Village Green, Victory Park, City Parking Lot Greens, East Exchange Park)
- Vermilion Chamber of Commerce – Live at the Lighthouse – 7/12, 7/19, 7/26, 8/2, 8/9, 8/16, 8/23, 8/30/2026 – Time: 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. (Main Street Beach & Park)

T. Swinehart noted there were a number of Events for the Chamber of Commerce which all looked like reoccurring events to her. They did have discussion at their last meeting regarding it and asked if they should defer the community event group use permits until they make a decision on recurring events as far as not requiring a representative here. L. Elden said currently someone should be appearing. T. Swinehart said yes, currently someone should be appearing here to explain in past practice that is what they have had. In their discussion at the last meeting, they said they were comfortable with approving reoccurring events without having that person come. K. Viterna said as long as there were not any changes and asked if they knew if there were any changes to any of these events that are proposed. T. Swinehart said it looks like they are all as they have seen them in the past. She saw Jody sent out what she set up so people can go online and make the detailed permit information available, and it would go either to a reoccurring event application or a new event application, and they would get an email back if they were required to come to the meeting or if it would be approved without someone there.

K. Viterna MOVED; L. Elden seconded table the Chamber of Commerce events until they were certain nothing had changed in any of these events. Discussion: K. Viterna said nothing is critically timed where they would prohibit an event from happening. M. Musial asked about Santa on the Boat which will be in November 2025.

L. Elden MOVED; K. Viterna seconded to approve the use of Exchange and East Exchange Park for Santa on the Boat and in the House on the dates and times as presented. Roll Call Vote 6 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

K. Viterna MOVED; L. Elden seconded to table the rest of the Chamber of Commerce events until they were certain there were no changes and will be reviewed at the December meeting. Roll Call Vote 6 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

K. Viterna MOVED; P. Dombrowski seconded to accept the new Community Event Group Use Permit form process to be able to distinguish events that are recurring as they have approved them in the past from events that are new. Roll Call Vote 6 YEAS. MOTION CARRIED.

T. Swinehart said they can contact Sandy to ask her to go back and fill out the reoccurring form and they will know nothing has changed and then if there is something has changed in the event she can fill that out so they wouldn't have to require people to come back for reoccurring events and would only require someone to attend the meeting if it is a new event or if there is a change to an event they would need to know about.

City Council Representative Report: No report.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Forthofer reported Veteran's Day was observed in Exchange Park at 11:00 am on November 11th and there were speeches and cannons, and everything went off fine. The new Gold Star Memorial was dedicated at the same time, and it is pretty impressive. That is really becoming a concentration of veteran observations there in Exchange Park. The veterans do give a lot back to the community and are very generous at helping the city out. For one thing, the clock works, which is remarkable.

In finance, they are getting a lot of year end requests for different verifications so people can claim their donations on their tax returns that are upcoming. It is really keeping them busy, to think of all the donations people have given. You never realize how generous people have been throughout the year until you start processing all the donations and the forms to go out for tax returns – it is significant.

He has been talking with the Park's Supervisor about the lights in the Village Green as you come out of the Fine Arts Building and you take the sandstone sidewalk straight out to Main Street, there are two city lamps in the Village Green, and they are out. He has received two calls from people saying negotiating the sidewalk in the earlier dark time is rather difficult so the Park's Supervisor will be looking into it.

Chief Hartung was supposed to check on the gate standing guard at the upper deck of Main Street Beach and Park. It is supposed to be working again – whether it is all the time or not, they are not sure. It is programmed and they have cameras up to be able to see if there is some sort of problem with it, but they have received no negative reports so far. They just want to make sure it still works.

The Service Director is not able to be here tonight; he is in Columbus getting recertified for his Building Inspector Certification.

T. Swinehart said they were going to look at the lights on the flag at Main Street Beach because they seem to be a beacon that is going into space. She thought they were going to see if they could lower the wattage on those lights, so we still have respectful light on the flag, but it didn't blind people when they were in the park. M. Weisenburger said it is on his list. K. Viterna said she would like to work with Marc on that. Mayor Forthofer said that flag was another donation from the VFW and at that time they weren't aware of the light pollution it caused, and it was put in innocently enough but since then has been a teachable moment. T. Swinehart said there is a light at Nakomis Park which needs to be looked at as well.

Recreation Director's Report:

C. Kuhns reported they opened up the registration for basketball this week. Basketball will start after winter break in January, and it will be for 2nd-4th grade boys and girls due to the gym time that is available. T. Swinehart asked if they would be co-ed teams. C. Kuhns answered yes.

Service Director's Report: No Report.

Parks Operation Manager Report:

Marc Weisenberger reported they have the annual trade in with their John Deer equipment. Each year they trade in the utility cart for a new one for a minimal trade in fee of \$1,500 and they get a brand new one every year. Today, the new utility cart was delivered, and the tractor will be coming in January. The tractor has been in place for about 12 years. T. Swinehart asked who it was through. M. Weisenburger answered Polen Implement in Elyria.

They have a little bit of work to do on the bathhouse at the pool as they winterize the parks. They are going to do the final inspection at the splash pad on Tuesday, and they will run and test it and get the final inspection with the Ohio Department of Health out of the way and then they will winterize the splash pad and the bathhouse. They will make one more pass around each of the parks in the next week or so and try to get the rest of the leaves cleaned up and any brush that is down.

The city mechanic has done a nice job working with the Parks Department on some annual maintenance on their vehicles. All the trucks have been in and had annual maintenance service done on them. This year, they replaced tires on several of the vehicles because they were pretty worn.

L. Elden said last month he reported on the possibility of upgrading the beach dragging apparatus, have they made a decision on that? M. Weisenburger said he is looking into a couple grants and without grant funding it will be hard to pull it off, but they will see if they can work something out. He would like to make a strong effort to get that piece of equipment if they can because it does a really nice job.

Budget/Finance Subcommittee Report:

L. Elden said they are looking at all their funds for the year end 2025 and they will meet and look forward to 2026 before the next meeting.

Main Street Beach Revitalization Project:

T. Swinehart reported the sign has been moving slowly. She thanked Dan Pryor who has been busy working on the structure to hold up the sign. They were working with one company and then the rep disappeared on them so now Marilou is helping them get another company. They are hoping before the end of 2025 the winter sign will be up.

T. Swinehart asked for the status of the park sign on the corner. M. Weisenburger said they have it, they just have to get a couple holes augured, and the posts put together and then they will get it in the ground. It is here ready to go. T. Swinehart asked if they were planning to install it before the ground freezes. M. Weisenburger answered yes. L. Elden asked if there were other pieces of the sign package that needed to be installed, or just the primary sign. M. Weisenburger said he thinks that is the last sign they have left to install. T. Swinehart

asked if there was a sign they were going to have for the Shore Thing for refreshments and concessions. She believed the park hours sign needed to be moved before that could be installed because they took all the signs off the side of the pumphouse. M. Weisenburger said they will have to relocate a couple of them. T. Swinehart said she thinks they need to look at signs again and make sure they have everything in place before spring. M. Weisenburger said they did put a life ring and sign with instructions down on the north side of the building.

Showse Park Revitalization & Transformation Project:

P. Dombrowski reported the ADA sidewalk that goes around the park has been approved and they did start the digging on that as well. Excavating is about 90% done of the whole platform and the forms are already laid for the concrete walkway and about 50% of that has been poured. M. Weisenburger replied yes, they are halfway around the playground and poured that yesterday, the other half is scheduled to be done tomorrow.

P. Dombrowski said he didn't know the date for the dig of the flag, he knew it was coming up. M. Weisenburger said he thinks they are planning to pour the concrete in 3-4 pours with the flagpole being one of those so it should be any time in the next week or two. The first thing they will have to do is put the pole in the ground and cement that in the sleeve and then they will pour the concrete base to place the concrete pavers on top of so that will be one of the next steps and then the ramp will be the final. They are working their way from the west to the east and the top of the mound back to the parking lot.

P. Dombrowski said it has been great partnering with Kate and Main Street Vermilion for Movies in the Parks, and they are excited and happy to have dates in place now. They do have sponsors who have already helped them out to get some of them going, which is great news.

Recreation and School Relations: No report.

Vermilion Community Pool Subcommittee:

K. Viterna said the work for the pool has become year-round. They really have been doing things in the off season. At the end of the season, they got the surveys out to members and when the swim lessons were finished, they sent surveys out to the parents or guardians of the students in the classes. Based on those bits of information, they really did have good feedback. People suggested things they were able to implement with the schedule, and they have adjusted the schedule a little bit, so the adult swim is not interfered with when they have the morning swim lessons. They have added an extra hour that she is encouraging because people said they had trouble getting to the pool before the 7:00 p.m. close time, they would like it to be open until 8:00 p.m. They are keeping the membership fees the same, those are already out and live on MyRec and anyone who wants to can sign up. Once they finalize those last pieces, they will be ready to go with their sponsorship campaign. The other thing they have done is target people to help them with the pool. Last year, 2025 was the first year they actually broke even, and she is ecstatic about that and would like to say this whole group made that happen. It was a long time coming and a lot of work and effort. The sponsorship campaign is starting, and they are ready to go with some special events that are going to happen to give people some extra things at the pool like a bubble day and Father's Day activities to be more than just coming to the pool and swimming although that is the perfect thing anyhow. They are meeting pretty regularly to get themselves set for that so they can start a marketing campaign for the pool in December.

T. Swinehart said from the start, they knew the communication about the pool was lacking and so they are trying to move forward and get better and better at it, and she thinks the splash pad will help too. K. Viterna said they had one person in the feedback who said they didn't know the pool closed when the school was going back to session and they have been doing that now for a few years. T. Swinehart said speaking of donations, it was a big donation for them to make the splash pad happen so that was quite something. They do read the results of the surveys, and it does matter what the community says to them so they can try to get better and meet the needs that people have. Hopefully it will be another good swim year – June was cold, but it ended up hot all the way around.

L. Elden asked if they were going to start selling annual passes. K. Viterna answered that the memberships are available now. This year they are also going to offer private swimming lessons based on the feedback they were getting this year so they have opened up some special slots so they will be able to offer those one on one or one teacher with two students. It is a new feature they think will be well received because so many people have requested it. P. Dombrowski said he has been in aquatics his whole life and he thinks private lessons will be very big for them this year.

Public Art Subcommittee:

L. Elden said “The Fish” at Showse Park is fully funded and in fabrication which is exciting. Nothing new to announce now, but there are some great things coming in the new year they will hopefully have a lot of fanfare for.

Recreation Department Subcommittee:

T. Swinehart said she, Connie and Marc have met, and they have been going over some ways they can also expand the recreation. This is a follow up to the committee who worked previously when John Ross was here. It took a long time, but she thinks they are getting pretty close. They have been working on not only keeping the programs going that Chad has been supervising since 2011 but also expand. They will hopefully have some recommendations before the end of the year.

Rotary Park Subcommittee:

M. Musial said the only thing new from last meeting was that he was to attend the Port Authority meeting last week and there was a mix-up in times so he will be visiting them in January to present. They are starting to look at some of the grant opportunities now. The property that was donated to the Rotary Club has been put up for sale, and they have already received an offer that has been accepted so they have to do the due diligence, and everything is moving along beautifully.

Pickleball Subcommittee:

C. Laughlin said it is winding down, Marc will be removing the nets and port-a-potties, and they will close it for the season. M. Weisenburger said they have been working on some ways they might be able to address some of the concerns that Mike had, who was here last month. They are putting some cost numbers to it and once he gets those and the budget they are working on, they will hopefully be able to include some of them.

OPEN TO THE AUDIENCE: None.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

T. Swinehart MOVED; P. Dombrowski seconded to adjourn into executive session to consider the employment and compensation of a public employee. Roll Call Vote 6 YEAS. MOTION CARRIED.

Upon the completion of executive session, T. Swinehart called the regular meeting back to order.

Tina Swinehart adjourned the meeting upon no further discussion.

NEXT MEETING:

January 20, 2026 @ 6:00 p.m.

Location: Vermilion Municipal Complex, 687 Decatur Street, Vermilion

Transcribed by - Melanie Wood, Clerk of Council