



City of Wimberley

221 Stillwater, Wimberley, Texas 78676

REGULAR PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD MEETING

WIMBERLEY CITY HALL – CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

221 STILLWATER, WIMBERLEY, TEXAS 78676

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 2026 - 4:30 PM

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Parks and Recreation Board Meeting was called to order at 4:38 PM on Wednesday, May 13, 2026.

2. CALL OF ROLL

Present: Lori Olson, Amy Crowell, Anthony Deringer, Leah Cuddeback, Rachel Buchanan

Absent: LeeAnn Linam, Lin Weber

A quorum was established.

3. CITIZENS COMMUNICATIONS

No citizens signed up to speak. The Board proceeded to regular business.

4. MINUTES

4.1. Consider approval of minutes from the April 8, 2026 Regular Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting

A motion to approve the minutes from the April 8, 2026 Regular Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting was made by Rachel Buchanan and seconded by Leah Cuddeback. The motion carried unanimously.

5. CITY STAFF REPORT

5.1. Parks Director Report

Parks and Recreation Director Erica Flocke presented the following updates:

Swim Season: Swim season opened May 1. The first day was affected by minor flooding and cold temperatures, requiring the cancellation and refund of all AM and PM reservations. A subsequent PM closure occurred on May 9 due to lightning in the area. Year-to-date swim

reservations stand at 12,455, compared to 14,596 at the same point last year; however, due to increased pricing, revenue is approximately \$10,000 ahead of last year. The current water level at Blue Hole is 35 inches, up from approximately 29 inches in early April.

Camp Registration: Registration is trailing behind prior-year benchmarks. Nature Camp is at approximately 60% capacity (266 of 440 slots), and Wimberley Summer Camp is at 33% capacity. At the same point last year, Nature Camp was at 84% and Summer Camp at 52%. Staff attributed the decline to increased competition from other local camp programs, including Camp Community and Project Art. Sponsored advertising on Facebook and Instagram has been deployed to boost enrollment.

Road Maintenance and Safety: Staff installed six speed bumps throughout the park—positioned in front of every crosswalk—to address vehicle speeding concerns. All crosswalks and directional arrows were repainted, and new parking stops were installed in the swim lot.

Aquatic Feasibility Study: Several stakeholder meetings have been held with members of the Parks Board, City Council, the YMCA, and Wimberley ISD. A public survey has closed with almost 400 responses received, generating nearly 90 pages of data. Director Flocke indicated she intends to present the full survey results at the next meeting. Board members briefly discussed the absence of a specific question regarding rainwater use, though it was noted the topic appears within written comments.

Programs and Events: Recent programming highlights included Concerts in the Park (over 1,500 total attendees across four concerts, two of which were partially rained out), a sold-out Birds and Brew walk (20 participants), a rescheduled Star Party (approximately 150 attendees), and the Migratory Bird Day Festival (60 attendees). Upcoming May events include Firefly Watch (May 15 and 29), a Community Garage Sale (May 16), Owl Prowl (May 22), a Guided Hike (May 23), and the start of Nature Camp (May 25). The Board was advised that programming activity typically decreases significantly once summer camp begins, with a resumption of regular programming updates anticipated in September.

Blue Hole Nature Center: The project has advanced from the design development phase into the construction documents phase. The building design has achieved an energy net-zero designation, which will be highlighted with dedicated signage. Director Flocke committed to sharing updated design drawings with the Board either at the next meeting or via email prior to that date.

Budget: information will be presented at the June meeting.

Wildlife: Golden-cheeked warbler surveys were conducted twice in April at Blue Hole, with no confirmed sightings during either survey, though the species is heard regularly on the property. A nesting pair of barred owls was also noted on the swim lawn and observed frequently by staff and visitors.

6. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

6.1. Discuss regional parks, trails, connectivity, and land acquisition efforts, including Hays County priorities and potential opportunities for collaboration with the City of Wimberley

Karl Flocke, Director of Parks and Natural Resources for Hays County, addressed the Board. He provided an overview of the county's current parks landscape and ongoing efforts, and engaged in an extended discussion with Board members on regional trail connectivity.

Hays County Parks Overview: Director Flocke noted that the county's parks master plan dates to 2011 and is significantly out of date. A request has been submitted within the upcoming budget to fund a new countywide parks master plan. The 2020 countywide parks and open space bond, from which the Blue Hole Nature Center is a recipient, has funded 36 projects countywide, with only approximately half of those funds expended to date. Key county projects include Sentinel Peak Preserve, the Limestone Link Natural Area, Capes Pond Park, and the Hays County Sportsplex. Several projects within the bond program remain partially funded and are largely awaiting TPWD grant awards to close funding gaps.

Sentinel Peak Preserve: Director Flocke reported that construction is actively underway. Demolition is complete, and utilities including water, septic, and electrical lines have been installed. Foundation work is in progress, with pouring expected to begin imminently. Planned structures include an entry guard shack/ticket booth, a main visitor center complex (comprising a visitor center, bathroom facilities, small event space, office and lab space, and maintenance area), and an elevated riverside bathroom facility. Access is planned as day-use reservation only, with operating hours of approximately 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM. Limited overnight use may be permitted for organized groups such as Boy Scouts to honor the site's historical character. Kayaking and canoeing access is intended, subject to river conditions, and a designated swimming area with boat exclusion is planned. The property encompasses 533 acres. Due to its location within the Habitat Conservation Plan area and associated conservation easements, trails will be open for unrestricted public traversal only from September through February; during spring and summer months, trail access will be limited to guided tours with a maximum group size of ten people.

Regional Trail Connectivity: Board members expressed strong interest in regional trail connectivity, noting it as a top priority in the city's parks master plan. Director Flocke discussed active efforts, largely led by the Great Springs Project and Hill Country Conservancy, to advance a regional trail network. The Violet Crown Trail is approaching the northern edge of Hays County and is expected to extend southward toward Austin Water lands. Further extensions toward Ranch Road 12 and connections into Buda and toward McKinney Falls are also under consideration. The county is currently working on a trail easement connecting Hilliard Road through Freeman Ranch and La Cima properties to Ranch Road 12. Director Flocke acknowledged that this regional network has not yet

meaningfully extended toward Wimberley or Dripping Springs, but expressed interest in exploring westward expansion in future discussions with the Great Springs Project.

Board members raised the prospect of a connector trail linking Wimberley to the Freeman Ranch corridor, potentially via the Fulton Ranch Road area. The feasibility of extending the existing hike-and-bike trail network—including completing a sidewalk connection along Woodcreek Drive—was also discussed. Director Flocke indicated that the City of Woodcreek would need to champion that effort within their jurisdiction, and that CAMPO (the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization) multimodal grants could be a relevant funding mechanism, typically requiring a 20% local match.

The Board noted the existence of a historical Wimberley Valley Trails vision map that has previously informed the city's parks master plan and the Resilient Community Master Plan but expressed difficulty in locating the original source document. Director Flocke suggested reaching out to former county staff member Lon Shell, as well as to Langford (the planning consultant), who may retain copies. The Board expressed consensus that preserving and furthering that regional vision remains a priority and discussed the value of maintaining trail connectivity as a standing item on future agendas to ensure continued focus.

No formal action was taken on this item.

6.2. Discuss, consider and make a recommendation for the Martha Knies Playground Fundraising paver design options and pricing structure

Director Erica Flocke reported that the city's application for an LCRA grant to fund the Martha Knies Playground renovation was unsuccessful, necessitating a community fundraising effort. The total project cost is \$250,000, with \$50,000 already committed by Keep Wimberley Beautiful, leaving a \$200,000 gap to address.

Staff presented a proposed engraved paver fundraising program. The proposed area encompasses approximately 85 square feet of pathway from the main trail to the pavilion at Martha Knies Park, with two additional side arms available to expand capacity if demand warrants. Three paver sizes were presented with the following proposed pricing: small pavers at \$300 each (capacity of approximately 120), medium pavers at \$1,000 each (capacity of approximately 50), and large pavers at \$2,500 each (capacity of approximately 10). Based on this structure, maximum revenue from paver sales within the defined area was estimated at approximately \$111,000. Pavers would be installed by city maintenance staff.

The Board acknowledged that paver sales alone are unlikely to close the full \$200,000 gap and discussed supplementing the effort with direct donations, business partnerships, and potentially city budget funds. Suggestions included creating a dedicated landing page and QR code for the campaign through Friends of Wimberley Parks, allowing donors to either purchase a paver or make a general donation to the specific project. Board members also suggested reaching out to businesses in and around the downtown square—who stand to directly benefit from the park improvement—to explore point-of-sale fundraising such as

register round-ups or percentage-of-sales contributions. The Board noted that the Friends of Wimberley Parks would serve as the fundraising arm for the project.

Regarding paver aesthetics, the Board discussed color and engraving options. Consensus was reached on beige-colored pavers with black engraving. The Board also approved the option to allow clip art on pavers, as offered through the paver vendor's platform.

A motion to move forward with the permeable paver fundraiser for the Martha Knies Park, using beige-colored pavers with black engraving, at the pricing structure of \$300 (small), \$1,000 (medium), and \$2,500 (large), with clip art permitted, and in coordination with Friends of Wimberley Parks, was made by Board Member Lori Olson and seconded by Board Member Rachel Buchanan. The motion carried unanimously.

6.3. Discuss, consider and make a recommendation for approval of engaging MHS Planning to provide grant writing services for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Outdoor Recreation Grant

Director Erica Flocke presented a proposal from MHS Planning to provide grant writing services for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) Indoor Recreation Grant—a \$1,500,000 grant program intended to help fund the Blue Hole Nature Center indoor facility. MHS Planning previously wrote the city's successful TPWD Outdoor Recreation Grant application, which was awarded at \$750,000 and required no upfront payment, with MHS receiving 4% of the awarded amount upon success.

For the current grant cycle, MHS is proposing an upfront retainer of \$11,500, plus 3% of any awarded amount (totaling approximately \$56,500 if the full \$1,500,000 is awarded). Director Flocke noted that, after negotiation, MHS reduced their fee from a higher initial proposal to the current figure. The firm cited the greater complexity and length of the indoor recreation grant application—described as potentially approaching hundreds of pages—as justification for the upfront payment, along with the financial risk they absorbed on the previous engagement.

Several Board members expressed initial concern about the total fee level, and questions were raised about whether competitive bids should be solicited. Director Flocke clarified that the \$11,500 upfront portion falls below the city's bid threshold, and the city administrator confirmed the amount is within administrative purview, though council buy-in was also being sought. It was further noted that the application window opened May 1 and closes August 3, leaving limited time to seek alternative proposals. The Board ultimately accepted that MHS's familiarity with the city's parks infrastructure and prior experience with the same grant program justified the engagement under the current timeline.

A motion to recommend approval of engaging MHS Planning to provide grant writing services for the TPWD Indoor Recreation Grant, at a fee of \$11,500 upfront plus 3% of any awarded amount, as outlined in the presented contract, was made by Board Member Leah Cuddeback and seconded by Board Member Lori Olson. The motion carried unanimously.

7. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

7.1. Announcements

The next Regular Parks and Recreation Board Meeting was confirmed for Wednesday, June 10, 2026, at 4:30 PM.

7.2. Future Agenda Items

Board members discussed the possibility of a future agenda item related to long-term grant funding strategy and the potential value of identifying a consultant or resource capable of supporting the city's broader grant writing needs across departments. It was noted that this topic may be more appropriate as a city-level initiative rather than a parks board agenda item. Director Flocke indicated she would ensure the standing parks master plan update item returns to future agendas, under which trail connectivity and funding discussions could continue to be addressed.

8. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Board Member Lori Olson and seconded by Board Member Anthony Deringer. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:06 p.m.

RECORDED BY:



PARB Secretary or Staff Liaison

APPROVED BY:



PARB Chairperson

