

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Parks and Recreation Board**  
**April 14, 2026, at 9:00 AM**

Helmerich Center for American Research | 1400 N Gilcrease Museum Road | Tulsa, Oklahoma 74127

Attendees:

MEMBERS		
NAME	PRESENT	ABSENT
SAVAGE	X	
MEINDERS BURKETT	X	
MILLER (left at 10:05AM)	X	
REESE-TIPTON		X
FERNANDEZ		X
TOTALS	3	2

- I. Chairperson Savage called the meeting to order at 9:52AM.
- II. Savage asked for the review and approval of March 3, 2026, PRB minutes. No corrections or revisions were requested.

NAME	IN FAVOR	OPPOSED	ABSTAINING	NOT PRESENT
SAVAGE	X			
MEINDERS-BURKETT	X			
MILLER	X			
REESE-TIPTON				X
FERNANDEZ				X
TOTALS	3			2

Motion carried.

**III. REPORTS**

- a. Parks, Culture and Recreation Department Report – Stacie Martin

Stacie Martin presented the Department Report. Martin noted that the department is contracting out the management of McClure pool for this summer as a trial run. Martin noted that a large amount of time has been spent getting familiar with Handshake to recruit more college aged employees for Lifeguards and Day Camp Counselor positions.

Martin noted working to open Wheeling splashpad stating this pad has been closed for around three years.

Martin noted that the department has opened Bales, a groundbreaking ceremony for Gilcrease Trails, and a successful Arbor Day. Martin noted that the Jane A Malone Community Center and Chamberlain Park have a scheduled groundbreaking for May 4, 2026.

Martin noted that the department has hired a new Marketing Coordinator, Sarah Edwards, who has been integrating more videos into our algorithm.

Martin noted planting at Woodward Park, Hicks Parking Lot is starting construction, the Route 66 Dinosaur pedestal has been poured. Martin noted that McClure Parking Lot will be receiving lights.

Questions were welcomed.

b. Recreation Update

i. Oxley Nature Center – Maggie Regan

Maggie Regan noted that Taylor Painter Wolf, fiber artist, has moved into Oxley and is stationed at Oxley on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Oxley has been hosting a lot of field trips, including H2Oklahoma, to coordinate seven learning activity stations focused on water quality and conservation. This is the Center's second year to host this which assisted in working out any issues from the previous year. Regan noted she hopes for this to become an annual event.

Regan noted Oxley staff is visiting every seventh-grade classroom in Tulsa Public Schools to discuss native bird populations. So far, five campuses have been completed and there are eight to go.

May 9<sup>th</sup> – Migratory Bird Day at Oxley, live bird ambassador

Moth Night on June 13<sup>th</sup>, two shirts will be available at Oxley Nature Center.

ii. Day Camp and Chamberlain Garden – Hunter Michelsen

Hunter Michelsen updated the Board on summer camp. Five centers are having a nine-week camp. 210 openings for ages 6-12. The Department is working to make camps more affordable for Tulsans. Michelsen noted that Hicks Recreation Center is piloting a "Stop the Slide" camp with daily activities that are structured to prepare the children to go back into the classroom.

Michelsen noted that the garden beds at Chamberlain Park were moved closer to the Community Center while construction begins. They have started a seedling program to provide seedlings to the community. Michelsen noted that

they are working with community partners to assist in filling gaps and providing services.

iii. Aquatics – Caleb Klugh

Caleb Klugh updated the Board on Aquatics. Positions are 50% of the way filled, there are several job fairs that are in progress. Klugh has set up a partnership with Tulsa Lifeguard Pro to run McClure Pool and remove the training and hiring responsibilities from the department. Tulsa Lifeguard Pro will be offering \$5,000 in scholarships for swim lessons at McClure.

Klugh noted that they have partnered with YWCA to offer free swim lessons at Reed and Lacy pool. Citizens can sign up through the YWCA's website.

Reed Community Center is refreshing their gymnastics equipment and implementing a new gymnastics scholarship that will function similar to the other sports scholarships.

iv. Special Events – Dustin Jagers

Dustin Jagers noted the St Patrick's Day Fishing Derby at Hunter Park that was a success.

Jagers noted that the Tulsa Trek was held in March where 200 people came out to hike 10 miles at Bales Park. Jagers noted that a survey was sent out that had great feedback. Many participants requested a "Hike Club" that would hike together a few times a month.

Third Annual Eggcessible Egg Hunt was moved inside. There were 30 children in attendance.

Owen Community Center has started a Homeschool Class and Enhanced Fitness Class that are going well.

WaterWorks has a collaboration with Oxley Nature Center to draw and paint the nature around us.

Martin noted that they are wrapping up their Volleyball League and Soccer is starting with 370 children.

**IV. NEW BUSINESS**

[NOTE: "New business" is restricted to any matter not known about or which could not have been reasonably foreseen prior to the time of posting. *Oklahoma Open Meeting Act*, 25 O.S.2001, §311(9)]

No new business.

## V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

### a. Community composting and community gardening – James Taylor

Good morning members of the board, my name is James Taylor. A little bit about me, I run a small nonprofit composting operation called Scraps Community Composting. We have the honor of operating the first DEQ small scale composting permit exempt site in the state. It's in The Heights neighborhood, you can read more about it, and the rest of our KGFF projects in the most recent edition of Tulsa People. I am also a board member for OCASA, that's the Oklahoma Composting and Sustainability Association. We will be bringing the Oklahoma Compost Conference to Tulsa this year for the first time, at Chandler Park in October.

Now, a little about our city.

Tulsa sends 160,000 tons of waste to the landfill every year, and the EPA tells us over half of that is compostable. That means, every year, we are paying to burn and bury over 80,000 tons of the very resource that could rebuild our soil, support our parks, and strengthen our communities.

At the same time, Tulsa Parks policy already commits this board to supporting community gardens as a tool for environmental education, community development, and food access, with a clear preference for school and youth involvement, and a focus on underserved areas.

And importantly, Tulsa Parks' own sustainability policy commits the department to reducing environmental impacts, improving ecological function, and supporting public health through green practices across the park system.

Compost is the enabling piece that will turn these policies into results.

Right now, that piece is absent, but there are no regulatory, financial, or structural barriers to implementing it today.

Under Oklahoma DEQ permit exemptions, small-scale composting can operate at up to 100 tons per site annually.

Consider that number in relation to this one. Consulting with a third party agronomist, the compost we made recently from local food waste, for the garden soil we're building in, restores 1,000 square feet of soil with every 689 pounds of compost.

It goes a long way.

So a single site will:

- Reduce landfill waste
- Build and sustain a sizable community garden

- Provide hands-on education for students
- And Produce nutrient-dense food

This directly supports Oklahoma's growing food-as-medicine efforts, because healthy food starts with healthy soil.

Please stop by the Crosbie Heights Community Garden to see this plan in action.

Most importantly, this fits entirely within Parks existing framework:

- Nonprofit-led
- Community-supported
- Educational
- And No cost to Tulsa Parks

But if you take one thing from this comment please let it be this:

The level of success this community deserves, and is ready for, is only possible through partnership with the City. The interest is already there. The nonprofit capacity is already there. The community need is already there. What's missing is alignment, and that's what this board controls. This is not a policy change, this is simply implementing what you have already adopted.

It also aligns with the leadership of Mayor Monroe Nichols, who has formally recognized composting as essential to public health, environmental resilience, and community impact by signing the ICAW proclamation recently.

So today, the decision in front of you is very simple:

Do we partner to unlock that success, or do we leave it on the table? Or in the landfill, rather.

I am asking you to consider and eventually approve, a pilot community composting program at a community center, fully integrated with a community garden and nearby school partnership, specifically at my favorite community center, walking distance to my home, Owen Park Community Center. We've already begun conversations with the Head of School and the Nature Club at the school adjacent to the park, Tulsa School of Arts and Sciences.

It just makes practical sense to decentralize this work to community centers, where access, participation, and impact are already built in.

We've already had conversations with Parks staff about supporting composting for future garden development at the Jane A. Malone Community Center in Chamberlain Park, including an upcoming community compost demonstration during International Compost Awareness Week next month. You're invited, it's a Thursday evening, please join us.

In closing, this is low risk, high reward. At no cost, or even cost savings to Parks. And in direct alignment with Tulsa Parks policy. The opportunity is here. The framework is already yours. We're ready to become the Soil Capital of the World, all that's left, is to say yes, you'll lettuce compost. Thank you.

- VI. Next Meeting – The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Park and Recreation Board will take place on May 5, 2026, at Oxley Nature Center – 6700 Mohawk Blvd., Tulsa, Oklahoma 74115.
  
- VII. Adjournment at 10:20AM.