



Parks & Recreation Commission -

THURSDAY, JULY 16, 2026;
Will begin at 5:30P.M. or immediately
following the Special Commission Meeting
City Hall, 211 Walnut Street
Neenah, WI 54956



NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, pursuant to the requirements of Wis. Stats. Sec. 19.84, that a majority of the Neenah Common Council may be present at this meeting. Common Council members may be present to gather information about a subject over which they have decision making responsibility. This constitutes a meeting of the Neenah Common Council and must be noticed as such. The Council will not take any formal action at this meeting.

MEMBERS	Lee Hillstrom, Kate Hancock-Cooke, Gary Lawell, Peter Kelly, Eric Maggio, Ted Galloway, Jim Wise, Ashley Ondresky, and Scott Weber	
STAFF	Megan Thompson, Kristine Butteris, Trevor Fink, and Michael Kading	
AGENDA TOPICS		
CALL TO ORDER		
CORRESPONDENCE		
APPEARANCES	Open Forum/Commission Consideration of Appearances	
MINUTES	Approval of Regular Minutes: June 24, 2026	Attached
BILL VOUCHERS	Bills for Previous Month	Ondresky
FINANCIAL Report	Review Financials Quarterly – None	Attached
MISSION ACTION Report		Attached
BUSINESS ITEMS	1. Accept and Recommend Kimberly Point Lighthouse Award 2. 2026 CIP Review 3. Announcements & Future Agenda Items	
LIAISON / AD-HOC COMMITTEE REPORTS	◇ Plan Commission ◇ Harbor Committee ◇ CORP Task Force	◇ Hancock-Cooke ◇ Galloway ◇ Ondresky
ADJOURN		

ADA Accommodation Notice: the following notice should be included in all printed material produced for City programs. In accordance with the requirements of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the City of Neenah will not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities based on disability in its services, programs, or activities. If you need assistance, or reasonable accommodation in participating in this meeting or event due to a disability as defined under the ADA, please call the **Park and Recreation Department** or the City's ADA Coordinator at (920) 886-6106 or e-mail clerk@neenahwi.gov at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting or event to request an accommodation.

Creating Community Through People, Parks & Programs

Scott Weber — sweber@neenahwi.gov
William Pollnow Jr. — wpollnow@neenahwi.gov
Jeff Linski — jlinski@neenahwi.gov
parkrec@neenahwi.gov

Subject: Formal Objection and Request for Immediate Remediation – Carpenter Preserve Trail Expansion

Dear City Administrator, Parks Director, and Members of the City Council/Alderman Office,

This letter serves as a formal notice of objection regarding the recent trail construction and expansion within Carpenter Preserve, as well as the City's apparent continuation of a multi-phase development plan that materially impacts adjacent residential properties.

This project reflects a serious lapse in planning, communication, and consideration for the residents whose properties directly border this area. The decision to construct an additional or expanded trail despite an existing walking path already serving the community has resulted in clear and immediate negative consequences for surrounding homeowners.

The City's actions, undertaken without meaningful notice or engagement of directly affected homeowners, raise serious concerns related to property rights, zoning expectations, due process, and potential regulatory overreach.

Key Concerns

1. Elimination of Privacy and Property Enjoyment

The new trail alignment has significantly reduced, and in some cases entirely eliminated, the privacy that homeowners reasonably expected when purchasing properties adjacent to a designated nature preserve. What was once a buffer of natural space has effectively become a high-traffic public corridor directly abutting private residences.

2. Financial Burden Shifted to Taxpayers

As a direct result of this project, homeowners are now forced to consider costly mitigation measures such as landscaping barriers, tree installation, or structural privacy solutions to restore a basic level of privacy that previously existed. This constitutes an unfair and avoidable financial burden placed on residents due solely to the City's decision.

3. Potential Decline in Property Values

The reduced privacy, increased foot traffic, and altered character of the preserve will likely have a negative impact on property values. These homes were marketed, purchased, and assessed with the expectation of adjacency to a quiet natural buffer not an exposed recreational pathway.

4. Negative Impact on Wildlife and Natural Habitat

The expansion of the trail and increased human activity will inevitably disrupt the local ecosystem that the preserve was intended to protect. Wildlife such as deer, rabbits, foxes, birds, owls, and other native species will face habitat disturbance, displacement, and increased stress due to heightened foot traffic and noise. This undermines the very purpose of maintaining a "nature preserve" and diminishes its ecological

value for both wildlife and the community. We had anywhere from 6-8 plus deer in our yard or on preserve every day, and we have seen exactly two deer since the new trail was put in place.

5. Lack of Communication and Public Engagement

Most concerning is the apparent absence of meaningful communication or input from the homeowners most impacted by this change. There was little to no proactive outreach, consultation, or opportunity for affected residents to provide feedback prior to implementation. This represents a breakdown in transparency and public trust.

Requested Actions

Given these concerns, we request the city take immediate steps to address and remedy the situation:

1. **Removal of the Newly Constructed Trail and Suspension of Future Expansion Plans**
Immediately evaluate and pursue removal of the newly constructed trail segment that directly impacts adjacent homeowners and formally terminate or suspend any future plans for additional trail expansion within the preserve. At a minimum, no further development should proceed without comprehensive community engagement and full reassessment of the impacts on residents, property values, and the natural environment.
2. **Property Tax Relief or Credits**
Implement tax abatements, credits, or other financial relief mechanisms for impacted homeowners to offset the costs of privacy restoration measures.
3. **Allowance for Privacy Fencing**
Amend or provide immediate exceptions to current zoning restrictions to permit appropriate privacy fencing along the preserve boundary, where previously prohibited.
4. **Reimbursement or Cost-Sharing Program**
Establish a program to reimburse or subsidize landscaping and privacy installations necessitated by the trail project.
5. **Formal Review of the Project Decision Process**
Conduct and share a review of how this decision was approved without adequate resident engagement, including steps to prevent similar failures in the future.
6. **Immediate Stakeholder Meeting**
Schedule a meeting with affected homeowners to openly discuss concerns, remediation options, and next steps.

While we support responsible use of public spaces, this project reflects a disregard for the residents and natural environment most directly impacted by its execution. Taxpayer-funded initiatives should not result in diminished quality of life, environmental degradation, or additional financial burdens for the very taxpayers who fund them.

We urge the City to address these issues promptly and constructively. Failure to do so will leave homeowners with limited options to protect their property interests moving forward.

We look forward to your timely response and a good-faith effort to resolve these concerns.

Sincerely,
Ryan & Cindy Eckes
1305 Nature Trail Drive
(920) 202-2194 / eckesrc@gmail.com

Michael T. Kading

From: Char Nagel
Sent: Thursday, July 9, 2026 8:02 AM
To: Michael T. Kading
Subject: FW: Island Park renaming

Michael,

I believe the naming of the parks is under the jurisdiction of the Parks Commission.

Thanks,



Char Nagel, WCMC

City Clerk
City of Neenah

Phone: 920-886-6110

Direct: 920-886-6101

Email: cnagel@neenahwi.gov

211 Walnut St
Neenah, WI 54956
www.ci.neenah.wi.us

"We strengthen our community by building on the past, owning the present, and stewarding the future together. " ~ City of Neenah Mission Statement

From: Mark A. Ellis <mellis@neenahwi.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, July 8, 2026 6:22 PM
To: GRP Council and Mayor <citycouncil@neenahwi.gov>
Subject: Island Park renaming

Good evening,

Five years have past since Mayor Kaufert recommended and the city council unanimously approved honoring my brother Mike Ellis by renaming Island Park to Ellis Park. A great honor for my brother.

I will be asking the council during our next council meeting if the renaming will occur.

I feel embarrassed to even bring this up but I have been questioned by my family if this will become a reality and cannot get an answer after five years.

Please do not respond to my email. This just a heads up.

Mark

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REGULAR MEETING – June 24, 2026

Members Present

X	Jim Wise		Kate Hancock-Cooke		Gary Lawell
X	Peter Kelly	X	Eric Maggio	X	Ted Galloway
X	Lee Hillstrom	X	Ashley Ondresky	X	Scott Weber

Staff Present

X	Michael T. Kading, Director of Parks & Recreation
X	Kristine Butteris, Superintendent of Recreation
	Trevor Fink, Superintendent of Parks
X	Megan Thompson, Recreation Supervisor
	Clinton Williams, Parks Supervisor

Others Present: Thomas H. Sutter, Mark Neuman - Council Member, Jacy Park, Becky Heidke-Kwiatkowski, Mayor Borchardt

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY Commissioner Ondresky at 5:00 P.M.

Correspondence

None

Appearances

None

Minutes

MSC Hillstrom/Galloway to approve the minutes of the May 21, 2026 Commission Meeting. All voting aye.

Bill Vouchers

Commissioner Ondresky reviewed the vouchers for June and found them to be in order.

Mission Action Report

The report was distributed earlier. The following items were discussed:

- Commissioner Ondresky complimented staff on their efforts to lead to a successful Listen to the Loop event.
 - Commissioner Hillstrom encouraged folks to volunteer and attend CommunityFest.
 - Director Kading noted that the Kimberly Point Lighthouse project was out for bids. Approvals are needed from the City's Landmarks Commission and Wisconsin State Historical Society. Bids are due July 14 and will be presented to the Commission on July 16.
 - Director Kading noted a letter sent via email to 13 individuals.
-

BUSINESS FOR CONSIDERATION

NEW BUSINESS ITEM #1: Doty Cabin – Accession/Deaccession

Docent Park reviewed the items to be deaccessioned per our policy. Commissioners discussed various items.

Action: MSC Galloway/Maggio to deaccession the “hard items” as listed per policy. All voting aye. Motion carried.

MSC Galloway/Kelly to deaccession the books as listed per policy. All voting aye. Motion carried.

BUSINESS ITEM # 2: Accept and Approve Aquatic Facility Agreement

Director Kading and Superintendent Butteris reviewed the Aquatic Facility Agreement with the Neenah Joint School District.

Commissioners expressed excitement and gratitude for the agreement and look forward to working with the school district.

Action: MSC Galloway/Kelly to accept and approve the Aquatic Facility Use Agreement with the Neenah Joint School District. All voting aye. Motion carried.

BUSINESS ITEM # 3: 2026 CIP Review

Director Kading reviewed the list of projects and noted that the CORP public input session is scheduled for July 8, and internal sessions are scheduled for July 16.

Action: No action required

BUSINESS ITEM # 4: Announcements and Future Agenda Items

- CORP planning for the Commission is scheduled for 4:30-5:30 P.M. on July 16. The regular Commission Meeting will be at 5:30 P.M. or at the conclusion of the planning session.
- Kimberly Point Lighthouse Bid Award

Liaison Reports

Plans Commission: F. Cuthbert, in absence of Hancock-Cooke, reported that Bergstrom Auto on Green Bay Road is expanding its footprint.

Harbor Committee: Galloway reported high water has been a challenge. Weeds currently are not showing. The plan is to cut the third week in July.

CORP Task Force: Commissioner Ondresky noted that information has been previously mentioned.

Meeting was concluded at 5:51 P.M.

Recorded for the Commission by Michael T. Kading, CPRP



Parks & Recreation MISSION ACTION REPORT

July 16, 2026

Provide recreational experiences.

- The **12th Annual Filthy Fun Run** took place on Saturday, July 11, in partnership with the Village of Fox Crossing Parks & Recreation Department. This year, the event was open to anyone ages 4+ and a family category. Around **400 participants** were registered for the event.



Facilitate community problem solving.

- Staff met with a representative from Radtke Contractors to get cost estimates to repair a portion of the **Herb & Dolly Smith Park bridge/boardwalk**. Additional information will be forthcoming with regards to bridge condition and cost for a formal inspection.

Protect environmental resources.

- Carpenter Preserve Volunteer Workday** was held June 27. Buckthorn was removed along the creek just west of Pendelton Bridge.
- Parks Supervisor Williams worked with our **forestry mower contractor** Randy Kuehl in clearing underbrush along the trails at Carpenter Preserve.

Strengthen community image and sense of place.

- CommunityFest 2026** was an overall great event. Special thanks to Elise, Administrative Assistant, who was on site both July 3 and 4 taking pictures and videos to post throughout the event. Elise also served as our onsite vendor coordinator. Trevor and his team did an amazing job preparing the park. Special thanks to the volunteers, including Commissioner Hillstrom.

Fun facts for the 4th – 1 EMS call curb fall, 1 swimmer, and only 1 lost parent

*Creating Community Through People,
Parks & Programs*

Parks & Recreation MISSION ACTION REPORT

Neenah Parks & Rec kicked off a vibrant **community decorating initiative** to celebrate America's 250th anniversary as part of CommunityFest 2026. From June 27 to July 12, residents were invited to decorate their homes with a "We the People" theme. A "People's Vote" took place on June 27-28, allowing community members to cast their votes for homes they felt best represented three categories:

- Community Spirit Award
- We the People Award
- Neighbors' Choice Award

The results of this People's Vote crowned Margaret Allen from N. Park Ave (left and middle pictures below) as the winner in all three categories. In addition, Milo Morales-VanDaalwyk (right picture below), also from N. Park Ave., secured second place for both the Community Spirit and Neighbors' Choice Awards.



Increase cultural unity.

- Upcoming Events:
 - Cardboard Boat Regatta at the Pool
(7/18, 2:00-3:00 PM)
 - Neenah Community Band at Riverside Park
(7/14 and 28, 7:00-8:00 PM)
 - The SpongeBob Musical* at Riverside Park
(7/23-26 and 7/29-8/1, 7:30 PM)
 - Kid's Triathlon at the Pool
(8/1, 8:00-10:00 AM)
 - National Lighthouse Day at Kimberly Point
(8/7, 4:30-6:30 PM)





City of Neenah Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting July 16, 2026

BUSINESS ITEM #1: Accept and Recommend Kimberly Point Lighthouse Award

In coordination with Gries Architectural Firm, specifications have been developed and released for bid. A pre-bid meeting was held with prospective bidders on June 14, with bid opening scheduled for July 16.

The City has received approval from the Wisconsin Historical Society and City Landmarks Commission.

Note: UW-Milwaukee will be on site when utility excavation is required.

Ground breaking for the renovation is scheduled as part of our National Lighthouse Day Celebration on Friday, August 7, 4:30-6:30 P.M. Construction is not expected to begin until after the marathon (9/21/26), with completion by May 2027.

Staff will provide a bid summary and recommendation prior to the Commission meeting.

Suggested Action: Motion to accept and recommend the lowest qualified bid to complete the scope of services as found in the specification to renovate the Kimberly Point Lighthouse.

BUSINESS ITEM #2: 2026 CIP Review

BUSINESS ITEM #3: Announcements & Future Agenda Items

Next Meeting – August 20, 2026, at 4:30 P.M., City Hall

-Draft 2027 Parks & Recreation Budget

