

A regular meeting of the City of Alma Parks Committee was held at the Alma Municipal Building. A quorum of the Committee was present.

Present: Roger Allman, Josh Higbie, Blaine Lafler, Rachel Molands, Andi Whitmore, and Luke Wright.

Absent: Jamie Jerome.

Also present: Caleb Ahern and Curtis Dancer.

Alma Finance Director Curtis Dancer called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Allman, seconded by Molands, to approve minutes of the January 26, 2026, and April 27, 2026, meetings, as presented. Motion carried with all present voting aye.

2026 Summer Parks Programming Recap

Director Dancer provided updates on the following activities:

- Health Fair
- Sports Leagues (volleyball and disc golf)
- Pickleball
- Cornhole tournament
- Remote Control Car Race
- Hope in the Park
- Music in the Park
- Petting Zoo

Discussion of Future of Programming

Dancer reminded the group that grant funding for programming ends on September 30th. He said he had been speaking with several groups about funding but hasn't found anything sufficient to continue the current full-time programming, and the City Commission hasn't had any serious discussion about funding the programming for the FY 2027 budget. Discussion followed regarding options for different levels of programming and necessary funding. The group agreed that continuing the programming needs to be a priority. Dancer told the group a non-profit organization would have more options for funding and asked the Committee about creating a group similar to the Friends of the Library. Discussion followed regarding a process for developing such an organization and other options for funding, including asking community partners to consider taking over management of some of the current programs, or charging a small fee. Whitmore asked about making a presentation to the City Commission, and Allman suggested it could be provided during reports at the next Commission meeting. Additional discussion followed regarding potential options for funding and partnering with other community organizations. The group asked Dancer to pursue steps for creating a non-profit organization and provide information at the next meeting.

Update on Splash Pad in Wright Park

Dancer explained Gratiot County's proposal for a splash pad in Wright Park. He added the City is waiting for a proposed agreement from Gratiot County and Gratiot County is hoping to have the splash pad operational for the next summer season.

Update on Riverside Park DNR Grant

Dancer told the group that engineers are working on the updates at Riverside Park and hoping to have a contractor in place to start renovations next spring.

Review of Capital Projects Completed/Scheduled

Dancer indicated the parks parking lots seal and stripe project had been completed, and new Fibar had been ordered and installed at several parks. Additional money has been budgeted for next year to continue renewing the Fibar on the rest of the playgrounds. Dancer also provided an update on the Wright Park monument repairs and new pickleball nets. Discussion followed about repairs needed at the Wright Park playground.

Discussion on 2028-2032 Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update

Discussion was held on the need to begin working on the 2028-2032 master plan update, as well as all the items that have been accomplished, so far, from the current master plan.

Other Business

Dancer said Programming Director Morgan Most is working on a plan for a close-out party at the end of September and he would share details as soon as they were available.

Motion by Allman, seconded by Wright, to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 p.m. Motion carried with all present voting aye.

Sara Anderson, Alma City Clerk

Date of Approval