



**Spokane Park Board
Development & Volunteer / Citizen Advisory
Committee**
12:00 p.m. Wednesday, September 10, 2025
In-person and WebEx virtual meeting
Fianna Dickson – Marketing & Communications

Committee members:

DVCAC:

- [Vacant] – Chair
- X Laura Ackerman / ~~Jeff Lambert (Alt.)~~ – Friends of the Bluff
- X Cole Taylor – Friends of Riverfront Park
- X Paul Lindholdt – Friends of Palisades
- X Elizabeth Goldsmith – Comstock Neighborhood Council
- X Kathryn Kolquist – Friends of Manito Park

DVC:

- X Jennifer Ogden – Chair/Park Board
- X Bob Anderson – Park Board
- Gerry Sperling – Park Board (*absent/excused*)
- X Lindsey Shaw – Park Board
- X Lee Williams – Park Board
- [vacant] – DVCAC representative

Park staff

Fianna Dickson
Sarah Deatrich
Jake Vandenberg
Dawn Frey

Guests

Sandy Wicht – Community Assembly

Minutes

1. **Call to order** – The meeting was called to order at 12:01 p.m. by DVC Committee chair Jennifer Ogden. See list above for attendance.
2. **Public comment:** None

3. **DVCAC action items:**

A. Election of Chair – Jennifer Ogden

Jennifer explained the role of the chair of the CAC is to run the CAC portion of the meeting and be willing to meet with those who may be curious about how to start a Friends group.

Elizabeth suggested postponing this item to the November meeting as she would like to announce it to the Comstock Neighborhood Council. Fianna explained that the chair must be a member of the CAC. An interested party would need to contact the Parks Director via letter or email for approval of appointment.

Jennifer moved to table the election until the November 12 meeting.

Lee Williams seconded.

Motion passed with unanimous consent. (5-0)

4. **DVCAC discussion items:**

A. [Park Ranger presentation](#) – Jake Vandenberg, Park Ranger Supervisor

The Park Ranger team consists of four full-time officers, three of whom are limited commission police officers, and eight seasonal temporary officers. Jake's duties include managing the Ranger team, parking management, training Parks staff, facility & building access control, radio maintenance, and more. The rest of the team patrol the parks and enforce park rules and regulations. The Rangers have successfully maintained necessary seasonal staffing levels thanks in part to a collaboration with the Spokane Police Volunteer Services Unit which creates a pathway for volunteer police to transition into Park Ranger roles as they progress in their careers.

Jake shared 2024 and year to date 2025 statistics about the number and types of calls for service and the numbers of citations and arrests. The limited commission Rangers work collaboratively with SPD, having designated call signs and logging on with SPD dispatch. The number of calls has decreased this year; however, the number of citations issued so far in 2025 has already surpassed last year, largely due to open air drug use which results in a 365 day exclusion from parks. The most common calls for service are for park entry after hours, unauthorized camping, and drug paraphernalia.

If the [Together Spokane](#) initiatives pass in November, it will allow for increased staffing, an increased vehicle fleet, and updated equipment. It will also allow for development of a neighborhood Ranger program with each full time Ranger assigned to a precinct.

Palisades Park is managed by the City even though it extends into County land. West Hills continues to be challenging for Park Rangers to patrol, especially the High Bridge, Palisades, and Indian Canyon areas, and along the river due to the terrain. Lindsey Shaw asked about using social workers alongside Park Rangers to help with getting to the root of some of the problems, and Jake noted that SPD does have trained social workers that assist officers with behavioral health issues. Elizabeth Goldsmith suggested that Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) be a future program and be emphasized for outlying parks, as it was successful at Comstock, Dutch Jakes, and Riverfront parks. CPTED ideas include raising tree canopies, and improved lighting and signage. If citizens see an encampment, they should call 311 to report suspicious activity, or Crime Check if they see illegal activity. They should

always call 911 for emergencies. The Rangers and SPD also collaborate with the Fire Department if a fire is involved.

The Centennial Trail is managed by Parks for the portion that is within city limits, and by State Rangers for trail areas outside the city.

B. Events and park reservations – Dawn Frey, Sales and Event Manager

Dawn walked through the [Park Reservations](#) web page which was created to streamline the process of reserving an area in a park for weddings, picnics, or other small gatherings. Special event reservations for over 200 people are made through Neighborhood Services; however, the Park Reservations team works closely with them and often help clients maneuver the system. Special events comprise about 25% of total reservations.

The online reservation program was launched in 2022. The front page of the reservations web page provides helpful information such as Park rules, contact information for questions and assistance, reservation and filming inquiry forms, and cancellation policy.

As one navigates the tabs on the page, they can find information about capacity and fees and view the availability calendar. If reservations are made online, there are no extra services involved for staff except to ensure space is available and place a sign at the location. These are typically for groups under 50. Reservations are encouraged for any gathering, such as a picnic, to avoid conflict with other groups. It also helps staff to know not to turn sprinklers on or mow at times that would inconvenience patrons. There are also 'no fuss' events, such as memorial tree planting, which staff prefers to know about ahead of time. An art class reservation can be made in the 'no fuss' category in which an area is not restricted from the public. The instructor needs a business license and insurance.

Reservations must be made through the reservations office if one needs extra service such as water, electricity, chairs, or if they are going to have the event catered or set up multiple tents. Insurance is usually a requirement, and some locations have caps on the number of people who can attend. Car shows and craft fairs are examples of these types of events.

Parks do allow some limited private events with beer and wine – usually weddings – at either Finch Arboretum or Manito Park as there are staff present at all times, which these events require.

Weddings are increasingly popular in the parks. Business has increased at Finch Arboretum and Manito Park with approximately 150 inquiries this year to date. From 2019-2024, wedding reservations grew by \$81,000. Wedding fees are largely based on location. Weddings have onsite assistants and sales are up to \$42,000 so far this year. Riverfront Park events are handled by Riverfront staff.

- C. Potential future agenda items
 - 1) None

5. **DVCAC standing reports:**

- A. DVCAC member news – Jennifer Ogden

Friends of Riverfront Park – Jennifer Ogden reported that there is a proposed dog park vote coming up at tomorrow's Park Board meeting. The vote is for a dog park in the NW corner of the park. Friends of Riverfront Park was talked about as potentially having a leadership role in helping the users of the dog park form a group to help look after it.

Lee Williams reported that she has done outreach in for 'Friends of' groups with Lincoln Park, Audubon Park, Downriver Park, and Underhill Park.

Friends of Palisades – Paul Lindholdt reported that there are two new homeless shelters going in at the corner of Government Way and Sunset Highway, and requested people reach out to their City Council to report their feeling on this.

Friends of Manito Park – Kathryn Kolquist reported that there have been two plant sales and a pop-up sale will be on September 20th.

Friends of the Bluff – Laura Ackerman reported that the Rocket Gulch stairs are not quite open but will likely be open in the next few weeks, and trail signs are going up next. The Friends are doing a membership drive, had a successful insect walk, have two high school environmental club students on the board.

Comstock Neighborhood Council – Elizabeth Goldsmith reported that they will be discussing starting a sub-committee to get started on the path to forming an official Friends of Comstock group. Lee Williams and Jennifer Ogden noted that similar Friends groups are under their local neighborhood councils, which can result in the benefit of insurance coverage for activities.

6. DVC action items

A. None

7. DVC discussion items

A. None

8. DVC standing reports:

A. Levy subcommittee update – Jennifer Ogden

9. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 1:40 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is 12:00 p.m. Wednesday, November 12, 2025, in-person in the Finch Arboretum Ponderosa Room, and virtually via Webex.

Park Rangers 2025

JACOB VANDENBERG

PARK RANGER SUPERVISOR

09/10/2025

Jacob Vandenberg

Park Ranger Supervisor
Limited Commission Police Officer

Park Ranger from 2017-
2023

Interim Supervisor 2023-
2025

Supervisor 2025-

Born and raised in the
Spokane Area



► Responsibilities Include:

- Managing Park Ranger Team
- Parking Management
- Training Park Staff (BLS, 1st aid, Taser, Park Safety)
- Facility & Building Access Control
- Radio Maintenance & Communications
- And more...

Jory Hustad

Park Ranger FTO
Limited Commission Police Officer

Park Ranger from 2018-
Reserve Police Officer
(SPD) 2023-

Park Ranger of the year
2022



► Responsibilities Include:

- Patrol city parks
- Enforce rules and regulations
- Train new Park Rangers

Jacob Stout

Park Ranger FTO
Limited Commission Police Officer

Park Ranger from 2018-
2023 outstanding
leadership award



► Responsibilities Include:

- Patrol city parks
- Enforce rules and regulations
- Train new Park Rangers

Deon Prescott

Park Ranger FTO

Park Ranger from 2023-
Park Ranger of the year
2023



► Responsibilities Include:

- Patrol city parks
- Enforce rules and regulations
- Train new Park Rangers

Temp Seasonal Rangers

- ▶ Mitchel Statton
- ▶ Benjamin Tafoya
- ▶ Logan Morrison
- ▶ Emma Larue
- ▶ Marshal Mumford
- ▶ Decem Moua
- ▶ Gabe Hill
- ▶ Derek Schweigert



Hiring

- ▶ We have successfully maintained the necessary seasonal staffing levels by fostering a strong partnership with the Spokane Police Volunteer Services Unit. This collaboration has enabled us to create a pathway for volunteer police cadets to transition into Park Ranger roles as they progress in their careers.
- ▶ Of the eight temp-seasonal Park Rangers five of them come from Spokane Police Department as cadets and one comes from the Spokane County Sheriffs Office explorer program.

2024 Statistics

Calls for service: 3,856

- Riverfront: 2,348
- Outparks: 1,508

Citations: 722

Arrests (June-December): 125

2025 Statistics

Calls for service: 3,010

- Riverfront: 1,824
- Outparks: 1,186

Citations: 767

Arrests: 110

2024 vs 2025 YTD Comparison

(01/01-09/09)

2024

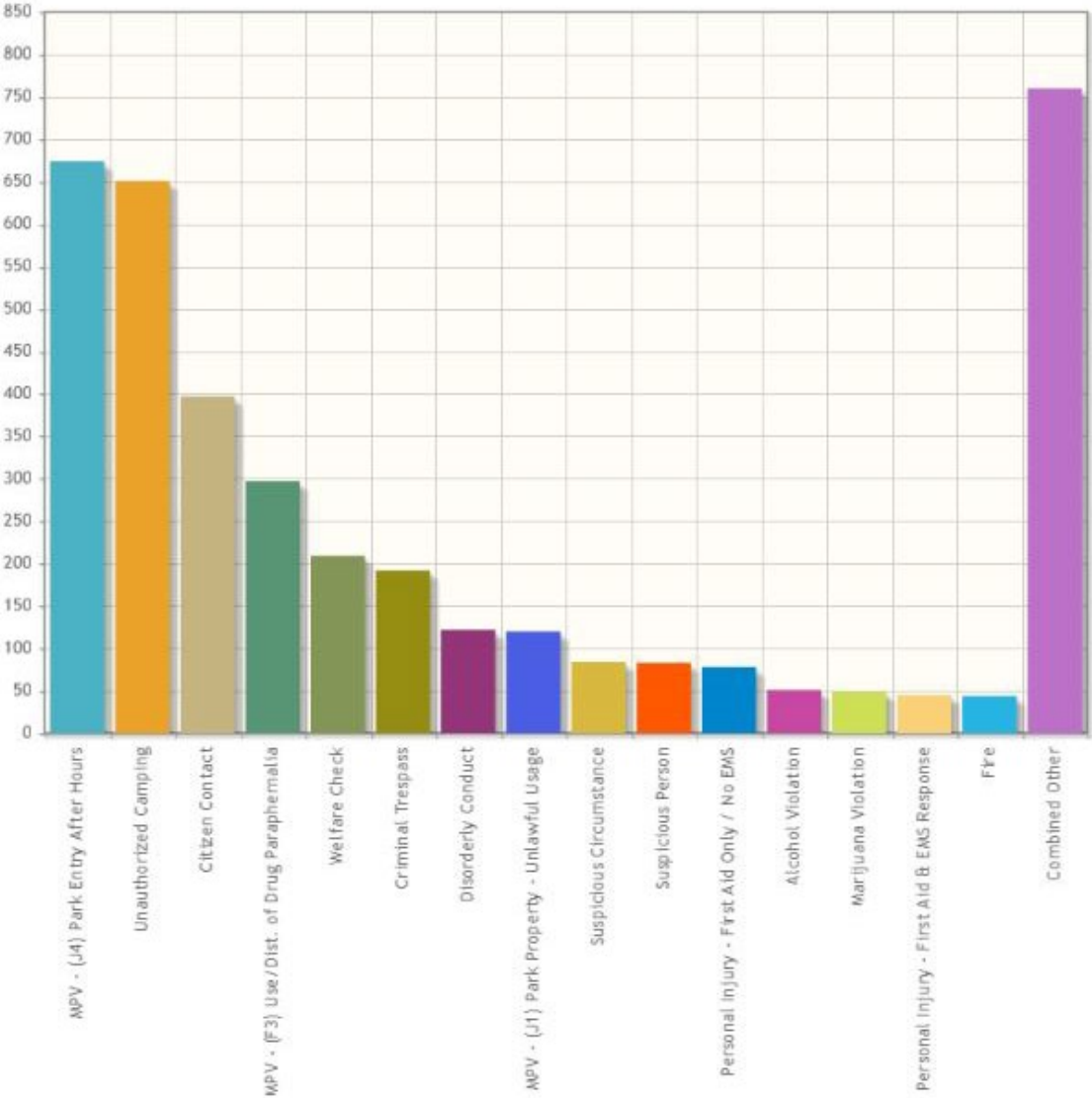
- ▶ Calls for service: 2,762
 - ▶ Riverfront: 1,723
 - ▶ Outparks: 1,039
- ▶ Citations: 336
- ▶ Arrests: 21

2025

- ▶ Calls for service: 3,010
 - ▶ Riverfront: 1,824
 - ▶ Outparks: 1,186
- ▶ Citations: 767
- ▶ Arrests: 110

REPORT CRITERIA

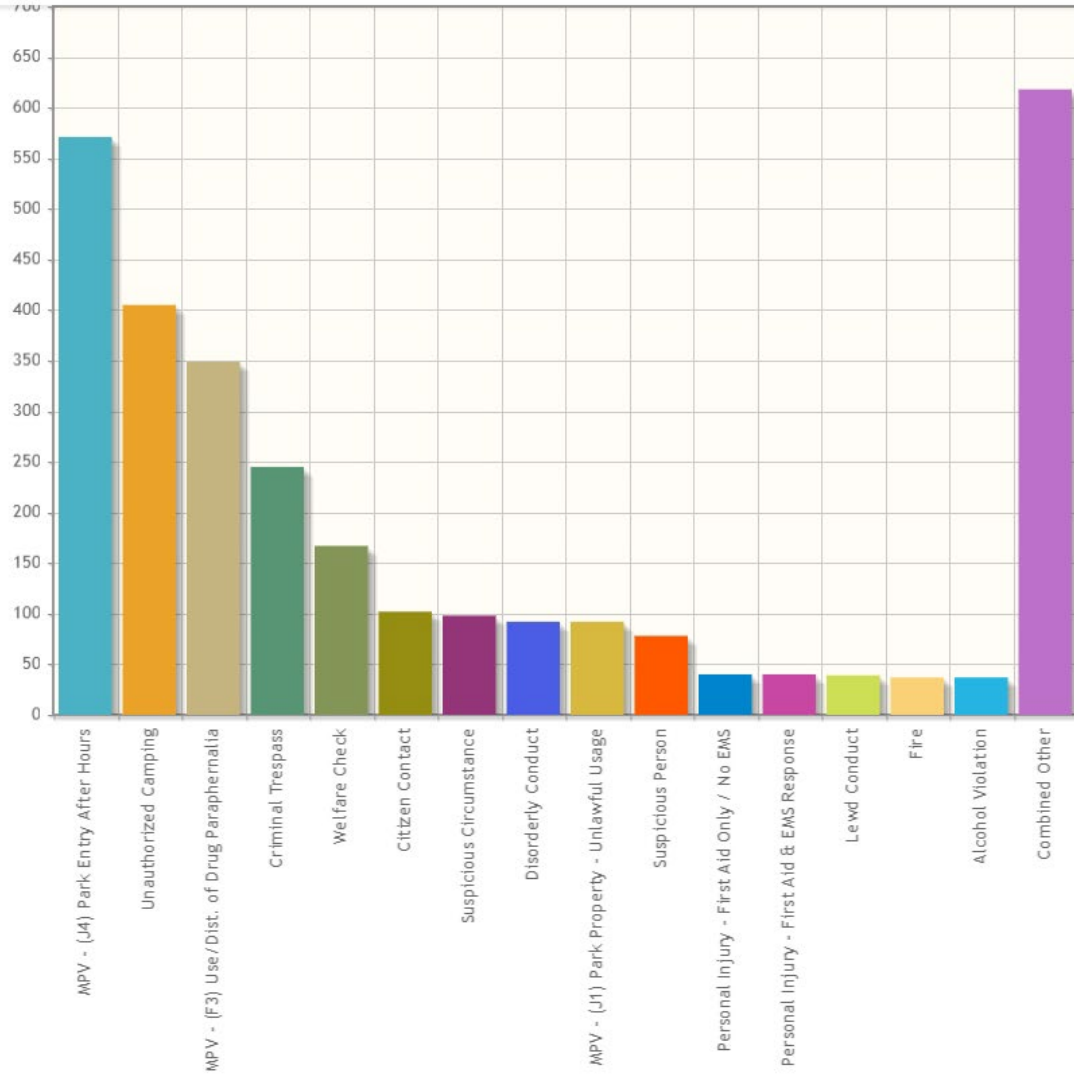
When Occurred In Range 01/01/2024 12/31/2024



2024 Calls for service

REPORT CRITERIA

When Occurred After 01/01/2025



2025 Calls for service

Limited Commission

Since June 2024

- ▶ 3 commissioned Rangers
- ▶ 235 total arrests
- ▶ 257 total criminal charges
- ▶ Limited commission Rangers have designated call signs and log on with SPD dispatch.
- ▶ Work collaboratively with SPD officers.



Vehicles

- ▶ Patrol Truck
- ▶ E-Bikes
- ▶ Bicycles

- ▶ Working on securing a side by side



Future of the program

- ▶ Together Spokane and its impact
 - ▶ Increase in staffing
 - ▶ Develop a neighborhood Ranger program
 - ▶ Fleet of vehicles
 - ▶ Update equipment

