



Spokane Park Board Development & Volunteer and Citizen Advisory Committees

12:00 p.m. Wednesday, July 8, 2026

In-person and Webex virtual meeting

Fianna Dickson – Marketing and Communications Manager

Committee Members:

DVCAC:

- X Elizabeth Goldsmith – Chair / Comstock Neighborhood Council
- X Laura Ackerman / Jeff Lambert (Alternate) – Friends of the Bluff
- X Jennifer Ogden / Cole Taylor (Alternate) – Friends of Riverfront Park
- Paul Lindholdt – Friends of Palisades (*absent/excused*)
- X Kathryn Kolquist – Friends of Manito Park
- X Delaney Carr – Friends of Coeur d’Alene Park (1:09)
- X Sandy Wicht – Community Assembly

DVC:

- X Lee Williams – Chair / Park Board
- X Bob Anderson – Park Board
- X Lindsey Shaw – Park Board (*exit 1:00*)
- X Elizabeth Goldsmith – DVCAC Representative

Add'l Park Board members

Park staff:

Fianna Dickson
Sarah Deatrich
Briana Ruffing

Guests

Megan Kapaun – Ass’t City Attorney representing Parks
Scot Webb – North Hill Neighborhood Council

Minutes

Click the link to view the [May 13, 2026, DVC/CAC meeting minutes and June 11 Park Board meeting minutes](#) .

1. **Call to order** – The meeting was called to order at 12:05 p.m. by DVC chair, Lee Williams. See list above for attendance. Each person introduced themselves to the group.
2. **Public Comment** – Lee Williams
 - A. None

Elizabeth Goldsmith commented that as chair of the Comstock Neighborhood Council she wanted to recognize Nick Hamad for his thoughtful, thorough response to her regarding the Comstock swings.

Elizabeth also commented that Jon Moog did a wonderful job as a guest speaker at the Comstock Neighborhood Council meeting.

3. **DVCAC standing reports:**

A. DVCAC Comments from the Chair – Elizabeth Goldsmith

Elizabeth reported that a few safety concerns in parks have come up recently. She stated that she will defer the volunteerism and discussion document items for a future meeting if the park safety discussion is robust.

B. DVCAC Member News – Elizabeth Goldsmith / Group

Friends of Coeur d’Alene Park – Delaney Carr shared that bathroom updates are currently highest priority. Community members have been giving feedback on design and wanting to keep historical integrity. Delaney also reported that the summer concert series is underway with concerts every Thursday, 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., now through August 6. Farmers market is also underway and Play & Learn at the market, engaging kids with hands-on activities.

Delaney and Lee shared the concert series brochure booklet and everyone agreed that they were very well done.

Friends of Riverfront Park – Jennifer Ogden reported that the Friends have been working on their MOU with Parks. They have been discussing member-based vs. donor-based organization. They hope to bring it to Park Board by August.

Friends of Manito Park – Kathryn Kolquist shared that there will be a pop-up plant sale on July 18, and the Fall plant sale will be August 15. Kathryn also reported that Art in the Park and June plant

sale went well. They received positive feedback and will probably hold the art event again next year.

4. **DVCAC discussion items:** - Elizabeth Goldsmith/Group

A. Park Safety

1) Establishing a Park Safety Committee

Elizabeth shared a general definition of safety with respect to parks. She said it's the responsibility of local government and/or agencies or departments to protect citizens and users of the parks from hazards. Hazards can be natural disasters, crime/violence, maintenance or equipment issues, and/or inappropriate use, to name a few. Elizabeth stated that the committee needs to be both proactive and reactive by educating, sharing information, and responding to issues that arise, noting trends and sharing information that will benefit the whole.

Using the Bluff as an example, Elizabeth posed the question of how Parks Department, code enforcement, and law enforcement can work together to ensure that parks are safe. Laura Ackerman shared that there have been two couches dumped, a party spot has come up, and unauthorized trails have been built. She was advised to call 311 by Park staff, but the situations haven't been addressed and there has been no communication from 311 as to status of the complaints. Laura would like to learn how 311 works, specifically how citizens are notified when something is resolved. Elizabeth has approached the South Precinct SPD Captain and was informed that 311 is the appropriate avenue for reporting issues such as these. If there are such things as signs of fire, drug use, or other crime, report it to the Neighborhood Resource Officer (NRO) as well.

Elizabeth said citizens need to understand what the expectation is when matters in the parks are reported, and how it is escalated to the Parks Department and who is responsible for replying. Bob Anderson said the website says 311 should be called for situations as those previously mentioned, but doesn't state how citizens are notified of status. He said if Garrett Jones (Parks Director) had known the situation, he would have taken it to whomever could address it. Fianna said she could request someone from 311 come to a meeting and explain their procedures and she will make that request if the group is interested. She also suggested that Friends groups contact their Parks liaison in addition to contacting 311. It was stated that the Parks liaison had been contacted and a discussion followed regarding looking into the escalation process. Jennifer Ogden suggested creating a volunteer cleanup corps. She suggested scout troops and select schools that have service requirements.

Elizabeth reported that county parks are starting to use cameras in their parks for specific uses as noted in an article in the newspaper recently, and asked whether this would be an option in city parks in known hot spots, e.g. the bluff. Fianna told her there are cameras in select locations but there are concerns about adding more because of retention requirements. Megan said this potentially could be looked at but that we need to think about who is watching and how we are paying for that person and how the cameras would be operated as far as whether they would be monitored 24/7. If this is the expectation, it would come with substantial cost.

Lindsey Shaw said that coming up with more ways for positive activation would help deter negative activity.

Elizabeth said that it was reported several months ago that Riverfront Park was going to hire a security consultant. Fianna stated that the report was not yet available but would look into it and let the group know.

At the last meeting, the subject of establishing a Park Board Safety Committee was mentioned. Elizabeth revisited this and asked for thoughts. Her preference is that it would be a standing Park Board committee with its own chair and regular meetings. Kathryn agreed and gave examples of how safety information across the entire Parks Department system could be beneficial (such as golf courses, wildland areas, etc.). Delaney said she would be hesitant to the idea of creating another committee. Megan said that the Park Board Bylaws would need to be revised to start another standing committee. Guest Scot Webb said he wouldn't mind simply having safety as a table topic and Laura questioned whether the large topic could fit into an existing committee on the Park Board. Bob feels it wouldn't be beneficial or influential to form a Safety Committee because there would be no authority. Sandy Wicht feels it would be helpful for Parks, SFD, and SPD to meet to discuss how they communicate. Laura feels there needs to be more work done on the issue of defining safety. Jennifer stated that Parks is not an enforcement agency. The levy did allow Parks to hire more rangers; however, there is a division between what rangers can do and what enforcement (code enforcement, SPD) does. She feels that having discussions before a potential committee is formed would be beneficial. Elizabeth will communicate with SPD and SFD to talk about concerns, ideas, and comments from this group. Megan suggested Elizabeth include Jake Vandenberg in her communications. Fianna said Jacob Stout as Jake Vandenberg is out.

2) E-bikes/E-motos in parks

Elizabeth asked how new e-bike/e-moto laws will be enforced in parks. Megan Kapaun has spoken with code enforcement regarding the issue, and was told that this was not likely an offense that someone would be stopped for. Fianna added that SPD, Parks, and Spokane Public Schools did a public service announcement focusing on bike safety for kids. Rangers are also doing some educational enforcement with kids in parks and there are signs that talk about e-bikes in parks.

3) Fire concerns

Fire safety in parks is imperative, particularly in natural areas. Elizabeth asked if there is "no fires" signage. Fianna stated that the park rules signs do address fires and she will send Elizabeth a copy of the signs. She also stated that the fuels reduction work that parks does with Spokane Fire is extremely helpful.

B. Volunteerism

Deferred to next meeting.

C. Discussion document/recommendations

Deferred to next meeting.

5. ***Unfinished Business (2 min)***

A. Park event permits - notifications

This item was not discussed.

6. ***DVCAC action items:*** None

7. ***DVC action items:*** None

8. ***DVC standing reports:*** None

9. ***DVC discussion items:***

A. Potential volunteer support from the Friends of the Centennial Trail – Lee Williams

Lee met with the Executive Director for the Friends of the Centennial Trail, Jen Westra. They discussed the collaboration between what other Friends groups do and what they do. The Centennial Trail is 40 miles of paved trail running from Nine Mile Falls, through downtown, all the way to the state line. The Friends of the Centennial Trail is a non-profit organization and they work with the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission as their volunteer connection. Jen Westra is going to contact the commission to find out if there is a way that when this group has events for which volunteers are needed, they can coordinate our needs. Lee is going to discuss a possible partnership.

B. Park Board President Report – Bob Anderson

When Bob, Jennifer Ogden, and Gerry Sperling formed this group, it was about communication between the community and the Park Board. He feels it's done that and appreciates how far it's come and where it's headed.

Groundbreaking is happening on several levy projects. Groundbreaking for Shadle/Rogers all-weather sports fields is July 9, and Meadowglen Park groundbreaking is later this month. The Together Spokane plan included at least one rectangular all-weather multi-sport field and one turf baseball/softball field with lighting within each of Spokane's five high school boundaries. Dwight Merkel sports complex will nearly double in size within the next few years.

Parks has applied for five RCO grants this year, totaling \$4.64 million and include Minnehaha Park renovation, Minnehaha Park jump track, Franklin Park baseball fields, and Iron Bridge.

The mayor forwarded her choices for the two new Park Board members to Council and will be in front of Council on July 15. Hopefully, the two vacant spots will be filled for August 13 Park Board meeting.

Rich Lentz and accounting team are working on the 2027/2028 biennial budget.

Levy funded staff increases will focus initially on Park Rangers.

Lee Williams made a final comment that outreach and assistance to neighborhoods that are looking at bringing on Friends groups and perhaps we could help with structure.

The Tool Kit was mentioned as a good resource for this information and the reason it was created was for this purpose.

10. **Adjournment** – Lee Williams adjourned the meeting at 1:23 p.m.

Tasks:

- Fianna will request someone from 311 and Code Enforcement to attend the same DVCAC meeting.
- Fianna will request information from RFP safety consultant's report.
- Fianna will check on park rules signs: do they address fires?
- Elizabeth will communicate with SPD, SFD, and Jacob Stout to discuss concerns and ideas from this group including but not limited to the formation of a safety committee.
- Elizabeth will document a draft escalation process for safety issues for the group's consideration.
- Megan will share citations and links to E-bike/E-moto information.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is 12:00 p.m. Wednesday, September 9, 2026, in-person in the Finch Arboretum Ponderosa Room, and virtually via Webex.