

CITY OF VERGAS.
Park Board Advisory Board Minutes
Vergas Event Center & Zoom Teleconference
3:00 PM on Thursday, July 9th, 2026

2026	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Dean Haarstick, Council Appointment	P	N/A	A	A	P	P	A					
Sherri Hanson, Member	P	N/A	P	P	P	P	P					
Chuck Hanson, Member	P	N/A	P	P	A	P	P					
Steph Hogan, Member	P	N/A	P	P	P	P	P					
Tiffany Prindle, Member	A	N/A	A	A								
Tony Sailer, Member	P	N/A	P	P	A	P	P					
Rachel Nustad, Secretary of the board	P	N/A	P	P	P	P	P					
Mike DuFrane, Utilities Superintendent	P	N/A	A	A	P	P	P					

P: Present. A: Absent N/A: No meeting

Present via person: Julie Lammers and Lin Peterson with the North Stars Water Ski Show Team.

Call to order

The City of Vergas Park Advisory Board was called to order by S. Hanson on Thursday, July 9th, 2026 at 3:00 PM

Additions and Deletions

S. Hanson noted a discussion item regarding the need to find a replacement Park Advisory Board member.

Minutes

Motion by Hogan, seconded by Sailer, to approve the minutes from June 11, 2026. The motion passed unanimously.

Status of Recommendations to City Council

Wishing Well Donation

Nustad reported that the City Council accepted the resolution for the wishing well donation.

Loon Landscape

Nustad reported that the City Council approved up to \$1,000 for mulch and related materials for the loon landscape project. The final cost came in at \$168.82. S. Hanson acknowledged the volunteers Joe and Julie Bruhn and Dan and Donna Winkels involved in the work, noting it looks very nice.

North Stars Water Ski Show Team

Lin Peterson attended on behalf of the North Star Water Ski Show Team to provide an update and extend thanks to the City of Vergas for the use of the beach. Peterson reported that the most recent show drew an estimated 600–1,000 attendees, describing it as a highly patriotic event that included recognition of a veteran. The team is actively seeking World War II veterans to honor at future shows.

Several operational matters were discussed:

Buoys: An issue from the first show involving a misplaced buoys was acknowledged as human error. Peterson noted that the team has since adapted their skiing route to avoid the buoys entirely, which proved to be an improvement.

Signage: A trespass sign had been placed at the top of the hill rather than at the dock, which was identified as the source of a prior concern. The placement issue has since been corrected.

Food Trucks: Multiple attendees have requested food vendors at future shows. The team expressed interest in facilitating food trucks but lacks capacity to organize it themselves. S. Hanson offered to reach out to a local ice cream vendor. The Board noted that the upcoming Looney Days show would have too many competing activities for food vendors, but identified next year as a realistic target for planning.

Restrooms: The condition and availability of restroom facilities at the beach was raised as a significant concern, with large crowds placing considerable strain on the existing bathhouse. Peterson noted that spectators and team members alike have requested portable restrooms. Peterson inquired whether the team could bring their own for the Friday show. DuFrane indicated this would likely not be a problem, consistent with how private groups such as family reunions handle similar needs. S. Hanson provided background on the bathhouse situation, explaining that proposed state legislation to authorize a local sales tax vote—intended to

fund a new bathhouse project estimated at approximately \$1,000,000—failed to reach the floor in either chamber, delaying any permanent solution by at least two years. The Board discussed the possibility of demolishing the existing structure and using temporary porta-potties in the interim (see also Item 8).

Parking: DuFrane raised parking congestion as a growing concern, noting that vehicles had backed up significantly during the last show. Peterson and the Board discussed several potential overflow parking areas, including a privately owned field used during Looney Days (though noted to be unavailable earlier in the season due to cattle), the church lot, and JK Marie across the road. Challenges related to walking distance and accessibility were noted. The Board suggested that Peterson proactively contact Otter Tail County regarding traffic management, particularly ahead of the Looney Days show.

Dock Storage: Peterson requested that the North Star Water Ski Team be permitted to store their dock on Long Lake Beach during the winter months, rather than retrieving and transporting it each season. The team recently purchased a new sectional dock at a cost of \$20,000. DuFrane expressed general support, though noted that authorization from the City Council would be appropriate. The Board agreed and made a formal recommendation.

Motion by S. Hanson, seconded by Hogan, to recommend to the City Council that the North Star Water Ski Show Team be permitted to store their dock on Long Lake Beach during the winter months. The motion passed unanimously.

Peterson also suggested the possibility of the team contributing financially to a future bathhouse project, expressing gratitude for the community's support of the program.

Pickleball

No representative from the pickleball group was present. S. Hanson noted that the group is planning a Looney Days tournament and that the courts are seeing increased usage throughout the day, including evenings—a notable improvement from prior seasons.

Baseball Committee

A report was provided regarding an incident at the ball field in which a member of the public removed a tarp from home plate and conducted batting practice. Upon follow-up, it was determined that the tarp had already been blown off by wind due to an insufficient number of stakes—reportedly only four of approximately sixteen stakes had been used. The individual using the field replaced the tarp as best they could. The Board reiterated that the ball field is a public facility and that public use is encouraged, while also noting the importance of properly securing equipment when done. Concern was also raised that the field striper had been left out. The Board emphasized that equipment should be stored properly after use.

Regarding Looney Days setup, the Board discussed the importance of staking off the infield to prevent vehicles from driving on it, consistent with the approach used last year. DuFrane confirmed he would mark sprinkler heads, as was done previously. A brief concern was raised regarding a neighboring property owner placing buckets of chicken and fish waste along the fence line adjacent to the little league field, creating a severe odor nuisance during practices. S. Hanson noted the issue appeared to have been resolved by the time of the most recent practice, but indicated she was prepared to contact the City Office if it recurred, as the property is within City limits.

Long Lake Park Master Plan

S. Hanson noted that no formal progress has been made on the Long Lake Park Master Plan and suggested the Board begin considering alternatives following the busy summer season. In the context of the ongoing bathhouse discussion, the Board formally moved to recommend the demolition of the existing bathhouse, with the intent of replacing it with portable restroom facilities in the interim. C. Hanson emphasized that the deteriorating structure presents potential environmental concerns and that the responsibility for providing park restrooms ultimately rests with the City Council.

Motion by C. Hanson, seconded by S. Hanson, to recommend to the City Council that the existing bathhouse be demolished, with porta-potties placed on-site in the interim. The motion passed unanimously.

Nustad proposed a fundraising event to coincide with the future demolition of the bathhouse, potentially during a community event. The idea would allow individuals to pay a fee to swing a sledgehammer at the structure, with all proceeds going toward fundraising efforts for the future bathhouse project.

Hogan has left the meeting.

City Worker Update

Utilities Superintendent DuFrane provided the following updates:

Restrooms: DuFrane acknowledged the difficulty of maintaining the existing bathhouse under high-volume use, noting that cleaning is performed once daily—the maximum feasible given staff capacity. The Board expressed appreciation for the effort.

Weed Treatment: All park weeds have been sprayed. A licensed contractor, operating under a state-issued variance, applied copper sulfate for aquatic weed control. Dead weeds were observed floating after treatment. The contractor is expected to return following the completion of swim lessons to assess whether a second application is needed, and will also clear weeds near the fishing pier prior to Looney Days at a cost of \$850.

Swimmer's Itch: DuFrane reported that researchers from a Minnesota college visited the beach approximately two to three weeks prior to pick up snail samples between the swimming dock and the fishing pier. No swimmer's itch has been reported, and swimming lessons are currently ongoing. A follow-up email from the researcher is pending.

Concrete Work: DuFrane reported that a crack in the recently installed concrete is the result of the contractor connecting the pour to the restrooms, which caused shifting when water infiltrated beneath. The contractor indicated nothing can be done to reverse this. Two options were discussed: a new 40-foot sidewalk section at a cost of \$1,700 (declined) or applying a concrete sealer to the crack to slow further deterioration. DuFrane indicated the contractor agreed that sealing is a reasonable approach and offered to extend the warranty into next year if conditions worsen. A formal contract documenting this agreement is being prepared.

Swimming Dock: DuFrane noted that the current swimming dock is approximately 17–18 years old and beginning to show significant wear. He flagged this as a budget consideration for the coming year, noting the frame integrity is becoming a concern. The fishing dock has also required ongoing welding repairs.

Budget

Nustad distributed a proposed 2027 budget for the Board's review. A preliminary review indicated an increase of approximately \$37,000 over the current year, including \$50,000 for equipment—specifically, aging tractors in need of replacement. The Board agreed to defer formal review and recommendations until the August meeting, ahead of the levy deadline in September.

Other Business

S. Hanson noted that the Board is currently short one member. Nustad suggested reaching out to a former member who had expressed interest in returning to the Board. S. Hanson directed that a recruitment notice be placed in the next City newsletter.

Next Meeting Date/Time

The next Park Advisory Board meeting was set for **August 13, 2026**.

Adjournment

Motion by S. Hanson, seconded by Sailer, to adjourn the meeting at 3:51 PM. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Rachel Nustad, Deputy Clerk (assisted by ClerkMinutes)
Secretary of the Park Board

Recommendations to City Council

- Recommend to the City Council that the North Star Water Ski Show Team be permitted to store their dock on Long Lake Beach during the winter months
- Recommend to the City Council that the existing bathhouse be demolished, with porta-potties placed on-site in the interim.

Follow Up Actions

- Lammers/DuFrane: Draw up a contract for the concrete repair warranty with the contractor.
- DuFrane: Follow up with the DNR representative about the swimmer's itch test results.
- DuFrane: Look into the possibility of the North Star Water Ski Team bringing in porta-potties for the next show and for Looney Days.
- The Board: Focus on reviewing and finalizing the 2027 budget at the August 13th meeting.
- Nustad: put a notice in the newsletter regarding the board needing a new member.