

**CITY OF FOLSOM
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
TUESDAY, JANUARY 6, 2026, 6:30 P.M.
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The Parks & Recreation Meeting was called to Order at 6:30 p.m.

2. **ROLL CALL:** Commission Members: Chair Matt Hedges, Vice Chair Brian Wallace Sandy Econome, Jim Ortega, Alayna Wagner,

ABSENT: Dustin Silva, Dean Williams

3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited

4. **BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR:**

Public comment was made by Joanne Brausch giving us an update on the fundraising for Castle Park.

5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
December 2, 2025, Meeting Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Econome, to approve the December 2, 2025, Meeting Minutes.

AYES: Commission Members: Hedges, Econome, Ortega, Wagner, Wallace
NOES: Commission Members: None
ABSENT: Commission Members: Silva and Williams
ABSTAIN: Commission Members: None

6. **ACTION ITEMS/STAFF REPORTS:**
A. Benevento Family Park Master Plan – Brad Nelson, Parks Planning Manager

Motion was made by Commissioner Chair Hedges to defer to next month the decision on Benevento Family Park Master Plan to get costs on some of the amenities that were taken out of the final plan (i.e., dock), with the caveat that the Planning, Development & Renovations Subcommittee meet to discuss further Benevento before the next Commission Meeting. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Wagner.



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AYES: Commission Members: Hedges, Econome, Wagner, Wallace
NOES: Commission Members: Ortega
ABSENT: Commission Members: Silva and Williams
ABSTAIN: Commission Members: None

The following public comments were made on this matter:

Dan & Zachary Waechter: We have been in the immediate neighborhood for 15 years, waiting for this park. Says he could say he has used this space more than anyone, taking his kids fishing, and dogs running. The main reason I am here is that I saw the original plans and loved them. On the upper tiers were the play structures, it had pickleball courts that a lot of the community knew about and were excited about. It had the sports field as well, as down below. I have been a sports coach for many years, and there has always been a need for more fields. So, when I saw the big reveal, we noticed that everything on the upper tiers had been taken away. For those who are unfamiliar with the space, everything to the right is the neighborhood, where everyone lives, and none of us were notified. So when we saw the big reveal, and none of this space was utilized we were upset. The reason it wasn't developed was because of three neighbors, they want to keep it the same way it has been for 20 years. Didn't want to have noise or see lights. All the kids coming to the park will be coming from above, and Carpenter Hill, there is a neighborhood north, and they will also be coming from the top portion. It is a long walk from the top portion all the way around to the parking lot, into the areas for the kids. We just feel that having the kids' areas above, pickleball courts down below, for the people who are concerned about the noise, is better. The new plan removes half the park. People wanted one phase rather than two, but we will only be getting half the park with the one phase. And I am sure everyone loves the pond, and there is a lot of fishing, so a dock would be a huge plus.

Stephanie Parsons: Absolutely agreed with everything Dan said. Version one of this park was amazing; it had a diverse set of uses for everyone in the community. It had a soccer field that she understands is in great demand; we are growing in population and always need more fields. I don't think how this ended up is consistent with the general plan and recreational plan policies. The way I understand it is supposed to be a community focal point. So, what was initially designed created that focal point. It offered a variety of opportunities that brought together different kinds of people. It also has an exceptional location for soccer fields, which could generate revenue from their use. I also understand the general plan highlights joint advantages that typically include expanding capacity and priority scheduling for adult sports. People love pickleball; only one other place to play pickleball unless you pay. Volleyball, kids are really into volleyball and are having to drive up the hill five miles to use the sand volleyball courts. People are still



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looking for places to have volleyball tournaments outside of the City of Folsom because there is nothing within Folsom. We continue to grow, we need more fields, more consistency with these policies. We need night-use facilities. It is part of our policies that we are to develop parks with night use capabilities. I would request a comprehensive inventory of the access sports fields in the City of Folsom. The types and comparing those against the number of residents in Folsom. I found an old census and a total number of parks, which came out to one park for every 2,000 residents. I don't think that is adequate. We can do better. We would like to see these numbers so we can see if this park actually meets the general plan. Are we getting, as residents who are paying for this, what we are promised?

Karen & Truman Gifford: We made the first meeting and missed the second meeting but then were there for the big reveal and were super sad. I agree with everything Stephanie and Dan said. We loved having the park at the top. As it has already been explained, everyone lives above and will be coming from that direction. Right now, coming from the homes, it is a 5-minute walk to the pond, through a back trail that is not part of the plans. But, because three neighbors put up such a fuss, they got what they wanted, while all the busy families who were not able to make the meeting got everything they wanted taken away. I didn't know that everything would be taken away after the first meeting. If I had known I would of spoke up more but thought that it was just a discussion. We really want the playground up top, the pickleball courts and the dock.

7. **SCHEDULED PRESENTATIONS:**

A. Folsom Park Development Design Principles – Paul Mewton, Special Project Manager

Paul Mewton, Special Project Manager went over a draft Park Development Design Principle to put in place until a Master Plan can be afforded.

B. Johnny Cash Trail Art Experience Informational Presentation – Tom Hellmann, Recreation Community Services Manager

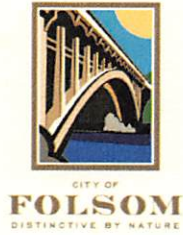
Tom Hellmann, Recreation Community Services Manager gave the past, present and future of the Johnny Cash Trail Art Experience. Showed Commission what the next art piece will be and that the hope is to have it done and installed by end of 2026.

8. **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

A. Budget/Finance (**Ortega**, Hedges, and Silva)

B. Planning, Development & Renovations (Econome, Wagner, and Williams)

C. Operations (Ortega, Silva, and Williams)



D. Zoo Sanctuary Ad Hoc Committee (**Econome**, Hedges, and Wallace)

The Planning, Development & Renovations meeting was held to discuss Benevento Park.

9. **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

A. Monthly Report – Kelly Gonzalez, Parks & Recreation Director

B. Parks & Recreation Director Report – Kelly Gonzalez, Parks & Recreation Director

Director Kelly Gonzalez provided a brief overview of the aforementioned reports.

10. **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:**

Vice Chair Wallace: Walks through Cummings Park weekly. Fantastic work is being done on the bike park. Met Randy and Greg, who are making so much progress in a short amount of time. I can see the kids looking through the fence, just waiting for it to open. Would suggest, if anyone has the time, to go by and see how the bike park is coming along.

Commissioner Wagner: Thanked Kelly for letting her take Derik Perez and Amy Nunez on a tree tour in Folsom Plan Area. She is excited about the Community Outreach meeting coming up, also looking forward to the Planning, Development & Renovations Subcommittee meeting this month on Benevento in order to get this park moving forward. She agreed with Commissioner Ortega that these people need a park.

Chair Hedges: Congratulations to Jocelyn on 25 years, and Holiday Lights, it was fantastic once again. Would go even as far to say that it felt smoother and it was fun to see the nocturnal animals.

Commissioner Econome: Echoed what Commissioner Wagner said, and for staff not being too frustrated with the Commission pushing Benevento off another month.

11. **ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:16 P.M.

Respectively Submitted:



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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Smith', is written over a horizontal line.

Chairperson

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As presiding officer, the Chairperson has the authority to preserve order at all Parks & Recreation Commission meetings, to remove or cause the removal of any person from any such meeting for disorderly conduct, or for making personal, impertinent, or slanderous remarks, using profanity, or becoming boisterous, threatening or personally abusive while addressing said Commission, and to enforce the rules of the Commission.

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