Village of Antioch Park Advisory Board

Wednesday, October 15, 2025
6:30 p.m. Village Hall, 935 Skidmore Dr, Antioch, IL

1. Call to Order
   Chairman Weber called the October 15, 2025 regular meeting of the Park Advisory Board to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Roll Call

	Present	Absent
Deichsel	X	
Hartman	X	
Nolan	X	
Olufs	X	
Weber	X	
<u>Staff</u>		
Kotloski	X	
Ford	X	

3. Pledge of Allegiance
   Antioch Park Advisor led the Pledge of Allegiance

4. Approval of Minutes
   Olufs/Nolan motion and second to approve the September 17, 2025 Park Advisory minutes.
   Vote –
   Yes = 5
   No = 0

5. Communications
   Chairman Weber asked if any public wanted to provide any comments. Nothing to report.

6. Chairperson's Report

Chairman Weber revisited the park project status reports last completed in 2019 and inquired about reinstating the park assignment process. Kotloski noted she was not aware of this previous practice and asked for clarification. Weber explained that board members were once assigned specific parks to review, compile needed repairs or

improvements and submit those items to Public Works. The Parks Director would then provide updates as those items were addressed.

Kotloski shared that Interim Director Nehila had created a similar list prior to his departure, though the board had not been informed of its existence. She will distribute these reports to the board for review. Following that review, Kotloski suggested that the board consider reestablishing park assignments, and the board expressed support for this approach.

Weber also recalled that board members previously used a park inspection checklist but was unable to locate a current copy. If the original cannot be found, the board may adopt a more comprehensive inspection form aligned with current park standards. Kotloski will search for the existing document and provide it to Chairman Weber.

Weber further asked about the potential for adding an additional staff member to the Parks & Recreation Department. Kotloski reported that she is actively making the case for expanded staffing, noting that the current workload is beyond what the three-person team can reasonably manage. While an immediate expansion is not possible, she emphasized the need for an administrative or registrar employee to manage phone calls, public inquiries, and facility rentals. She thanked Weber for his support and expressed appreciation that the board recognizes this need as a priority.

Weber concluded his report by expressing enthusiasm for the ongoing Centennial Park updates.

7. Director's Report

Centennial Park Update

Kotloski provided an update on the Centennial Park project. In-person voting for the new play structure is currently underway in alignment with the Parks Master Plan. She noted that many residents have requested an online voting option. These concerns were acknowledged, and previous technical issues related to file size have been resolved. Online voting will open over the upcoming weekend, with tallies to be completed on Monday. She shared that many children have been participating in the voting process, which is exciting given that they are the primary users of the new playground and have offered thoughtful suggestions.

Kotloski reported that electrical updates will be required for the Centennial Park shelter. She expressed the interest of installing security cameras at the parks; however, current challenges include finding adequate housing for the hardware and the lack of Wi-Fi or fiber connectivity. For example, Williams Park receives its signal from an antenna at the

pool, but without hard wiring, the system is not the most unreliable. Kotloski will bring these issues to Hitchcock to discuss possible solutions or determine whether implementation should be postponed.

Board members engaged in further discussion about these logistics. Olufs asked why Designs 3 and 4 included certain plan details while Designs 1 and 2 did not. Kotloski clarified that all companies received identical project information but that Designs 1 and 2 incorporated those elements differently within their renderings.

Kotloski reminded the board that the 90% plan meeting is scheduled for the 22nd. During this meeting, Hitchcock will present their near-final design, and Kotloski will share the playground voting results. She encouraged board members to submit any comments beforehand so they can be incorporated into the discussion. Olufs noted concerns regarding the steepness of certain areas and walkway placements. He shared marked-up copies of the site layout to illustrate potential accessibility issues, including walkways being flush with the parking lot and the risk of vehicle overhang narrowing pedestrian paths. He also noted that the proposed playground location includes slopes exceeding 5%, which could pose accessibility challenges for wheelchair users and those utilizing the fitness stations. Both Olufs and Weber discussed additional topography considerations related to the south parking lot. Kotloski and the board thanked Olufs for his detailed review, and she will relay these comments at the upcoming meeting.

Kotloski and Nolan discussed safety features, highlighting the importance of appropriate playground surfacing such as engineered wood fiber to mitigate fall hazards. Kotloski emphasized that while the project budget allows flexibility within the $110,000 allocated for the play structure, expectations should be managed. She noted that the community may compare the new Centennial playground to the existing Sequoit Creek structure, which costs approximately $1 million. While the new structure will be an improvement and will appear more complete than the sparse renderings, it will not have the same scale or “wow factor.” She expressed concern about potential public disappointment and reiterated that key decisions regarding Centennial were made before she began in her role.

Deichsel suggested proactive communication with the community about the current plans and the future of the engraved bricks. The board discussed possible pricing options and the idea of a community meeting, potentially framed as “The Future of Our Parks,” to facilitate open dialogue. Nolan added that it would be helpful to share a budget breakdown to explain the direction of the project. Board members briefly discussed past offerings at Osmond Brothers Park, Tim Osmond and Hiram Buttrick Sawmill as additional context.

Kotloski informed the board that decisions will soon also be needed for Centennial regarding the pavilion, baggo courts, and fitness stations included in the original project manual. She asked whether the community might prefer more basic amenities in order to allocate additional funds to the play structure. Hartman questioned the necessity of the baggo courts. Kotloski stated that they were established in the project plan and cannot be removed. Olufs asked for clarification on required elements within the plan, and Kotloski confirmed these include racket sports, baggo, fitness stations, and play structures for ages 0–4 and 5–12. The group further discussed fitness station configurations.

Kotloski noted recent requests to convert the tennis/pickleball combination courts into six dedicated pickleball courts, and that there is sufficient space to accommodate this. Deichsel and Olufs raised potential noise concerns based on past issues with the basketball courts. Kotloski will take these factors into consideration and explore possible ordinances. Concerns were also raised by Olufs regarding motorized scooters and bikes in the park; Kotloski discussed the use of signage as a mitigation strategy. Board members shared additional logistical considerations and community feedback.

Programs & Events

Kotloski reported strong participation in recent programs. The Ghost Tour hosted 65 participants across a wide age range, and she noted that she also served as a tour guide. “Treat the Streets” and Harvest Fest will take place on the 25th, with Treat the Streets shifted to 11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. this year to improve flow and allow families more flexibility. A community member reached out to share that he has donated pumpkins for the last seven years and will be doing so again this year.

Kids in the Kitchen is nearing capacity, and the first School Day Out program has been held, which now includes lunch for participants. Upcoming programs under Schools Day Out include Fall Break Camp, Winter Break Camp, and additional dates all following the District 34 calendar.

The board asked about general programming and cancellations. Ford outlined the new program structure, which is designed to eliminate cancellations and strengthen community trust. The board also discussed Hot Shots, and Ford explained that new approaches, increased promotion, and additional outreach have significantly improved participation, supporting this statement by acknowledging all upcoming hot shot programs have the participation numbers to run.

Kotloski highlighted Ford’s continued promotional efforts, including outreach to other organizations/buisnesses and attending community events such as the upcoming Truck

or Treat. Ford asked board members to notify her of any additional opportunities where Parks & Recreation representation would be beneficial.

Parents Night Out is scheduled for November 8. Kotloski shared that a parent expressed concern because she had previously signed up six children for this event in previous years but it had still been cancelled. She reiterated the importance of consistency and following through so families trust that programs such as this will continue to run as scheduled.

A tentative date of November 22 has been set for the Punt, Pass & Kick event, pending the Vikings' schedule. The event will be held at Tim Osmond if the schedule aligns. On February 7, the 3-on-3 Basketball event will take place at Northbridge Church on the same day as the Princess Dance to consolidate costs. Kotloski provided additional details about the basketball event flyer.

Commission Applications

Kotloski updated the board that several commission applications were received; one applicant was ineligible due to residing outside city limits, as required by ordinance. Four candidates have been selected to advance and will receive follow-up questions. Two will ultimately be chosen, and the board will be included in the email process to offer input.

Kotloski also reminded the board that all advisory members are part of the Parks & Recreation Association. She explained the benefits of membership, including receiving monthly magazines like the issue distributed at the meeting. She concluded that she and Fielder will be attending the annual conference held this year.

8. Financial Reports for Period Ending September 30, 2025
   The Advisory Board reviewed the Financial Reports for the period ending September 30, 2025.

9. Next Meeting
   The next Park Advisory Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 19, 2025 at 6:30 pm at the Village Hall building.

10. Other Business

The Commission raised several additional items for discussion. Deichsel informed Kotloski that her name had again been misspelled in the current brochure. Kotloski will ensure this does not happen in brochures moving forward. Hartman expressed interest in establishing a dedicated Parks & Recreation Facebook page. Kotloski explained that this

is the long-term goal; however, all current social media content is managed through Vicarious Media, and the department does not yet have sufficient staffing to manage its own platforms independently.

Weber asked what level of control Kotloski has over the website and social media accounts. She clarified that she is able to make minor adjustments to Facebook posts, but all other website and social media updates must be completed by Vicarious. She shared her ongoing frustrations with these limitations and explained the challenges this creates for timely communication.

Hartman also inquired about planning for the Christmas Parade. Kotloski reported that registration is now open and that the board will assist with developing the parade lineup. Entries are due by November 16, and lineup discussions can take place at the meeting on the 19th. The board and Kotloski briefly reviewed additional parade details.

11. Adjournment

    Hartman/ Deichsel motion and second to adjourn the meeting at 8:41 p.m.

    Vote –

    Yes = 5

    No = 0