



## Alma Parks Committee

# Agenda

### Park Meeting – March 27, 2023 – 6:00 p.m.

1. Alma Park Meeting Minutes from December 2022, October 2022, September 2022, August 2022
2. Updates on Grant Applications
  - a. Gratiot County Parks Millage Grant
  - b. Spark Grants for Trail Expansion & Riverside Park
3. Park Plan Survey (Update Priority List)
  - a. Copy of the Survey from the last Park Plan
4. Community meetings for Public Input (Month of April)
  - a. Public Meeting Format from last Park Plan
5. Other Business.

A regular meeting of the Alma Parks Committee was held in the Alma Municipal Building on December 6, 2022. A quorum of members was present.

Present: Roger Allman, Bill Gorton, Josh Higbie, Jamie Jerome, Blaine Lafler, Aeris Ripley, and Luke Wright.  
Absent: Kim Alonzi, Ty Warczinsky, and Andi Whitmore.

Others present: Curtis Dancer and David Ringle.

Alma City Manager Aeris Ripley called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Ripley shared information about the Michigan Spark Grants program, noting there will be three rounds of available funding with the first round being awarded in January of 2023. Round two will be awarded in spring of 2023, and round three in the summer of 2023. Ripley said he and Public Services Director David Ringle are working with OHM Advisors to prepare a grant application for the first round of funding. Grant applications will be based on two main projects: updates to the amphitheater and other structures in Riverside Park, and an extension of the River Walk around Euclid Ball Field and along the river to St. Louis city limits.

Ringle provided maps and presented ideas for the Riverside Park improvements and the River Walk extension from Euclid Ball Fields. Discussion followed about the proposed route.

**Motion by Lafler, seconded by Jerome, to support submission of an application for SPARK Grant funding for the rehabilitation of the Alma Riverwalk boardwalk adjacent to Riverside Park and the rehabilitation of the pavilion and associated assets within Riverside Park.**

**Yes: Allman, Gorton, Higbie, Jerome, Lafler, Ripley, and Wright.**

**No: none.**

**Absent: Alonzi, Warczinsky, and Whitmore.**

Discussion followed about the bicycle trail and connections to other trails.

**Motion by Jerome, seconded by Wright, to support submission of a grant application for Michigan Spark Grant funding to extend the River Walk from Euclid Ball Fields adjacent to and along the Pine River to St. Louis city limits. Motion carried.**

**Yes: Allman, Gorton, Higbie, Jerome, Lafler, Ripley, and Wright.**

**No: none.**

**Absent: Alonzi, Warczinsky, and Whitmore.**

Ripley presented a list of goals and objectives from the current Parks Master Plan for members to review. He asked members for input on park assets that need attention, rehabilitation, or replacement.

Gorton explained that he had visited each park and took notes and pictures of items he believed could use improvement. He reviewed the items on his list. Discussion followed about some of the items he listed and park bathroom open hours, bathroom vandalism, and disadvantages of the location of Mill Park.

Jamey Jerome left the meeting at 6:36 p.m.

Wright said he had noticed that park signage was in bad shape. Discussion followed about possibilities of contacting local groups for assistance with some of the easier improvement projects.

Ripley said he will also be applying for funds from the Gratiot County Parks Millage Grant. He will be asking for \$80,00 to help fund a pocket park in the alley between the Strand Theater and the Arts Council building. The request will include drainage, stamped concrete, decorative poles for banners, bollards at each end, and lighting. The proposed park will be multifunctional, and he expects the total cost will be approximately \$150,000.

Ripley went on to say the group will need to consider, in the future, possible uses for the former sugar beet factory site. He said the property is not viable for residential use, but could be used for industry, or for recreation. He asked members to think about possibilities.

Ripley asked Allman to present information on the return of Evenings in the Parks. Allman said the Pine River Arts Council has been working on bringing back the event. It would be every week, same day, in the same venue. He said the Council would like to use the gazebo in Wright Park, and they will be asking the City to consider waiving the rental fee for the event. The Council has another meeting coming up, but Allman said he wanted to bring the matter before the Parks Committee for consideration, and if they are agreeable, the Council will continue to move forward with the project.

Ripley said he will check policy regarding the park rental fee. Additional brief discussion followed.

**Motion by Allman, seconded by Gorton, to adjourn the meeting at 6:51 p.m. Motion carried.**

**Yes: Allman, Gorton, Higbie, Jerome, Lafler, Ripley, and Wright.**  
**No: none.**  
**Absent: Alonzi, Warczinsky, and Whitmore.**

A special meeting the City of Alma Parks Committee was called for October 24, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. at the Alma Municipal Building.

Present: Jamie Jerome and Aeric Ripley.

Absent: Roger Allman, Kim Alonzi, Bill Gorton, Blaine Lafler, Ty Warczinsky, and Andi Whitmore.

Others present: David Ringle and Curtis Dancer.

A quorum of the Committee was not present. City Manager Aeric Ripley reminded those present that an official meeting could not be conducted.

Ripley and Jerome briefly discussed the master plan.

The meeting recessed and the group disbanded at 6:10 p.m.

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Sara Anderson, Alma City Clerk

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Date of Approval

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A special meeting the City of Alma Parks Committee was called for September 26, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. at the Alma Municipal Building.

Present: Kim Alonzi, Bill Gorton, and Aeric Ripley.

Absent: Roger Allman, Jamie Jerome, Blaine Lafler, Ty Warczinsky, and Andi Whitmore.

Others present: David Ringle and Curtis Dancer.

A quorum of the Committee was not present. City Manager Aeric Ripley reminded those present that an official meeting would not be conducted but discussion could be held among those present.

Ripley asked Alonzi and Gorton to review the Parks and Inventory lists included in the current Master Plan. He also suggested the two tour each of the Parks. The group will need to carefully consider each asset and determine whether that asset should be retired or replaced.

Discussion followed about tennis courts versus pickleball courts. Ripley asked everyone to consider what might be a more appropriate replacement for the tennis courts that have outlived their usefulness.

Additional discussion followed about the disc golf course and adding it to the new plan. Ripley also noted there may be property available to add additional park space. Brief discussion followed about dog parks.

Ripley mentioned the two vacant seats on the Committee and said if anyone had suggestions to please forward the names to him.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

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Sara Anderson, Alma City Clerk

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Date of Approval

A special meeting the City of Alma Parks Committee was held in the Alma Municipal Building on August 22, 2022. A quorum of the Committee was present.

Present: Roger Allman, Bill Gorton, Blaine Lafler, Aeric Ripley, and Andi Whitmore.

Absent: Kim Alonzi, Jamie Jerome, and Ty Warczynsky.

Others present: David Ringle and Curtis Dancer.

Ripley called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

**Motion by Allman, seconded by Whitmore, to approve minutes of the July 25, 2022, meeting, as presented. Motion carried with all ayes.**

Ripley said a link to the Parks master plan had been included in the meeting agenda, and he wanted to get things rolling on the new plan starting with a site visit to each of the parks. Ripley said Alma Transit would provide transportation for the visit. The group discussed possible dates and determined August 31<sup>st</sup> at 6 p.m. would work for the most members.

Ripley then reviewed requirements for projects that could be submitted for potential funds from the Gratiot County Parks and Recreation Millage grant, noting the project must be a new asset and not maintenance of an existing project. The group offered ideas including converting tennis courts to pickleball courts, adding shade structures, and converting the old sand volleyball court at the Library to a basketball court. Discussion followed regarding whether taking out an old asset and replacing it with a new asset would meet qualifications for the grant.

Ripley told the group he had received information about possible funding for a "fitness" park. Discussion followed. Members expressed fears of additional vandalism. Allman asked if surveillance could be considered as a project for the Gratiot County millage grant. Additional discussion followed about security cameras, requirements for retaining footage, and the continued threat of vandalism to any new project. Members asked Ripley to seek additional information about the fitness park funding.

Whitmore noted she would not be available for the September 26<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Ripley told members he would follow up with an email regarding the proposed August 31<sup>st</sup> parks visit.

Allman asked if Scotland Yard Park could be used for overflow parking during the Alma Alive event. Brief discussion followed.

The meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m.

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Sara Anderson, Alma City Clerk

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Date of Approval

City of Alma Parks & Recreation  
 Master Plan Public Input Survey Questions  
 2-5-15 Draft

The City of Alma is in the process of updating its 5-Year Recreation Master Plan to provide planning for community recreation. We would like to invite you to take part in the process by participating in this short on-line survey. Your input will greatly influence the direction in developing park and recreation opportunities over the next five years and beyond. Thank you in advance for your time and interest.

1. I am a:           City of Alma Resident\_\_\_   College Student\_\_\_   Local Area Resident\_\_\_.

2. How important do you feel public parks and recreational facilities are to your quality of life?

- Extremely Important                    Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
- Somewhat Important
- Neutral    \_\_\_\_\_
- Somewhat Unimportant
- Extremely Unimportant                    \_\_\_\_\_

3. Overall, how satisfied are you with the quality and current maintenance of public parks and recreation facilities available in the City of Alma?

- Extremely Satisfied                    Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
- Somewhat Satisfied
- Neutral    \_\_\_\_\_
- Somewhat Dissatisfied
- Extremely Dissatisfied                    \_\_\_\_\_

4. What priorities should the City of Alma give to the following recreational opportunities?

| Low                      | Medium                   | High                     |   |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Develop a Dog Park  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Expansion of Existing Trail System  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Upgrades to Existing Park Facilities  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Encourage Park Programs/Partnerships with Community Organizations<br>(i.e. School groups, Churches, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Improving Softball/Baseball Facilities  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Improve City Basketball Courts  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Improve Existing Tennis Courts  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Areas/Opportunities for Wildlife Viewing  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Support Facilities for Existing Recreational Areas (Restrooms, Parking,<br>Lighting, etc.)                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Branding/Park Signage/Maps/Wayfinding   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Develop Bike Routes Within The City   |

5. What is your age?  
 0-5 \_\_\_ 5-12 \_\_\_ 13-18 \_\_\_ 18-30 \_\_\_ 31-50 \_\_\_ 50 and older \_\_\_

6. How do you hear about recreation programs and activities?  
 Brochures \_\_\_ Website \_\_\_ Flyers \_\_\_ Facebook \_\_\_ Newspaper \_\_\_ Word of Mouth \_\_\_

7. Place a check (✓) if you have visited any of the city parks listed below in the past year:

\_\_\_ Hampton Park

\_\_\_ Mill Park

\_\_\_ King Park

\_\_\_ Holiday Park

\_\_\_ Washington Park

\_\_\_ Euclid Park

\_\_\_ Highland Park

\_\_\_ Pine River/Conservation Park

\_\_\_ Riverside Park

\_\_\_ Scotland Yard (Farmer's Market)



# Recreation Open House

Hosted by:  
**City of Alma**  
**Park and Recreation Advisory Committee**

Welcome! Thank you for your participation. We would like your ideas and suggestions for the future of our City parks. Please make sure you sign in.

The city is currently updating its 5 Year Recreation Plan (required for various grant funding opportunities). Your input will be used to refine goals and develop an action plan of priorities within the plan. The draft of the recreation plan will be posted and available for public review this Spring.

Various stations are located within the room, attended by city staff, park and recreation advisory committee members or consultants from ROWE Professional Services. Each station has a board with topics and related ideas. Please talk with the representative at the station for questions or to add your suggestions to the board.

Stations include:

- Existing Facilities  
Find out what we have accomplished since the last recreation plan and what is at our parks already. Locate your favorite park.
- Survey Results  
Review the comments we have received from the survey that has been posted for public comment since January.
- Park Development  
Are there specific improvements that should be made at existing parks?  
Look at what is already planned for 2015.
- Miscellaneous  
Let us know what you think of our draft goal statements.  
Any additional thoughts for how we can work together and partner to get things done?

What is important to you? Let us know by using your stickers to vote on things you support. (put them all on one or spread them around as appropriate). There are some forms for additional written comments too.

Thanks again. Enjoy the refreshments and thank you for your input!