Winnemac Park
Advisory Council

Winnemac Park Advisory Council, May Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, May 13, 2026
Time: 6:15pm
Location: Amundsen Library
Board Members: Jacob Schuster, Deb Miretzky, Claire Howard, Tessa Groll, Sarah Harpring

Introduction and Call to Order

Approval of March Minutes? Yes.
All Meeting Minutes can be found upon our website (www.winnemacpac.org/WPAC-meetings)

Approval of May Agenda? Yes

Members in Attendance (22 total, ~16 total voting members): Jacob Schuster, Deb Miretzky, Dave Miretzky, Amy Williamson, Tessa Groll, Jeff Borden, Mike Pavilon, Matty Lewis Hall, Diana Diaz, Mary O'Connor; Anne Sylvan, Margaret O'Conor, Kiala Moore, Amy Reeder, Claire Howard, Lisa Ragucci, Sarah Harpring, Ron Rasmussen, Rick Marron, Lise Helene, Danielle Neergheen, Tony Correa,

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Supervisor Report

Park Supervisor Report, Lisa Ragucci

8/1 - Movie in the Park: (RESCHEDULED TO SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12TH)
Join us on August 1st to get Wicked in Winnemac! We will be showing the first movie in the sequel.

8/8 - Camp Winnemac!
August 8th; celebrate a night surrounded by nature with the chance to camp in Winnemac Park! This opportunity is available to families of 6 to camp overnight in Winnemac Park.
Cost: $50/family

9/3 - Fiesta Mexicana:
A family interactive musical event will take place on September 3rd

Winnemac Kids Day Camp: runs from June 22nd through July 31st

Grub Treatment: further treatment will be finalized between June 1st-19th
Park District had to select a different contractor to accommodate baseball diamonds schedule

Ballpark/Turf Field Lights: Lisa (Park Supervisor) will be meeting with the electricians next Tuesday (May 19th)

As a city park standard, turf/ballfield lights will be on each night of the July 4th weekend (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday). They will be turned off for Full Moon Jam's headlining WFFA performance. Once installed and operating, Lisa will have control of the lighting and will be able to operate it remotely.

Park Benches: There is a severely damaged (yet funky) bench by Chappell that still requires repair. The bench by the central Willow was removed in autumn of last year and has yet to be replaced. We are awaiting an update on both items. Kiala Moore, CPD Area Manager, will be following up.

Crack in Central Tennis Court: This complaint has been addressed and passed along. It has been confirmed that the court is under warranty More information on updates and repair will be provided in coming months. Kiala will attempt to expedite repair.

Treasurer's Report

CURRENT FINANCIAL STANDING AS OF MAY, 2026

We currently have **~$9,233** in our account; while a sizable sum, we do need to continue to drive our efforts among our community, family, friends, etc in order to push us over the finish line.

New business

Chelsea Brown called a motion to combine the numerous WPAC committees that are relatively inactive She suggested combining WFFA, Arts Committee, and Movement in The Park to fall under one umbrella of Events and Planning. This motion passed. Efficiency, here we come!

WPAC Fundraising: Tessa (WPAC Secretary), launched a social media push starting this morning (5/13) to support our May fundraising week. In these efforts, we hope to draw upon family, friends, and our community in order to get us to our goal for WFFA and beyond. Any donation helps!

Sarah Harping asked about corporate matching options and protocol: there has to be a specific designation within CPD to specify which PAC the raised money is meant to be donated to (tax deductible).

WFFA Overview:

Below is the list of current vendors that are slated to join us for our 3rd Annual WFFA. This is subject to change.

ACTIVITIES/VENDORS
Yoga Class, Bloom Yoga
Balloon Animals
Card Magic
P2 Soccer
Disc Golf
Ravenswood Neighbors Association
National Anthem Singer
Chicago Metropolitan Baseball
Snapology: STEM Activities
Chicago Ornithological Society
Fun to See Faces
Lita Keller, Tarot Reader
Story Time with Miss Ruby

ACOUSTIC MUSIC
(Accordion) - Daniel
(Guitar) - Will Fancher

HEADLINER
Full Moon Jam

FOOD TRUCKS
Limoni Belli
Tacomotura
Empanadas 5411
Kona Ice
Tom's Coffee
Reggie's
Double Dip Ice Cream
RITE TOILETS
Lita Keller

Art fair/walk: While this is one of the WFFA activities that still requires planning, we are very excited to welcome our first Art Walk to WFFA! **Jacob Schuster** (WPAC president) is currently working with groups that have experience in hosting such activities. Promotions and acceptance will begin on the week of May 17th; one of the art organizations Jake has spoken to will help vet these There will be no table fee and artists will be able to take all proceeds from what is sold. The deadline for sign-up is still to be determined, but will ultimately have a cut-off for acceptance.

Edgewater Castle Football Club: will be creating a special link for their season tickets as there is a desire to create a closer partnership with the WPAC. A purchase of season tickets will contribute $10 back to the council in support. **Cost for ECFC season tickets:** $60/season

Lincoln Square Spice Company: 15% of all pre-tax sales between 12:00 AM June 7th - June 14th at 12:00 PM CST will be contributed to the WPAC. There will be a social media promotion and a poster/sign available in the shop. This will apply to all sales (in-store and online). WPAC will be promoting this as well.

WFFA Raffle: we will be having our first-ever raffle offered at this year's WFFA event. Prizes include a month-long gym membership, a brand new carry-on suitcase by Away, Fleet Feet gift certificate, and more!

Meeting with Police Commander & Andre Vasquez (40th Ward Alder): Jacob Schuster and **Dave Miretzky** (WPAC member) met with the Police Commander and Andre Vasquez on Monday, May 11th to outline the WFFA needs, and potential policing. Park clearance following the event will begin at 11 PM. The Park District continually comes early on July 5th to do a thorough clean-up. Neighbors and volunteers also help with park clean up the day after WFFA. Kiala Moore will look into options for handling coals from barbequing that get left by trees. Please note, barbequing, use of grills, fireworks, or the starting of personal fires, is strictly prohibited within Winnemac Park.

Chicago Park District Participatory Budget: Steering Committee: Tessa Groll was selected to serve on behalf of our northside parks on the Chicago Park District's Steering Committee for the city's participatory budget process. Individuals from all over Chicago are able to submit their proposals for park improvements and beautification (including our very own). This committee helps to further whittle the list down by working alongside CPD. We will organize those ideas into categories that will be voted upon by the city. Anyone aged 13+ who resides in Chicago can cast their vote for park projects that will be undertaken in 2027 and beyond. The first meeting took place at the end of April to outline the process and more updates will be provided as they are available.

Amy Williamson, Natural Areas Steward, proposed a strong case about the allocation of additional funds to be dedicated to our natural areas. Our late-year survey in 2025 found that our natural areas are the number one attraction here in Winnemac. Additional funds would allow the Natural Areas Committee to obtain additional wildflowers, trees, and shrubs, as this is currently not funded by the WPAC. As of now, the NAC has goals of implementing imperiled IL native species in order to diversify our prairies and give wildflowers the chance to thrive here in Chicago, this however, requires us to purchase them. Expanding upon our prairies is one of the biggest ways we can give back to our future generations, as they are truly the gift that keeps on giving. This funding would also

go toward informative/educative signage that helps improve the experience of parkgoers and encourages biodiversity.

- There are concerns about setting up a formal budget that would be able to be dedicated to these spaces.
- Ideas of a potential fundraising push in the autumn that focuses specifically on wildflower/tree/shrub funds. All installations to Winnemac are pre-approved by the Chicago Parks District and are sourced hyper-locally.
- Kaila Moore mentioned looking into grant opportunities and seeing what money could be allocated for our natural areas.

Natural Areas Report, Amy Williamson:

Earth-Day Clean-Up (April 25th): we had one of our biggest turnouts we have ever had for our volunteer days! We are extremely grateful to the Chicago Metropolitan Baseball Association (CMBA) who had the bases loaded when it came to pitching in! Their group, in addition to neighbors, community members, and WPAC members came together to pick-up trash, re-establish a mulch trail through our western prairie, and cut back a few early signs of invasives. We also installed four new Hazelnut bushes (three within our Central prairie and one within our children's prairie).

Upcoming Volunteer Work Days: May 30 and June 2 from 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Educational Walk & Talks: the next tour on the docket will take place with Tessa, who will lead a guided walk through Winnemac on Memorial Day Weekend (Sunday, May 24th at 11AM). Only 12 spots - register today to get wild about our flowers!

May 24th | **The Wonders of Winnemac:** Our Wildflowers
➔ Event Brite Sign-Up

Our first Walk & Talk tour of the year kicked off with Tessa and Jon Woolwine (Natural Areas Steward) leading a Tree Identification Tour. ~20 species of trees were discussed with the ability to sneak in a bit of birdwatching and Bodwéwadmimwen!

Seeds of Change | **Amundsen:** hosting their plant sale on June 6th

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Minutes submitted by Tessa Groll, WPAC Secretary with edits and inclusions from Deb Miretzky (WPAC Vice President)