

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

AUGUST 2026

ADMINISTRATION

The annual audit process is complete, and it shows that the Park District is in a good financial position with solid procedures in place. Lauterbach and Amen provided the final draft of the audit and copies will be available at the August 20, 2026, Board Meeting.

Also on the agenda for your consideration is the asphalt installation for the Hunter Prairie Park parking lot. A public bid was conducted, and four bids were received with McGill Construction being the lowest. Staff confirmed the specifics and contacted the references provided, all of which were satisfactory.

Reminder that the August 20, 2026, Board Meeting will be held at the Community Center and the September 17, 2026, Board Meeting will be held at The Square. All meeting dates, times, and locations that were approved at the May 21, 2026, Board Meeting are posted on the FSPD website.

This summer, smoke, extreme heat, flooding, and storm damage resulted in the temporary closure of FSPD facilities, cancellation of outdoor activities, and rescheduling of park projects. Staff responded to these challenging conditions and continue to evaluate how best to prepare for similar events in the future.

The health and safety of our program participants and staff remains our highest priority. In response to poor air quality caused by wildfire smoke, staff developed air quality guidelines to help inform program participants and their families when outdoor programming would be moved indoors and when regularly scheduled activities could safely resume. We recognize the importance of outdoor play and appreciate the understanding and cooperation of our participants and families as we take necessary precautions to protect their health and well-being.

Procedures are already in place to keep program participants indoors during periods of extreme heat and to adjust staff hours and responsibilities as needed. Similarly, established procedures are in place for lightning safety, supported by the ThorGuard Lightning Prediction System.

Flooding and storm damage temporarily closed the golf course. Staff and the Reliable Property Services team are commended for their repeated storm cleanup efforts and for reopening the driving range and course in a safe and timely manner. Many trees and large limbs were lost and there is extensive fence damage.

The pickleball courts at Champions Park also sustained fencing damage, resulting in a temporary closure until repairs can be completed. In the meantime, players are encouraged to use the courts at Community Park.

Maintenance staff have remained focused on storm clean-up throughout the District, while recreation staff have developed creative indoor alternatives to ensure program participants can continue to engage in meaningful activities while remaining safe. All other departments supported their efforts and communicated with impacted residents and program participants to keep them informed.

Resilience is not simply about recovering from severe weather events. It is about learning from each experience, strengthening our preparedness for the future, and taking steps to ensure our parks, facilities, programs, and staff are ready for whatever challenges may come next.

MAINTENANCE

We are immensely grateful to our parks crew for their storm cleanup efforts. Three severe storms have required six weeks of focused work to clear fallen park trees, downed fencing, repair roof damage, and cleanup debris throughout the parks. The crew is completing this work in a safe and efficient manner.

The basketball point and shoot area has been painted, and the tennis courts received a fresh coat of paint to cover the existing graffiti. These improvements, along with the new parking lot asphalt, represent the finishing touches to the Hunter Prairie Park renovation project.

RECREATION

August is filled with music! Scheduled and rescheduled summer concerts have been enjoyed on beautiful summer evenings at Island Prairie Park. The Throwbacks got people up on their feet and dancing to the music. The Sideshow Jim Band featured local musicians having the opportunity to perform for their neighbors, and Port Authority from Chicago's South Side, will close out this year's summer concert season on August 18.

With summer camps finished for the season, recreation staff turned their focus on preparing for the start of the upcoming school year. We are delighted to welcome 74 children into our ELC Preschool program this fall. The Four's 4th Day is an optional fourth day to help prepare children for kindergarten and registration continues to increase each year.

IT

Our IT team successfully completed their continuing education AI class and are preparing a presentation that includes recommendations to enhance Park District operations.

The next phase of security camera installation was completed at the Community Center and The Square as well as the access control project. Staff have already found the improvements to be beneficial and user friendly.

SPECIAL RECREATION

This year's LWSR Foundation Golf Outing is on August 14. The Foundation is grateful for the Park Board's continued support through sponsorship and raffle baskets.

The next LWSRA Board Meeting is scheduled for August 18, 2026.

LWSRA golfers are regulars at Square Links Golf Course & Practice Center, and we have enjoyed watching their skills continue to develop throughout the season.

OFFICE

Fall program resident registration begins August 20 and non-resident registration on August 25. This year's fall brochure includes many exciting new opportunities along with the time-tested favorites that continue to be enjoyed by FSPD patrons.

FOIA

Two FOIA requests were received requesting the companies that participated in the public bid and their bid amounts for the asphalt installation at the Hunter Prairie Park parking lot. Responses were sent and following the awarding of the bid at the August 20, 2026 Board Meeting, the bid results will be posted to the FSPD website.

Also, staff responded to a request for documents pertaining to the bike and/or walking path located South of St. Francis Road, West of Pfeiffer Road, and North of Hickory Creek.

All responses were provided within the appropriate timeframe.

Respectfully submitted:
Audrey Marcquenski
Executive Director