

Parks Safety Council

Meeting Summary

Monday, January, 26, 2026

Ed Ball Bldg., 214 N. Hogan Street, 4th Floor Conference Room

Meeting Attendance

- **Park Safety Council Members:** Chair Bruce J. Tyson, Planning District 4, Walter Bryant, Planning District 3, Don Oulton, Planning District 2.
- **Zoom Members:** None.
- **Staff and Elected Officials:** Dan Piastuck, Chief of Recreation & Community Programming; Terrence Hurst, Parks Maintenance Superintendent; James Taylor, Park Facility Safety Officer; Michelle Godwin-Ware, Neighborhood Services Coordinator.
- **Zoom Staff:** None
- **Visitors:** None
- **Zoom Visitors:** None

Meeting Summary

1. **Call to Order/Verify Quorum:** Bruce J. Tyson, Park Safety Council Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:06 a.m. Michelle Godwin-Ware verified that there was no quorum.
2. **Approval of Previous Meeting Summary:** Meeting summaries will be approved when the Park Safety Council has full membership.
3. **Elected Officials Report:** None.
4. **Meeting overview:**
 - The Parks Safety Council met on January 26, 2026; however, a quorum was not reached, and no votes were taken. Despite this, the session provided a comprehensive review of park safety inspections, operational challenges, and improvement initiatives.
 - Inspection data for the 2025 calendar year showed 721 total inspections, with 436 (≈60%) resulting in no findings and only 28 unsatisfactory inspections (≈3.9%), many of which have already been corrected. The team emphasized significant improvement in park conditions compared to prior years. Staff identified 13 outstanding unsatisfactory hazards, which will now receive immediate, structured follow-up and monthly tracking.
 - Operational enhancements are underway, including transition from paper/email reporting to mobile app–based inspections to increase accuracy, timeliness, and proactive maintenance. Supervisors (and eventually foremen) will conduct baseline inspections to complement the formal inspector’s detailed reviews.
 - A major concern discussed was Buck Park, where defective fencing near a retention pond poses a high-drowning risk. This park has been made a top priority for immediate reinspection and corrective action.
 - The Council also discussed ongoing challenges in maintaining quorum, which have impeded the fulfillment of formal reporting obligations. City leadership has initiated a review of the Council’s structure and operations. Two new member appointments are expected soon, which may restore quorum and enable the required quarterly reporting.
 - Overall, both inspection data and member observations indicate that park safety conditions have continued to improve, though documentation and reporting processes must be strengthened to clearly and consistently demonstrate progress.
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5. **Review of Safety Report/Updates:**
 - James Taylor reported that he completed **164 inspections** in the last quarter (excluding Chandler).

- Overall park conditions noted as improving; unsatisfactory ratings were uncommon.
 - Parks with notable concerns:
 - **Buck Park** – fence down near retention pond; considered a serious hazard.
 - **Murray Hill Park** – long-term issues.
 - **Stenton Park** – unsatisfactory rating.
 - Electricians and carpenters were recognized for rapid response to hazards.
- 6. Parks, Recreation, and Community Services provided a 2025 annual inspection data review, reviewing the full 2025 dataset.**
- 721 inspections completed.
 - 436 inspections had no findings (≈60%).
 - 285 inspections had findings, broken down as:
 - 28 unsatisfactory
 - 236 satisfactory with findings
 - 21 satisfactory with hazards
 - 15 of 28 unsatisfactory items closed; 13 remain open and will receive priority review.
 - Many unsatisfactory items involved pool electrical issues, now resolved.
 - Staff will implement monthly data tracking to improve accuracy and closure rates.
- 7. Improvement Initiatives & Technology Changes**
- Transition underway from paper/email inspection processes to mobile app–based inspections for greater accuracy and efficiency.
 - Supervisors will begin performing standard inspections; eventual expansion to foremen.
 - New workflow aims to strengthen documentation, reduce response times, and align internal maintenance with official safety inspections.
- 8. Priority Safety Issue – Buck Park**
- Defective fencing poses a drowning risk; Council emphasized urgency due to historical incidents.
 - Staff committed to reinspecting the site the same day and developing a corrective timeline.
- 9. Member Questions & General Discussion**
- **Tree hazard on private property:** should be reported through **MyJax** and handled by Code Enforcement.
 - **Seasonal inspections:**
 - Pools inspected in early June when operational.
 - All other parks receive uniform inspection year-round.
 - **Communication rules (Sunshine Law):**
 - Members must send questions or comments through Michelle; she will distribute them to the relevant staff.
- 10. City Review of Council Operations**
- A city reviewer is preparing a report on the Parks Safety Council, focusing on quorum challenges and operational consistency.
 - The city attorney and families involved in prior incidents have expressed interest in the Council's progress.
 - Two new appointees are expected to join soon, potentially restoring quorum.

11. Member Comments

- Members expressed strong support for improving documentation, proactive hazard identification, and formal reporting.
- Consensus that park conditions have significantly improved compared to 2021–2022, but data must clearly demonstrate those improvements.

12. Public Comments: None

13. Adjournment:

Chair Tyson adjourned the meeting at 11:58 a.m., with members in agreement on next steps and acknowledging ongoing improvements in park safety and reporting processes.

NEXT MEETING: March 23, 2026, 11 a.m.

LOCATION: Ed Ball Bldg., 214 N. Hogan Street, 4th Floor Conference Rm.

Meetings are recorded. A copy of the audio recording can be obtained through a public records request at MyJax.com or 630.CITY

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