



MINUTES
OXFORD RECREATION BOARD
MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 15 SOUTH COLLEGE AVE. OXFORD, OHIO 45056,
SECOND FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
MONDAY, MAY 11, 2026 AT 12:30 PM

Roll Call

Call to Order

The Oxford Recreation Board was called to order by Mr. Smith on Monday, May 11, 2026 at 12:32pm.

Roll Call

Members in attendance were: Adam Biessel; Sarah Meaney; Roxanne Ornelas and Jacob Young

Members absent were: Jake Richardson

Staff members present were: Chad Smith and Deanna Barbour

Guest Visitors: none

Approval of Agenda

1. Approval of the Agenda for May 11, 2026, Oxford Recreation Board Meeting

Motion to Approve

(Voice Vote) 1st Mr. Young 2nd Ms. Ornelas

AYE# 4

NAY# 0

ABS# 0

Approval of Minutes

1. Approval of the Minutes from April 13, 2026 Meeting of the Oxford Recreation Board

Motion to Approve

(Voice Vote) 1st Mr. Young 2nd Ms. Ornelas

AYE# 4

NAY# 0

ABS# 0

Public Comment

No public comment.

Old Business

1. Parks Master Plan

Mr. Smith noted the Parks and Recreation master plan will remain on the agenda for the next couple of months. Over 40 people attended the focus groups that were held at the end of April, stating that there was a great number and turnout. This really shows the interest that people have in parks and recreation.

Mr. Smith stated the project website is live, adding that you can refer people there that want more information. We've promoted it on the city website, and also with flyers at the TRI and at various locations around town. Most important is to get people to take those surveys. Mr. Smith is currently speaking to PROS to see where we're at and looking at old TRI drawings.

Mr. Smith stated he's in the process of doing a park inventory that will list how many playgrounds, how many shelters etc. we currently have. This process is a very familiar one to him from his days in the park system, such as classifying our parks. For example, Inloes would be considered a pocket park, and it's interesting to see how they classify these parks. Mr. Will Younger from PROS will come out for a day and walk the parks with Mr. Smith, and they will also take time to visit the Oats Trail.

Ms. Ornelas asked how the bridge was going on the Oats Trail? Mr. Smith stated we are ahead of schedule and Mr. Driesbach tells us that, hopefully, a ribbon cutting to officially open it that will connect the middle school and high school will be coming soon.

Mr. Smith stated this is not related directly to the master plan but residually. Mr. Smith has contracted with American Ramp company, to do the skate park design. When we get the design done, then we can go out to bid for contractors. Looking late 2026–2027, so spring 2027 the skate park could be open.

Mr. Smith noted he wanted to bring the skate park design people on board so they could work with PROS Consulting and the master plan process.

Currently, the area being looked at for the new skate park site is the area behind the TRI, maybe closer to that retirement community, more visible and more security, not hidden behind a playground. So far, he likes that game plan, adding we'll see what we get from American Ramp and their design.

Ms. Meaney asked when the time came, if there would be a way to invite the community to come and leave hand prints in or around the skate park structure. Mr. Smith said American Ramp does a public listening session like what the master plan did and once he gets a date and gets that planned, he will put that question out there.

Ms. Ornelas asked are they looking at the different ages and separate areas, so it's accessible for all ages. Mr. Smith said yes, they are looking at a multi-use concept for skateboards, scooters and bikes.

2. Park Project Updates

Mr. Smith advised the contractors are currently working on the pickle ball court. They need to put in new footers and sleeves. Currently, that side ended up smaller than originally planned. So a tennis court and pickle ball will not fit. So we're only able to do pickle courts on that side. All the footers will be done soon and then everything will be asphalted, and then it will take about 2 weeks to cure. Looking into maybe updating the fencing around the courts and painting them black.

Ms. Meaney asked how many tennis courts there are. Mr. Smith said we currently have one tennis court and four pickle ball courts. Now we'll be adding 6 more pickleball courts.

New Business

1. 2026 Action Items Toward Comprehensive Strategic Plan

Mr. Smith distributed to the Rec. Board showing the action items in the comprehensive strategic plan for our department and what our goals would be for 2026.

Mr. Smith noted several items are already complete — such as the batteries for recycling — complete. Electric needs in the uptown parks — complete. An environmental naturalization plan is currently in process. Mr. Smith advised that they have some great ideas for the Community Park etc. Mr. Smith stated he will let that take shape and the pilot area would be the trail at the OCP, such as repairing the bridges and doing some nice cleanup on the trail. Ms. Meaney said that sounds like a great volunteer project. Mr. Young said it would be a great botanical opportunity to take kids out there to learn.

Mr. Smith said he hasn't put together anything yet, but it is coming.

OPRD branding - master plan initiative

Parks Master Plan - moving along, looking to be done by December holidays.

Pickleball courts at the TRI - currently in progress.

2. Action Items to be Researched for 2027 Budget

Mr. Smith stated here are the 2027 action items to be researched for the 2027 budget.

Mr. Smith noted rain gardens at the community park that will have a catch basin, have been discussed, adding the overall theme will have a conservation focus.

Mr. Biessel stated he knows there's been discussion regarding an outdoor fitness pad. Mr. Biessel asked do they get used, adding that, to be honest, Joyce Park in Hamilton has all that outdoor workout equipment, and he's never seen anyone using it. Mr. Smith noted he will research other communities to see if they get the use people are saying. Mr. Biessel said, yes, canvas other parks and see if others are really using them. Mr. Smith stated that since there is such a huge price tag, it may not be cost-effective for us to pursue it. Adding a fitness court is in the survey,

so we will see what the feedback from the community is. Ms. Meaney said if she could imagine it at Leonard Howell, would there be a way to bring in the schools to do a field trip and do a work-out day etc. Mr. Biessel stated Miami is going to have one in front of the current Millet hall, adding this will be a fitness court, so this could be a duplicate for this community. Mr. Smith stated this is definitely something for us to consider. We'll be listing Miami Rec opportunities for the community along with Butler County Metro Parks options etc. So we're not creating duplicate options unless there is a definite need, and they will be used. We will provide more of an update on this later.

Mr. Smith stated in regard to the Juneteenth celebration this year, he does sit on the Enjoy Oxford Board and Mr. Revere and his group are getting the support that they need. The only thing from an action side Parks and Recreation can do is, we can work with you for a park location to help with space. Mr. Young said they received funding directly from Enjoy Oxford for the event.

Mr. Smith advised Ms. French was in charge of the Oats and Honey 5k/10k that took place this year and next year it may make it to a half marathon. This year 196 runners participated and thinks it will just get bigger and bigger. The Bee Festival event itself is drawing people from all over the country, so the run is bound to continue to grow as well.

Mr. Smith noted another action item is to expand presence at Miami events.

Mr. Smith stated there is a group called Hamilton's Main Street Running Collective and they want it to be a hub for local races and connecting communities. Mr. Biessel said he goes back to the master plan and what it could do in terms of connecting Oxford to other communities. Mr. Smith said it's been a part of the discussion for sure. Mr. Biessel said if you're looking at the future of the master plan and the forward thinking with this plan and connecting to other trails, that would be the way to go. Mr. Smith said Metro parks has that vision of also connecting to other trails. This is why it's so important for us to also partner more with Miami and trying to foster more and more relationships with Miami, sort of a town and gown opportunity. Mr. Smith has worked with Miami for place making and worked with OPRD for ticketing discounts, meaning if you were an OPRD family registered for one of our sports, say Basketball and we were working with Miami for our teams to go to a game, the family could get a discount at a Miami game for attending. Mr. Smith added a lot of you on the board have connections at Miami, so send those connections our way.

Mr. Biessel asked should the skate park be on here for 2027. Mr. Smith said yes.

Mr. Young added that correct coding and zoning of all of our green spaces is very important. All of our parks were still zoned and coded based on the area of town they were in. So another layer of protection for our parks with all of them as green space is needed. In 2025 one was still coded as an R1 since it was near a residential area. Mr. Smith said yes, making sure they are all coded as park land is needed, and we'll definitely make sure we are looking at those individually.

Mr. Biessel asked do we know what, from the master plan will be achievable for 2027. Mr. Smith noted we do our CIP in July and then council votes in September, the master plan will be done closer to the end of the year. However, we can look at that while the wheels are in motion. Mr. Smith thinks the main big ticket item we can look at is the new building. Possibly some of the design, such as the design concept or surveying that needs to be done, can be

started. Mr. Biessel said yes, so we can see what we can be doing concurrently, while the process is in motion, so we don't lose a lot of time.

Mr. Smith stated last year we looked at a design for the potential construction of a flushable restroom at Leonard Howell Park, but that was going to be a very expensive ask. Mr. Biessel said a very inexpensive ask would be a shade structure at the new dog park. Mr. Smith said we had that in our CIP already, along with a shelter, but that funding was reallocated to the skate park, and the timeline pushed back for the dog park. The shade structure for the dog park is still on the list and will be done at a future date.

Mr. Smith said a maintenance replacement list will be in the works. Mr. Smith said he's looking into expanding the aquatic center's black perimeter fence. By taking that fence down and pushing out the margins, it will give more people a bigger area to set up and maybe room enough for another shelter to be installed at the aquatic center as well.

Ms. Meaney thinks there are some park areas that need a little updating. Such as, at the community park, there are benches that need a little refreshment. The volleyball pit, horseshoes etc, need some updating. Mr. Smith agreed, asking if the shuffle-board and horseshoes even still needed to be there? Mr. Smith said that will be a question for the master plan etc. Mr. Biessel noted the back boards on the basketball court need a little more attention as well. Mr. Smith said there is some deferred maintenance out there, and so we need some clean-up improvements. Ms. Meaney said she sees things a little more differently now being on the Rec Board and notices where we can make improvements.

Ms. Meaney asked what the uptown bathroom timeline is. Mr. Smith stated it looks like it will be ready sometime in June.

Mr. Biessel noted the large playground at the park is in need of updating, possibly a new structure and different type. Mr. Smith said we do have a playground replacement plan, adding that we just did a replacement of the small playground by the park concession stand between the ball fields, and it's been a huge hit.

Report

1. Parks and Recreation Administrative Report

Mr. Young stated it's a great time to be a part of the Recreation Board and he is happy to be a part of it.

Mr. Smith stated the parks department is gearing up for the season. The Aquatic center opens Monday, May 25. Mr. Smith added he understands the desire for the pool to open earlier in May. However, we were not able to open any earlier due to staffing. Historically, quite a few of our guards are from out of town, and they don't come already certified, so managers and supervisors need those days to do orientation and get them trained.

Mr. Smith said additionally, Parks and Recreation just became an American Red Cross training facility and have also now partnered with Miami Rec Center. This will assist us in being able to

get our guards trained earlier by using the Miami Rec Center, giving us a better opportunity to possibly get these folks trained earlier next year, and hopefully opening sooner.

Mr. Smith stated that we're currently in full swing with sports season, baseball, soccer all the things going on every night at OCP. Mr. Smith is out there coaching, adding it's a busy time at the park.

Mr. Smith advised he's negotiating with the TRI Board regarding the future lease and use of the TRI facility. We are currently in a five-year lease agreement that ends December 2026.

2. Recreation Board Member Administrative Reports

Mr. Young said people are excited about pickleball, everybody seemed very excited. Mr. Young said he's telling people to make sure their families take those surveys and everybody he knows has kids and wants to be a part of this.

Mr. Biessel noted he had a retreat this morning for campus planning, noting they like to do things ad hoc. There was at least some discussion on a urban design approach, such as entrances to the university and having some sort of guiding framework and out of that came the discussion on where recreation will be located at Miami.

Mr. Biessel added that there is an informal recreation space at the current Millet field space. However, one key discussion, which will be a much larger discussion, is that narrow stretch at chestnut field will now need a lot of attention and focus. Mr. Biessel stated how does the city cooperate on how this vision will look like for Miami?

Mr. Smith said that definitely touches on what we're doing right now. Mr. Biessel said yes, it does so how this ties into the city as well, is the bigger picture. Mr. Smith said this is good information to know especially for our master plan.

Ms. Ornelas stated all is good, especially about the plans for the skatepark. Ms. Ornelas said she may do a refresh from the flyer that was created and add a reminder.

Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn - Mr. Smith adjourned the meeting at 1:37pm.

(Voice Vote) 1st Ms. Ornelas 2nd Ms. Meaney

AYE# 4

NAY# 0

ABS# 0