



Board of Park Commissioners

Regular Meeting

~ Minutes ~

March 11, 2026

8:30 AM

Roger Williams Park Boathouse
1000 Elmwood Avenue, Providence

BOARD MEMBERS

Chairman Mayor Brett P. Smiley

Council President Pro-Tempore Juan M. Pichardo
Commissioner Randall Rice
Commissioner Justin Holland

Councilor Sue R. AnderBois
Commissioner Sara McConnell
Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon-Martin

This meeting was called to order at 8:34AM

PRESENT: Chairman Mayor Brett P. Smiley; Council President Pro-Tempore Juan M. Pichardo; Commissioner Randall Rice; Commissioner Justin Holland.

ABSENT: Councilor Sue R. AnderBois; Commissioner Sara McConnell; Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon-Martin.

Also present were Wendy Nilsson, Parks Superintendent; Kristen Andel, Parks Deputy Superintendent; Hannah Falvey, Assistant to the Superintendent; Christyl Melendez, Parks Manager of Fiscal Operations; Nicholas Poulos, Associate City Solicitor; City Councilor Shelley Peterson; ACT Deputy Director, Rebecca Noon; ACT Special Projects Manager, Charlotte Abotsi.

Chairman Mayor Brett P. Smiley recognized two of Commissioner Justin Holland's professional milestones. The first being his first gallery show, and the second being recognized by Rhode Island Monthly as one of Rhode Island's top photographers.

Commissioner Randall Rice asked if the two meeting minutes on the agenda could be taken to a vote separately.

APPROVAL OF JANUARY 14, 2026 MEETING MINUTES ([Exhibit A](#))

On motion of Commissioner Randall Rice and seconded by Commissioner Justin Holland it is voted to approve January 14, 2026 meeting minutes.

RESULT: Approved (VOTE)

MOVER: Commissioner Randall Rice.

SECONDER: Commissioner Justin Holland.

AYES: Council President Pro-Tempore Juan M. Pichardo.

ABSENT: Councilor Sue R. AnderBois; Commissioner Sara McConnell; Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon-Martin.

APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 6, 2026 MEETING MINUTES ([Exhibit B](#))

On motion of Commissioner Justin Holland and seconded by Chairman Mayor Brett P. Smiley it is voted to approve February 6, 2026 meeting minutes.

RESULT: Approved (VOTE)

MOVER: Commissioner Justin Holland.

SECONDER: Chairman Mayor Brett P. Smiley.

AYES: Council President Pro-Tempore Juan M. Pichardo; Commissioner Randall Rice.

ABSENT: Councilor Sue R. AnderBois; Commissioner Sara McConnell; Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon-Martin.

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Commissioner Randall Rice noted that he was not in attendance for the meeting in which the Parks Department directors spoke on the annual report and their accomplishments, and requested to submit a letter to the record congratulating members of Parks Department staff. ([Exhibit C](#))

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Linda Perry of Washington Park and the Washington Park Association spoke on the Community Benefit Reserve Fund. She noted that they (Washington Park Association) have been working with GZA who has been writing the port plan, and that it is their interpretation of the original ordinance that the money that was in trust of the BOPC for the 1% community benefit fund (for wards 10 and 11) was not to be spent. She said that they would like to see a different method of allocation for the money in the future, whether that be in a trust, a bequeathed amount of money etc.

The Mayor asked if any other members wished to comment and none came forward. The Mayor also noted that in the January 14th minutes previously approved, there is a record of the discussion of the topic brought up by constituent Linda Perry, adding that the commissioners voted to continue that item for further discussion with community at a later date. Parks Superintendent, Wendy Nilsson noted that those meetings are on-going.

AUTHORIZATION TO NAME CORLISS PARK BASKETBALL COURTS IN HONOR OF BATTALION CHIEF JAMES (JIMMY) VARIN. *Wendy Nilsson, Parks Superintendent. Discussion and Vote.*

Mayor Brett P. Smiley introduced Parks Department Superintendent Wendy Nilsson to introduce the item. Wendy explained that last year, the Varin family approached the Parks Department to inquire about renaming Corliss Park after James (Jimmy) Varin. She went on to explain that Corliss Park was already named after the inventor of the steam engine, and was bequeathed to the City for it to be a park perpetually in his name. For this reason, the department is unable to rename this park. Wendy noted that the basketball courts are offset from the park proper, and since that was a place Jimmy and his brothers liked to play, it seemed an appropriate location to name; The Jimmy Varin Courts at Corliss Park. The Mayor asked if this was consistent with the Parks Department Park Naming Policy to which Wendy answered that it was. The Mayor noted that each commissioner was given a copy of the Naming Policy ([Exhibit D](#)), a letter from the Providence Fire chief Derek Silva ([Exhibit E](#)), and a letter from Councilwoman Shelley Peterson ([Exhibit F](#)). He asked if the Councilwoman had anything to add, and she spoke positively in support of the Varin family and the naming of the basketball courts.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions from the commissioners, and seeing none, took a motion to approve the item. On motion of Commissioner Justin Holland and seconded by Chairman Mayor Brett P. Smiley it is voted to name Corliss Park Basketball Courts in honor of Battalion Chief James (Jimmy) Varin.

RESULT: Approved (VOTE) [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Council President Pro-Tempore Juan M. Pichardo.

SECONDER: Commissioner Justin Holland.

AYES: Commissioner Randall Rice.

ABSENT: Councilor Sue R. AnderBois; Commissioner Sara McConnell; Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon-Martin.

AUTHORIZATION TO WITHDRAW FUNDS FROM THE EDWARD ELY TRUST FOR NEIGHBORHOOD PERFORMING ARTS PROGRAM. *Joe Wilson, Jr., Director, and Rebecca Noon, Deputy Director Department of Art, Culture + Tourism and Wendy Nilsson, Parks Superintendent. Discussion and vote.*

Mayor Brett P. Smiley provided the background that the Ely Trust is for the funding of neighborhood parks programs, and noted that the meeting was joined by ACT Deputy Director Rebecca Noon and Charlotte Abotsi, he then introduced Parks Department Superintendent to introduce the item.

Superintendent Nilsson explained that Edward Ely was a member of the Board of Parks Commissioners who bequeathed his estate in part to the Providence Parks Department so that they could continue performing arts programming in the parks. She noted that it's about small performances across a variety of parks rather than one large performance. She also spoke on the Parks Department's work with the Department of Art, Culture + Tourism to develop a successful concert series. Wendy noted that last year the department drew down 4% of the fund, and this year they are asking for 3.5% which is \$58,902.58 and comparable to previous years. Wendy stated they believe this draw down is consistent with the trust and presented a letter from Assistant City Solicitor, Nick Poulos that states this ([Exhibit G + H](#)). She then introduced Rebecca and Charlotte from ACT to speak.

The foregoing Committee may seek to enter into Executive Session.

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ACT Deputy Director, Rebecca Noon provided more background on and related to the Ely Fund concert series program and process. Superintendent Nilsson and Mayor Smiley both remarked on the remarkable breadth and scope of work of the programming. Mayor Smiley inquired about insufficient audiences at some performances last year and if anything would be done differently in 2026. ACT Special Projects Manager, Charlotte Abotsi responded that this year they were working on a newsletter that goes out to 2,000 artists in the city, collaborating with Eat, Play, Learn programming where people will already be congregating in parks, and working with communications to complete a robust social media presence. Rebecca noted the program schedule not being nailed down until June as an obstacle, but that they are working on further promotion this year.

Council President Pro-Tempore Juan M. Pichardo added that he's attended many of the Ely Fund events and had positive feedback. He also noted that he'd like to see the City Council emblem on promotional materials. Commissioner Justin Holland asked where the schedule will be available, and Rebecca answered that it will be available on the ACT website, the Eat, Play, Learn website, social media, as well as physically at the Gateway Center. Charlotte added finally that applications close March 30th.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions from the commissioners, and seeing none, took a motion to approve the item. On motion of Commissioner Randall Rice and seconded by Commissioner Justin Holland, it is voted to authorize to withdraw funds at 3.5% this year (2026) from the Edward Ely Trust for Neighborhood Performing Arts Program.

RESULT: Approved (VOTE) [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Commissioner Randall Rice.

SECONDER: Commissioner Justin Holland.

AYES: Council President Pro-Tempore Juan M. Pichardo.

ABSENT: Councilor Sue R. AnderBois; Commissioner Sara McConnell; Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon-Martin.

APPROVAL TO USE MERINO PARK FOR CONSTRUCTION STAGING AREA AS OUTLINED IN AGREEMENT FOR CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE BY AND BETWEEN THE WOONASQUATUCKET RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL AND THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE FOR THE WOONASQUATUCKET RIVER GREENWAY. PHASE 1 – HEATH STREET AND MERINO PARK. *Wendy Nilsson, Parks Superintendent.*

Discussion and Vote.

Mayor Brett P. Smiley introduced Parks Department Superintendent to provide background on the item. Superintendent Wendy Nilsson explained that the Woonasquaticket River Watershed Council is leading this project which will create a bike path through Heath Street into Merino Park. She stated that this request is to use the parking area outside of the park proper as a staging area, and that construction is expected to wrap up in June or July.

Commissioner Randall Rice asked if there were community impact concerns, and Superintendent Nilsson answered that there is no way for there not to be, but the project will overall be a net positive for the community. Council President Pro-Tempore Juan M. Pichardo asked again about the timeline, and Superintendent Nilsson reiterated that it would be from the time the BOPC approves until June or July. She also added that this request for the construction was brought before the Board last year and approved, but didn't include this lay down area at the time. Council President Pro-Temp asked if there was a plan for the community and the Mayor clarified that the park's parking lot will still be open, and this request is referring to space along the street outside of the park where members of the community sometimes park. There will be other parking options still available. Council President Pro-Temp asked if egress in and out of the park would be impeded and inquired about signage. The Mayor answered that it would not, and Superintendent Nilsson answered that signage is outlined in the communications plan. (Exhibit I)

Superintendent Nilsson also clarified that the project itself (the bike path) is not going to be finished in this phase, only rough grading the area and doing the retaining wall. In another phase the bike path will be paved. Commissioner Randall Rice stated concern over the ambiguity of the timeline and Superintendent Nilsson said that an update will be provided at the next BOPC meeting.

The Mayor asked if there were any further questions from the commissioners, and seeing none, took a motion to approve the item. On motion of Commissioner Randall Rice and seconded by Commissioner Justin Holland, it is voted to approve to use Merino Park for the construction staging area as outline in agreement for construction and maintenance by and between he Woonasquaticket River Watershed Council and the City of Providence for the Woonasquaticket River Greenway. Phase 1 – Heath Street and Merino Park.

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RESULT: Approved (VOTE) [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Commissioner Randall Rice.

SECONDER: Commissioner Justin Holland.

AYES: Council President Pro-Tempore Juan M. Pichardo.

ABSENT: Councilor Sue R. AnderBois; Commissioner Sara McConnell; Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon-Martin.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:04am.

RESULT: Approved (VOTE) [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Council President Pro-Tempore Juan M. Pichardo.

SECONDER: Commissioner Justin Holland.

AYES: Commissioner Randall Rice.

ABSENT: Councilor Sue R. AnderBois; Commissioner Sara McConnell; Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon-Martin.

PER ORDER OF THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

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Board of Park Commissioners Regular Meeting

~ Minutes ~

January 14, 2026

8:30 AM

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1000 Elmwood Avenue, Providence

BOARD MEMBERS

Chairman Mayor Brett P. Smiley

Council President Pro-Tempore Juan M. Pichardo
Commissioner Randall Rice
Commissioner Justin Holland

Councilor Sue R. AnderBois
Commissioner Sara McConnell
Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon-Martin

This meeting was called to order at 8:38AM.

PRESENT: Chairman Mayor Brett P. Smiley; Council President Pro-Tempore Juan M. Pichardo; Commissioner Sara McConnell; Commissioner Justin Holland; Commissioner Randall Rice; Councilor Sue R. AnderBois.

ABSENT: Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon-Martin.

Also present were Wendy Nilsson, Parks Superintendent; Kristen Andel, Parks Deputy Superintendent; Hannah Falvey, Assistant to the Superintendent; Christyl Melendez, Parks Manager of Fiscal Operations; Nicholas Poulos, Associate City Solicitor; Nicholas Chicchitelli, Director of Real Estate; Jonathan Montalbano, Providence Urban Wood Lot; Kristin Stone, Providence River Boat; and additional members of the Parks Department leadership team and members of the public.

APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 30, 2025 MEETING MINUTES.

On motion of Commissioner Sara McConnell and seconded by Commissioner Justin Holland it is voted to approve the October 30, 2025 meeting minutes. Councilor Sue R. AnderBois and Commissioner Randall Rice abstained due to absence at previous meeting.

RESULT: Approved (VOTE)

MOVER: Commissioner Sara McConnell.

SECONDER: Commissioner Justin Holland.

AYES: Council President Pro-Tempore Juan M. Pichardo.

ABSTAINED: Councilor Sue R. AnderBois; Commissioner Randall Rice.

ABSENT: Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon-Martin.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Member's of the public Ellen Tuzzolo (in person) and Linda Perry (via video call) distributed a letter pertaining to agenda item 9 to be discussed at that time.

AUTHORIZATION TO EXTEND TWO-YEAR MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT WITH PROVIDENCE RIVER BOAT, INC. FOR THE SHARED USE OF THE PROVIDENCE RIVER, DYER STREET DOCK. *Wendy Nilsson, Parks Superintendent. Discussion and vote.*

Agenda item 6 was taken out of order.

Parks Superintendent Wendy Nilsson introduced the item and noted that Kristin Stone from Providence River Boat was present. Wendy explained that Providence River Boat operates a storefront boating concession and ice cream bar near Dyer Street and has been a long-standing partner of the Parks Department. She reviewed the MOA authorized two years ago, which allows Providence River Boat to use the dock at no cost in exchange for providing free recreational programming for the department, including participation in events such as Wicked Walk. She noted that the only other users of the dock are WaterFire on event nights and that both groups coordinate effectively. Wendy requested approval to extend the MOU for an additional two years, with revised language clarifying that Providence

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River Boat would be responsible for dock maintenance only as it relates to their operations and not for major damage caused by events such as hurricanes etc. She emphasized the value of the partnership.

Mayor Smiley asked if there were any questions or discussion, and hearing none, called for a motion to approve and authorize the two-year extension of the MOA with Providence River Boat.

On motion of Councilor Sue R. AnderBois and seconded by Council President Pro-Tempore Juan M. Pichardo it is voted to authorize the two-year extension of the MOA with Providence River Boat.

RESULT: Approved (VOTE) [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Councilor Sue R. AnderBois.

SECONDER: Council President Pro-Tempore Juan M. Pichardo.

AYES: Commissioner Sara McConnell; Commissioner Randall Rice; Commissioner Justin Holland.

ABSENT: Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon-Martin.

AUTHORIZATION TO EXTEND MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH SAWMILL ENTERPRISES, INC., FOR FIVE YEARS, PER CONTRACT ENTERED ON 12/11/2023. *Wendy Nilsson, Parks Superintendent. Discussion and vote.*

Parks Superintendent Wendy Nilsson presented an update on the Urban Wood Lot project, noting that it was approved several years ago and has proven to be highly successful after a lengthy startup period. She explained that the project engages the community in urban forestry by offering free wood chips and classes while repurposing Parks Department wood waste that previously cost \$80,000–\$90,000 annually to dispose of. Wendy introduced City Forester Sam Daganhardt and Wood Lot manager Jonathan Montalbano and highlighted additional benefits, including biochar production for stormwater mitigation, fire department training, and the activation of a formerly vacant industrial lot.

Jonathan Montalbano described the project’s operations and community engagement, including collaboration with the fire department, professional development opportunities, and a tour with RISD landscape architecture students. Sam Daganhardt added that the project has benefited the Forestry Department by effectively closing the urban forestry loop.

Wendy explained that the City initially entered into a three-year lease due to uncertainty at the project’s outset, but following its success, legal counsel confirmed that a single five-year lease extension rather than multiple one-year extensions would be possible. Commissioner Justin Holland asked about the relationship with neighbors, and Jonathan Montalbano reported they have been excellent, noting that per request, no work occurs on Sundays.

Council President Pro-Tempore Juan Pichardo asked about quantifying forestry cost savings; Sam Daganhardt responded that an analysis could be conducted by comparing labor and equipment use before and after the project, noting reduced hauling and handling, but we already know the reduction in disposal fees as noted earlier. Pichardo also asked about collecting neighborhood Christmas trees, and Councilor AnderBois indicated that Waste Management currently does that. Jonathan noted that he is currently the sole employee. Councilor Sue AnderBois asked about investments in the site, and Jonathan explained that approximately 60 percent has been dedicated toward heavy equipment and 40 percent toward infrastructure and maintenance.

Mayor Smiley asked if there were any further questions and with none, called for a motion to approve the five-year lease extension with Sawmill Enterprises.

On motion of Council President Pro-Tempore Juan M. Pichardo and seconded by Commissioner Sara McConnell it is voted to approve 5-year lease extension with Sawmill Enterprises.

RESULT: Approved (VOTE) [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Council President Pro-Tempore Juan M. Pichardo.

SECONDER: Commissioner Sara McConnell.

AYES: Councilor Sue R. AnderBois; Commissioner Randall Rice; Commissioner Justin Holland.

ABSENT: Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon-Martin.

The foregoing Committee may seek to enter into Executive Session.

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AUTHORIZATION TO ENTER INTO A FIVE-YEAR LEASE WITH LA GONDOLA PROVIDENCE, INC., PENDING BOARD OF CONTRACT AND SUPPLY AWARD ON JANUARY 26, 2026, FOR THE TWO DOCKS LOCATED AT WATERPLACE PARK IN PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND.
Wendy Nilsson, Parks Superintendent. Discussion and vote.

Parks Superintendent Wendy Nilsson introduced the agenda item regarding La Gondola, Providence Inc., at Waterplace downtown, clarifying that it is not to be confused with other similarly named entities. She explained that the previous lease to operate downtown had expired, requiring the opportunity to be put out to bid. La Gondola Providence was the only and lowest bidder and met all minimum requirements. The proposed new lease is nearly identical to the prior agreement, with the primary change being the total lease amount of \$63,709.63 over five years. Wendy noted the item was delayed due to its receipt over the holidays and requested approval to proceed.

Councilor Sue AnderBois asked for clarification on the lease amount, and Wendy and the Mayor confirmed the total is \$63,709.63, based on the established minimum bid. Wendy added that La Gondola Providence has been a strong partner and does an excellent job downtown. The Mayor asked if there were any additional questions; hearing none, the Mayor called for a motion to award a five-year lease extension pending approval of the Board of Contract and Supply.

On motion of Councilor Sue R. AnderBois and seconded by Council President Pro-Tempore Juan M. Pichardo it is voted to approve 5-year lease extension with La Gondola Providence pending approval of the Board of Contract and Supply.

RESULT: Approved (VOTE) [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Councilor Sue R. AnderBois.

SECONDER: Council President Pro-Tempore Juan M. Pichardo.

AYES: Commissioner Sara McConnell; Commissioner Randall Rice; Commissioner Justin Holland.

ABSENT: Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon-Martin.

AUTHORIZATION TO APPROVE FINAL FIVE-YEAR LEASE OPTION FOR ROGER WILLIAMS PARK BOATING CONCESSION, LA GONDOLA, INC. *Wendy Nilsson, Parks Superintendent. Discussion and vote.*

Parks Superintendent Wendy Nilsson introduced Cynthia and Allen Days, operators of La Gondola, Inc., clarifying that this entity is distinct from La Gondola, Providence Inc, discussed in the prior agenda item. She explained that La Gondola, Inc. operates the swan boats and the Boathouse Café at Roger Williams Park and has a more than 20-year history of successful operations in the park. Wendy stated that the Days are seeking to exercise the second five-year lease option to allow them to continue their operations.

Council President Pro-Tempore Juan Pichardo asked whether the lease included the serving of all food within Roger Williams Park. Wendy clarified that the lease applies only to boating concessions, excludes sales within 200 feet of the carousel, and permits concession sales at the Boathouse. The Mayor asked if there were any additional questions and, hearing none, called for a motion to approve the final five-year lease option for the Roger Williams Park boating concession.

On motion of Council President Pro-Tempore Juan M. Pichardo and seconded by Commissioner Justin Holland it is voted to approve the final five-year lease option for the Roger Williams Park boating concession.

RESULT: Approved (VOTE) [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Council President Pro-Tempore Juan M. Pichardo.

SECONDER: Commissioner Justin Holland.

AYES: Commissioner Sara McConnell; Commissioner Randall Rice; Councilor Sue R. AnderBois.

ABSENT: Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon-Martin.

Agenda item 10 was taken out of order.

AUTHORIZATION TO ENTER INTO A LEASE WITH AROCAM, LLC., DOING BUSINESS AS, WEGOTSOCCEER, FOR THE TEMPORARY USE OF WATERPLACE PAVILION LOCATED AT 1 FINANCE WAY, PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND. *Wendy Nilsson, Parks Superintendent. Discussion and vote.*

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Parks Superintendent Wendy Nilsson presented a proposal related to the upcoming World Cup and the potential short-term use of the Waterplace Park Pavilion (formerly known as Skyline). While the City had previously gone out to bid for a long-term tenant and received two bids, a separate short-term opportunity emerged during that process.

Wendy clarified, in response to a question from Councilor Sue AnderBois, that the proposal was not one of the existing bids but involved a no-cost or \$1 lease for a four-month period, providing significant community benefit. She introduced Nicholas Chicchitelli, Director of Real Estate for the City of Providence, to provide additional details. Nicholas explained that although the City has been seeking a long-term tenant, that effort was temporarily paused to pursue this short-term opportunity with Arocam, LLC., in support of the House of Portugal and the Portuguese National Soccer Team. Negotiations had been ongoing for several months, and the lease presented reflected an agreement intended to generate tourism and economic activity.

In response to further questions from Councilor AnderBois, Nicholas Chicchitelli stated that the space would be used for merchandising and public-facing events such as player signings and experiential programming tied to the Portuguese team. Superintendent Nilsson added that the tenant would be responsible for 100% of the build-out and infrastructure improvements, noting that the building requires significant work and that these upgrades would remain as a lasting community benefit.

Legal questions regarding the bidding process were addressed by City Solicitor Nicholas Poulos, who confirmed that the original bid was for a long-term lease and that proceeding with a short-term lease posed no legal conflict. The Mayor added that the deferment had been communicated to the long-term bidders, who raised no objections, particularly given the extensive renovations required before occupancy. Nicholas Chicchitelli further clarified that the existing bids would be preserved, though the City is under no obligation to select either.

Additional discussion included questions from Council President Pro-Tempore Juan Pichardo regarding oversight and financing. Nicholas Chicchitelli stated that the Board of Park Commissioners ultimately determines the future of the pavilion and confirmed that Arocam LLC is an authorized FIFA World Cup sponsor and would fund all improvements in lieu of rent. Questions regarding operating hours, food service, and licensing were addressed, with clarification that hours would remain sensitive to the surrounding residential area and that all normal permitting and licensing requirements would apply, with no special treatment. With no further questions, the Mayor called for a vote, and the Board approved entering into a lease with Arocam, LLC, doing business as WeGotSoccer.

On motion of Councilor Sue R. AnderBois and seconded by Commissioner Randall Rice it is voted to enter into a lease with Arocam, LLC. Doing business as, WEGOTSOCER, for the temporary use of Waterplace Pavilion located at 1 Finance Way, Providence, Rhode Island.

RESULT: Approved (VOTE) [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Councilor Sue R. AnderBois.

SECONDER: Commissioner Randall Rice.

AYES: Commissioner Justin Holland; Commissioner Sara McConnell.

ABSENT: Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon-Martin.

REVIEW AND ADVISE ON DRAFT: COMMUNITY BENEFITS RESERVE ACCOUNT (CBRA) – PROJECT SELECTION AND IMPLEMENTATIONH FRAMEWORK. *Wendy Nilsson, Parks Superintendent. Discussion and vote.*

Mayor Smiley made brief remarks on Item 9 prior to stepping out, noting that community feedback had been received through public comment and prior communications with his administration. He stated that the proposal before the Board was intended to address concerns related to the Port bond funds and be responsive to public input.

At this time, Chairman Mayor Brett P. Smiley stepped out to attend a funeral. Council President Pro-Tempore Juan M. Pichardo took over running the remainder of the meeting.

Parks Superintendent Wendy Nilsson introduced the item, explaining that two withdrawals, one in FY 2024 and one in FY 2025, for Richardson Park (Ward 10) and Pearl Street Park (Ward 11) had previously been brought before the Board. She noted that the Board of Park Commissioners retains final authority over the use of these funds. Wendy stated that in August, the Parks Department was asked to develop a community engagement process similar to that used by the Sustainability Department, and worked with GZA to draft a proposal. The draft was presented to the Board in November, at which time the Board requested additional time for review.

Wendy explained that the Parks Department and GZA worked together on a proposal they both agreed on, and noted that some dates may be outdated due to the age of the draft. The proposal establishes a structured public input process, including criteria and timelines, while maintaining the Board’s final decision-making authority. Members of the public provided responsive discussion.

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Commissioner Randall Rice summarized that the Board expects the Parks Department to share the proposal with the community and solicit public comment and written feedback. Council President Pro Tempore Juan Pichardo made a motion to continue the item for further discussion at a future meeting.

On motion of Councilor Sue R. AnderBois and seconded by Commissioner Sara McConnell it is voted to continue the item for further discussion at a future meeting.

RESULT: Approved (VOTE) [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: Councilor Sue R. AnderBois.
SECONDER: Commissioner Sara McConnell.
AYES: Commissioner Randall Rice; Commissioner Justin Holland.
ABSENT: Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon-Martin.

APPROVAL OF ANNUAL REPORT 2025. *Wendy Nilsson, Superintendent and Parks Leadership Team. Discussion.*

Parks Superintendent Wendy Nilsson introduced Item 11, explaining that while the Annual Report is typically presented to the Board by Parks Directors, a separate presentation-only meeting would be scheduled due to the Mayor’s early departure. The Board was provided with a draft of the 2025 Parks Department Annual Report, a comprehensive overview of departmental operations, which requires Board approval for submission with Parks Department budget.

Wendy noted that minor, non-substantive technical edits, such as correcting formatting or replacing low-quality images, would be made prior to final printing and submission of the document. Council President Pro Tempore Juan Pichardo made a motion to approve the annual report draft with the understanding that only non-material edits may be made.

On motion of Councilor Sue R. AnderBois and seconded by Commissioner Justin Holland it is voted to approve the annual report draft with the understanding that only non-material edits may be made. The Board requested an opportunity to hear from all of the directors directly as the Annual Report is a significant achievement each year. Superintendent Wendy Nilsson agreed and indicated that she would schedule a dedicated meeting at the convenience of the Board.

RESULT: Approved (VOTE) [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: Councilor Sue R. AnderBois.
SECONDER: Commissioner Justin Holland.
AYES: Commissioner Sara McConnell; Commissioner Randall Rice.
ABSENT: Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon-Martin.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40AM

On motion of Councilor Sue R. AnderBois and seconded by Commissioner Randall Rice. It is voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:40AM.

RESULT: Approved (VOTE) [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: Councilor Sue R. AnderBois.
SECONDER: Commissioner Randall Rice.
AYES: Commissioner Justin Holland; Commissioner Sara McConnell.
ABSENT: Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon-Martin.

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Board of Park Commissioners Special Meeting

~ Minutes ~

February 6, 2026

11:00AM

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Council President Pro-Tempore Juan M. Pichardo
Commissioner Randall Rice
Commissioner Justin Holland

Councilor Sue R. AnderBois
Commissioner Sara McConnell
Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon-Martin

This meeting was called to order at 11:01AM.

PRESENT: Chairman Mayor Brett P. Smiley; Commissioner Sara McConnell; Commissioner Justin Holland; Councilor Sue R. AnderBois.

ABSENT: Council President Pro-Tempore Juan M. Pichardo; Commissioner Randall Rice; Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon-Martin.

Also present were Wendy Nilsson, Parks Superintendent; Kristen Andel, Parks Deputy Superintendent; Hannah Falvey, Assistant to the Superintendent; Christyl Melendez, Parks Manager of Fiscal Operations; Nicholas Poulos, Associate City Solicitor; and additional members of the Parks Department leadership team.

PUBLIC COMMENT: No public comments were made at this time.

PRESENTATION OF ANNUAL REPORT 2025. *Wendy Nilsson, Superintendent and Parks Leadership Team. Discussion.*

Parks Department Superintendent Wendy Nilsson introduced the meeting's sole agenda item: presentation of the Parks Department's 2025 Annual Report. She described the report as a comprehensive overview of departmental operations and services across all divisions, including Forestry, Maintenance, Neighborhood Parks Services, the Museum of Natural History and Planetarium, the Botanical Center, the Gateway Center, the Providence Rink, the Zoo, City Cemeteries, Finance, Design, Food & Play Access, and Information & Access.

Each division director provided a brief 2–3-minute overview highlighting key accomplishments and priorities from their respective sections of the report. The full 2025 Annual Report is available on the City of Providence website on the Parks Department landing page.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:51AM.

Chairman Mayor Brett P. Smiley asked if there was a motion to adjourn the meeting. On motion of Commissioner Sara McConnell and seconded by Commissioner Justin Holland. It is voted to adjourn the meeting at 11:51AM.

RESULT: Approved (VOTE) [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Commissioner Sara McConnell

SECONDER: Commissioner Justin Holland

AYES: Councilor Sue R. AnderBois.

ABSENT: Council President Pro-Tempore Juan M. Pichardo; Commissioner Randall Rice; Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon-Martin.

PER ORDER OF THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

The City of Providence strives to host inclusive, accessible meetings and events that enable all individuals to engage and participate fully. To request an accommodation or for inquiries about accessibility, please contact Leonela Felix, Esq., Ethics Education and ADA Coordinator at 401-680-5333 or LFelix@ProvidenceRI.gov. Providing at least 72 hours' notice will help to ensure availability. The location for this meeting is accessible to individuals with disabilities. If you need interpreter services for the hearing impaired, please contact the office of Neighborhood Services at 401-421-7768 not less than 48 hours in advance.

Roger Williams Boathouse | 1000 Elmwood Avenue | Providence, RI 02905 | 401-785-9450 | www.providenceri.gov

Randy Rice
47 Higgins Ave.
Providence, RI 02908

March 10, 2025

Dear Providence Parks Department Team,

I am writing to extend my gratitude for your outstanding work throughout 2025.

From small improvements to major capital projects, your efforts reflect a commitment to equity, sustainability, and community connection that continues to elevate the quality of life for **all** who call Providence home.

Providence Parks' stewardship of more than 120 outdoor spaces—from neighborhood playgrounds to conservation areas—continues to shape Providence's identity as a city where nature, recreation, and community are valued.

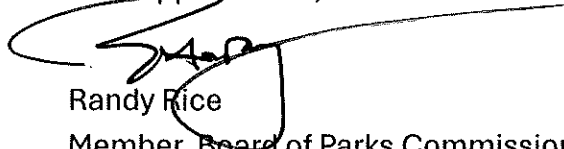
The thoughtful improvements you've made, whether through playground renovations, trail maintenance, or creative recreation features, reflect your dedication to making our parks vibrant, inclusive, and resilient.

These investments not only strengthen public spaces but also deepen the sense of belonging and pride that makes Providence such a special place.

Thank you for your leadership, your collaboration with partners across the city, and your unwavering commitment to creating parks that are accessible, beautiful, and enriching for everyone.

Your dedication to enhancing Providence's parks has strengthened our neighborhoods, supported public wellbeing, and enriched the daily lives of all residents across the city.

With appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Randy Rice', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Randy Rice
Member, Board of Parks Commissioners

cc: Mayor Brett Smiley
Wendy Nilsson, Superintendent of Parks
Members, Board of Parks Commissioners

Providence Parks Naming Policy
October 20, 2020

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to establish a systematic and consistent approach for the official naming of public parks, including buildings, recreation facilities, structures, playing fields, open spaces and natural areas, which fall under the authority of the Providence Parks Department ("Department") and the Board of Park Commissioners ("Board").

Policy Statement

It is the Board's policy to reserve the naming or renaming of parks for circumstances that will best align with the mission and interests of the Department and ensure a worthy and enduring legacy for the City's park system.

Proposals to rename parks and/or recreational facilities, whether for a major gift or community request, are not encouraged. Likewise, names that have become widely accepted by the community will not be abandoned unless there are compelling reasons such as naming inconsistencies or strong public sentiment from the broader community for doing so. Historical or commonly used place names will be preserved wherever possible. In alignment with Mayor Jorge O. Elorza's Truth-Telling, Reconciliation and Municipal Reparations Process, priority consideration will be given to names that honor and fairly represent the impact of Indigenous People and People of Color in Providence.

All naming requests should conform with the Special Committee for the Review of Commemorative Works criteria for significant social and cultural merit. The Board may choose to seek a nonbinding opinion from the Special Committee to support the naming.

To this end, the BOPC supports consideration of naming requests within the following broad categories:

Outstanding Individuals

The Department has benefited, through its evolution, from the contributions made by many outstanding individuals. This category is designed to acknowledge the sustained contribution that has been made by such an individual who has been deceased for at least three years and who has:

- a. made a significant land and/or monetary contribution to the particular park or recreational facility at issue;
- b. made a significant monetary contribution to the Department;
- c. performed extraordinary or outstanding service for the good of the community in regard to parks, trails, and/or open space;
- d. been an outstanding community leader who made significant civic contributions to the City and gave highly productive support to the Department; or
- e. been an outstanding regional, statewide or national leader who contributed significantly to the promotion of parks and recreation and/or land conservation.

Note:

Parks, trails, and facilities shall not ordinarily be named for living persons, except in the event that an individual, family, business or organization has donated the land for a new park, donated the cost of developing the park or facility, or has established a maintenance endowment for the projected maintenance cost for 20 years.

Historic Events, People, and Places

An historical figure, place, event or other instance of historical or cultural significance may play an important role in the naming or renaming of a park and/or recreational facility as communities often wish to preserve and honor the history and culture of the City, its founders, other historical figures, its Native American heritage, local landmarks, and natural features through the naming of parks. Park names in this category should have significant cultural merit.

PROCESS

General Principles

In reviewing proposals for the naming or renaming of a park and/or recreational facility, the following general principles will be considered either collectively or individually. The proposed name should:

- Support the Mission of the Department.
- Engender a strong positive image.
- Be appropriate, having regard to the park's/recreational facility's location and/or history
- Have historical, cultural or social significance for future generations.
- Commemorate places, people or events that are of continued importance to the community and City.
- Have symbolic value that transcends its ordinary meaning or use and enhances the character and identity of the park and/or recreational facility.
- Have broad public support.
- Be validated through research and documentation.
- Not result in the undue commercialization of the park and/or recreational facility if it accompanies a corporate gift.

Following the criteria for the Special Committee on Commemorative Works, "social and cultural merit," the Board will not review any proposal that:

- Commemorates an event that occurred less than twenty years ago.
- Already exists in identical form elsewhere OR proposes a modification that exists in identical form elsewhere, locally, nationally, or internationally.
- Communicates the intent, either explicitly or implicitly, of conveying hate speech or provoking violence against protected groups.
- Has the purpose of promoting, favoring or inhibiting any religion or which would appear to a reasonable person that the City is promoting, favoring, or opposing a religion.

The Board reserves the right to rename any park or facility if the honoree is subsequently discredited.

All requests for the naming or renaming of a park and/or recreational facility shall be made in writing to the Superintendent of Parks, Wendy Nilsson. Requests should contain the following minimum information:

- The proposed name.
- Reasons for the proposed name.
- Written documentation indicating community support for the proposed name, including local councilperson.
- Description/map showing location and boundaries of the park.

- If proposing to name a facility within a park, include a description/map showing the location of the facility.
- If proposing to rename a park or facility, include justification for changing an established name.
- If proposing to name a park or facility after an outstanding person, include documentation of that person's significance, reputation, and contribution to the Department or related area, i.e., conservation, forestry, etc.

Assessing and approving naming/renaming requests

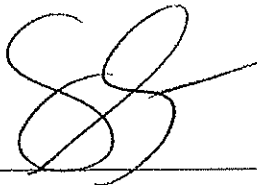
Upon receipt of a naming request by the Department, the relevant groups and association(s) shall be advised and their comments on the proposal will be invited if applicable. The local City Councilor, neighborhood association and Friends groups will be notified of all naming/renaming proposals. If there is significant support for the name involving a person, cause or event, the Superintendent may first refer to the Special Commission on Commemorative Works. It has been past practice for the City Council to draft resolutions to support park names. Such resolutions will be included in the review, but are not required. Each proposal will then be considered by the Board and Public comment will be invited.

- Review the proposed request for its adherence to the Department's mission and guidelines and this policy.
- Ensure that supporting information has been authenticated, particularly when an individual's name is proposed. Vetting through the City Archivist is recommended.
- Take into consideration the comments of the relevant groups and association(s).

Communicating naming/renaming decisions

The Parks Superintendent will be responsible for communicating the decision to all stakeholders and changing any corresponding documentation and signage.

Approved:

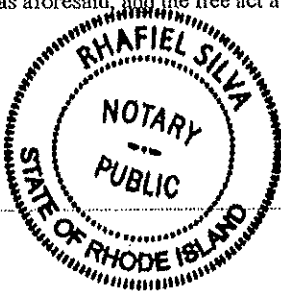


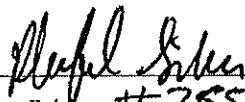
Mayor Jorge O. Elorza,
Chairman of the Board of Park Commissioners

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

PROVIDENCE, SC.

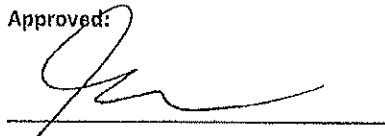
In Providence, in said County and State, on the ____ day of _____, 2020, before me personally appeared Jorge O. Elorza, Mayor and Chairman of the Board of Park Commissioners, to me known and known by me to the party executing the foregoing instrument for and on behalf of the City, and he acknowledged said instrument by him executed to be his free act and deed, his free act and deed in his capacity as aforesaid, and the free act and deed of the City.




Notary Public #765660

My Commission Expires: 8/12/2024

Approved:



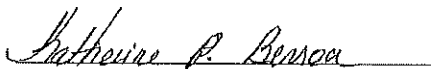
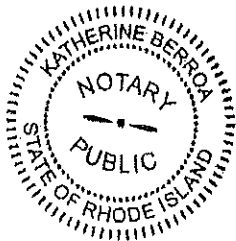
Wendy Nilsson

Superintendent of Providence Parks

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

PROVIDENCE, SC.

In Providence, in said County and State, on the 20th day of October, 2020, before me personally appeared Wendy Nilsson, Superintendent of Providence Parks, to me known and known by me to the party executing the foregoing instrument for and on behalf of Providence Parks and he/she/they acknowledged said instrument by him/her/they executed to be his/her/their free act and deed, his/her/their free act and deed in his/her/their capacity as aforesaid, and the free act and deed of Providence Parks.



Notary Public #61193

My Commission Expires: 11/08/2021

BRETT P. SMILEY
Mayor



DEREK M. SILVA
Chief of Department

Department of Public Safety, Fire Department
"Building Pride in Providence"

March 6, 2026

Honorable Councilors
Providence City Council
City Hall

RE: Corliss Park Basketball Court Renaming

Dear Honorable Councilors,

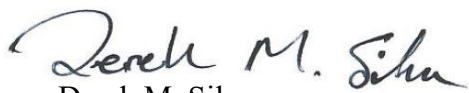
On behalf of the Providence Fire Department, I would like to express our support for the proposal to rename the basketball court located at Corliss Park in honor of Battalion Chief James Varin.

Battalion Chief Varin proudly served the residents of the City of Providence as a member of the Providence Fire Department for more than thirty years before ultimately passing away from occupational cancer. He spent much of his career assigned to the Admiral Street Station, where he built strong relationships with members of the surrounding neighborhood. As both a firefighter and a resident of the community, he took great pride in serving the area he called home.

Basketball was always an important part of his life. He played throughout high school at Our Lady of Providence and later continued playing while attending the Community College of Rhode Island. His connection to the neighborhood and his love of the game make this basketball court a meaningful place to recognize his memory.

Renaming this court in his honor would not only recognize his years of service, but also send a positive message to the young members of the community. It will stand as a reminder of the importance of dedication to community, the value of public service, and the role that sports can play in bringing people together and building strong neighborhoods.

Sincerely,


Derek M. Silva
Chief of Department

Shelley T. Peterson
Councilwoman – Ward 14

PROVIDENCE CITY HALL
25 DORRANCE STREET, ROOM 310
PROVIDENCE, RI 02903
OFFICE: 401-521-7477
SPETERSON@PROVIDENCERI.GOV



PROVIDENCE
CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEES

Committee on Ordinances, Vice-Chair
Special Committee on Health, Opportunity,
Prosperity, and Education, Vice-Chair
Housing Crisis Task Force, Member
Committee on City Property, Member
Committee on a Claims and Pending Suits,
Member
Committee on State Legislative Affairs, Member

Dear Members of the Board of Commissioners,

I write to respectfully request your support in renaming the basketball court at Corliss Park in honor of Battalion Chief James L. “Jimmy” Varin Sr., a lifelong Providence resident, dedicated public servant, and beloved member of our community.

Chief Varin served the Providence Fire Department with distinction for 31 years. He joined the department in 1992, following in the footsteps of his father, Robert “Pops” Varin, and spent decades protecting the people of Providence with professionalism, courage, and compassion. Over the course of his career, he rose through the ranks and most recently served as Captain of Ladder 3 at the Admiral Street Station in the Wanskuck neighborhood, the very community where he grew up. He was widely respected by his colleagues as a mentor and friend, known for his generosity, leadership, and willingness to support others.

Beyond his service to the department, Jimmy Varin was deeply connected to the community through the game of basketball. A standout player at Our Lady of Providence High School, he was named Rhode Island Gatorade Player of the Year and earned All-State honors. His love of the game continued throughout his life, including playing on the Providence Fire Department’s team. Basketball was not only a sport for Jimmy but a way he connected with friends, colleagues, and young people in the community.

In early 2022, while preparing for his promotion to Battalion Chief, Jimmy was diagnosed with an aggressive brain cancer linked to occupational exposure as a firefighter. Even during his illness, he remained focused on helping others, inspiring the creation of the James “Jimmy” Varin Memorial Scholarship Fund and efforts to support brain cancer awareness and research. He passed away on February 27, 2023, surrounded by his family, leaving behind his wife Paula and their two sons, along with a legacy of service that continues to inspire those who knew him.

Renaming this basketball court in Jimmy Varin’s honor would be a meaningful tribute to a man who dedicated his life to this city. It would recognize not only his service as a firefighter but also his lifelong connection to basketball and the neighborhood that helped shape him. Most importantly, it would ensure that future generations who gather on that court understand the story of a Providence son who gave so much to his community. In the spirit of beautifying our community spaces in Ward 14, we have included a re-fencing of the basketball court in our CDBG funding request to continue to revitalize this space.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and for helping us honor the life and legacy of Battalion Chief James L. Varin Sr.

In Service,

Providence City Council

Providence City Hall, 25 Dorrance Street, Providence, RI 02903

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shelley T. Peterson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Shelley" being more prominent than the last name "Peterson".

Shelley T. Peterson
Councilwoman – Ward 14

REQUEST TO THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

TO TRANSFER FUNDS

FROM THE *EDWARD ELY TRUST FUND*

TO THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE OPERATING ACCOUNT 826

The City of Providence, Rhode Island accepted a gift on the 14th day of July 1916, which is to be permanently invested and kept invested, and to use the income, thereof, to pay the necessary cost of furnishing public concerts in the parks of the City of Providence. Said fund shall be administered by the Mayor and the Board of Park Commissioners, who shall have control of the public presentations of such concerts.

AMOUNT REQUESTED	3.5%	\$58,902.58
	4%	\$67,317.24
	5%	\$84,146.55

USE OF FUNDS:	NEIGHBORHOOD PERFORMING ARTS FUNDING
---------------	--------------------------------------

EXISTING TRUST FUND BALANCE:	\$1,682,931 (as of 3/5/2026)
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LAST WITHDRAWAL AMOUNT:	\$58,425.80
(4%) – (5/5/2025)	

YTD	+xx.xx%
1 Yr	+15%

JEFFREY DANA
City Solicitor



BRETT P. SMILEY
Mayor

Office of the City Solicitor
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Brett P. Smiley, Chairman of Board of Park Commissioners and Board of Investment
FROM: Nicholas P. Poulos, Associate City Solicitor
RE: Authorization to Withdraw Funds from the Edward Ely Trust for Neighborhood Performing Arts Program
DATE: March 6, 2026

Dear Mayor Smiley:

The Department of Art, Culture and Tourism together with the Parks Department have requested authorization to make a withdrawal from the Edward Ely Trust in order to fund performing arts programming in City parks. The opinion of the Solicitor’s Office is that the use of the trust funds for this purpose is in accordance with the intent of the trust.

Very truly yours,

Nicholas P. Poulos, Esq.
npoulos@providenceri.gov
(401) 680-5333

Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council
Communication Plan
Woonasquatucket Greenway Expansion in Merino Park
Phase 1 – Retaining Wall along Heath Street
DRAFT

Purpose: Provide information to stakeholders and community regarding construction of the above project

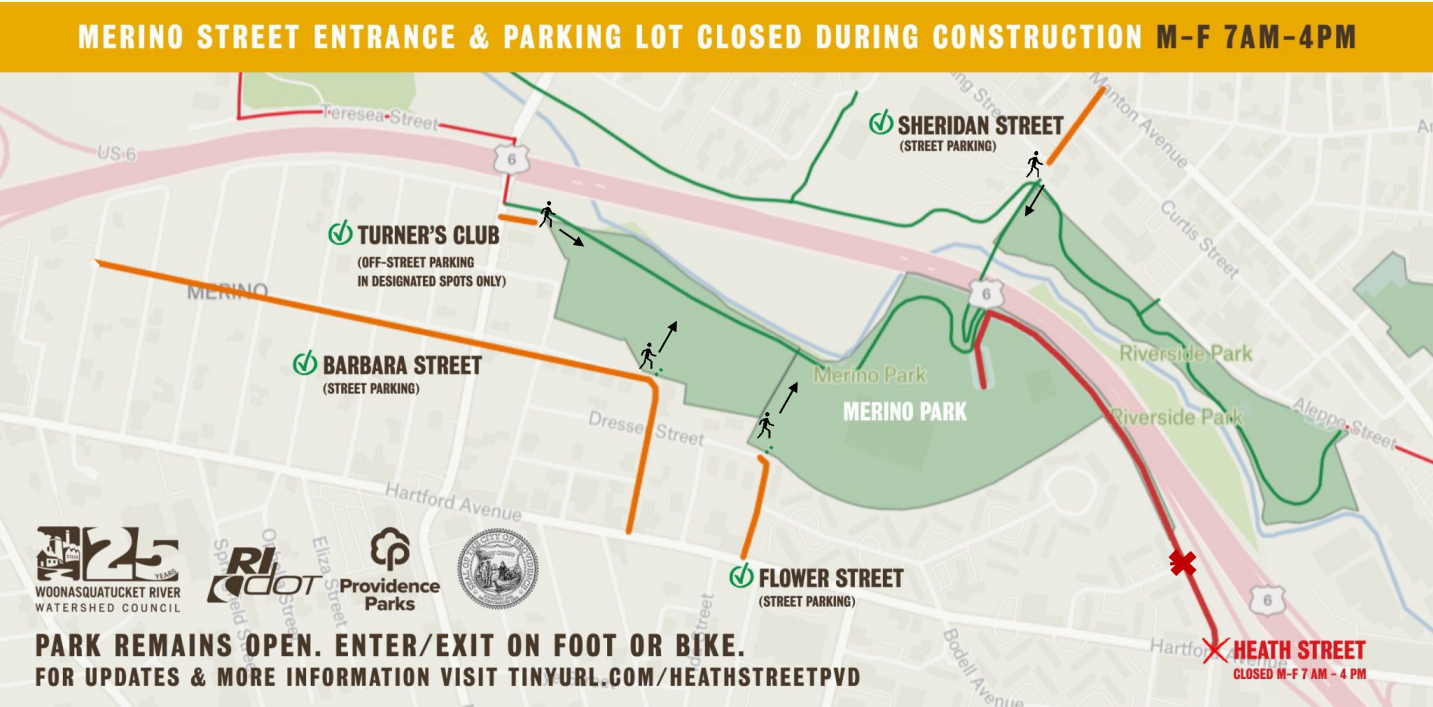
- 1. Effective Dates & Times
 - a. Start Date: ASAP
 - b. End Date: June 30, 2026
 - c. Road closure is scheduled M-F from 7am to 4pm
- 2. Stakeholders
 - a. Includes:
 - i. City of Providence Parks Department
 - ii. City of Providence Recreation Department
 - iii. City Council Members Ana Vargas & Miguel Sanchez
 - iv. City of Providence Emergency Departments
 - v. Providence Housing Authority – Hartford Park
 - vi. *WRWC assumes coordination with Mayor’s Office will be handled by Parks and/or Recreation Departments*
 - b. This plan will be provided to stakeholders in advance for review and comment.
 - c. Stakeholders will be given monthly updates on project status (or at the frequency requested).
- 3. Points of Contact (*to be updated with contact information*)
 - a. WRWC – Lisa Aurecchia and Mark Pereira
 - b. Parks Department – Nicole Modi
 - c. Recreation Department – David Onyemen
 - d. City Council Members – Kyle Delgado
 - e. Emergency Departments – TBD
 - f. Providence Housing Authority – Melissa Sanzaro and Jacqueline Martinez
 - g. Engineer – Jack Madden (all correspondence to be coordinated through WRWC)
 - h. Contractor – DiCenzo, Inc. (all correspondence to be coordinated through WRWC)
- 4. Outreach Materials
 - a. Refer to attached materials
 - b. Includes:
 - i. Signage
 - ii. Social media
 - iii. Webpage
- 5. Construction Notifications
 - a. Two weeks prior to road closure starting:
 - i. **Install sign along Hartford** Avenue at entrance to Merino Park informing passersby of upcoming road closure – to be installed by WRWC. Sign to include:
 - 1. Closure start date
 - 2. Closure hours
 - 3. QR code to alternative parking locations
 - ii. **Posts on WRWC social media** w/ the following information:
 - 1. Start date
 - 2. Link to alternative parking locations

3. Closure hours
 4. Short overview of project
 5. Tagging: City of Providence, City of Providence City Council, City of Providence Parks, City of Providence Recreation Department, Providence Housing Authority (and others as requested)
 - iii. **WRWC project webpage** goes live with the following information:
 1. Closure start date
 2. Link to alternative parking locations
 3. Closure hours
 4. Short overview of project
 - iv. Notify stakeholders
 1. For City Departments requiring access to park during road closure – inform them of alternative entrance to park at Glenbridge Avenue via the bike path
- b. Evening before road closure:
 - i. **Post on WRWC social media** w/ the following information:
 1. Road closure begins tomorrow
 2. Link to alternative parking locations
 3. Closure hours
 - ii. **Install 24'x36" corrugated plastic signs throughout Merino Park** informing park users of road closure – to be installed by WRWC. Sign to include:
 1. Closure hours
 2. QR code to alternative parking locations
 - iii. Notify stakeholders
 1. For City Departments requiring access to park during road closure – inform them of alternative entrance to park at Glenbridge Avenue via the bike path
- c. During road closure:
 - i. Maintain corrugated signs throughout Merino Park – to be monitored by WRWC
 - ii. Continue posts on WRWC social media w/ the following information:
 1. Construction progress
 2. Link to alternative parking locations
 3. Closure hours
 4. Tagging: City of Providence, City of Providence City Council, City of Providence Parks, City of Providence Recreation Department, Providence Housing Authority (and others as requested)
 - iii. WRWC maintains project webpage
 - iv. Monitor social media, email, etc. for public feedback and address issues as they arise. WRWC will engage with stakeholders as needed.

Yard Signs



Alternative Parking Map



Webpage

THE HEATH STREET GREENWAY PROJECT



Merino Park Construction Updates

Construction of Phase 1 of the Woonasquatucket River Greenway expansion in Merino Park will begin shortly. During Phase 1, the entrance and parking lot of Merino will **be closed to vehicles Monday through Friday from 7 AM to 4 PM**. On-site signage will be posted to help guide visitors.

Merino Park will remain open and accessible by foot and bike throughout construction.

To support continued access, alternative parking will be available at the following locations:

- **Sheridan Street** (street parking)
- **Flower Street** (street parking)
- **Barbara Street** (street parking)
- **Turners Club** (off-street parking in designated areas only)

A map showing these alternative parking options is provided below.

The project will create a safe route for pedestrians and cyclists to access Merino Park from Hartford Avenue and add another 1/3-mile to the seven-mile Woonasquatucket River Greenway network.

The Heath Street Greenway Project is transforming access to Merino Park by creating a safer, more enjoyable route for people walking and biking. New green space and expanded recreational access for the community will be added along the way. **Phase 1 is expected to finish late Spring 2026. Phase 2 is expected to start after the busy summer and fall months.**

Thank you for your patience as we work to improve this important connection.

Alternative Parking



Project Highlights

- Pedestrian & Cyclist Safety:** Separated lane along the entrance to Merino Park.
 - Welcoming Gateway:** A prominent entry point at Hartford Avenue invites everyone to the Woonasquatucket River Greenway and Merino Park.
 - Green Infrastructure:** Landscaping and stormwater treatment features support a healthy, sustainable environment.
 - Recreational Access:** Easy entry to Merino Park's playgrounds, playing fields, trails, parkour course, and pump track at Woony Adventure Park.
- A Community Connection

Once completed, this project will provide a beautiful gateway to the Woonasquatucket River Greenway, connecting neighborhoods, enhancing pedestrian and cyclist safety, and increasing green spaces. The new path will link people of all ages to nature, recreation, and community spaces along the river.

Digital Banners (for social media)

MERINO STREET ENTRANCE & PARKING LOT CLOSED DURING CONSTRUCTION M-F 7AM-4PM

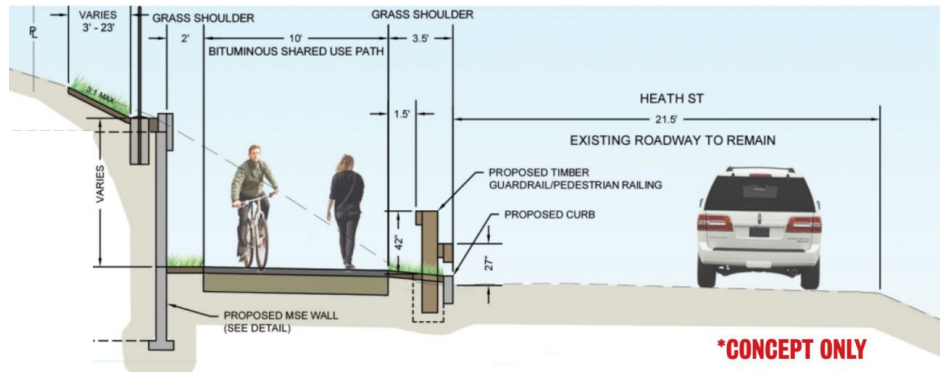
A SAFE, ACCESSIBLE, AND PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY PARK ENTRANCE IS UNDERWAY

ALTERNATIVE PARKING

- Sheridan Street (street parking)
- Flower Street (street parking)
- Barbara Street (street parking)
- Turners Club (off-street parking in designated areas only)



**LEARN MORE
& VIEW MAP**



PARK REMAINS OPEN. ENTER/EXIT ON FOOT OR BIKE.
FOR UPDATES & MORE INFORMATION VISIT [TINYURL.COM/HEATHSTREETPVD](https://tinyurl.com/heathstreetpvd)

