



Sterling Park Advisory Board Regular Meeting Agenda

114 N. Broadway Avenue, Sterling, Kansas
May 21, 2026, at 6:00pm

A. Call to Order

B. Approval of the Agenda

C. Citizen Comments

D. Appointments, Proclamations, Recognitions, & Nominations

E. Consent Agenda

Items on the Consent Agenda are considered by staff to be routine business items. Approval of the items may be made by a single motion, seconded, and a majority vote with no separate discussion of any item listed. Should a member of the Governing Body desire to discuss any item, the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered separately.

1. Approval of minutes

A. Regular Meeting February 24, 2026.

F. Old Business

G. New Business

1. Discuss matters related to Sterling Lake Park.
2. Discuss matters related to Evergreen Park.
3. Discuss matters related to Library Park.
4. Discuss matters related to Dysart Park.
5. Discuss matters related to Peace Park

H. City Manager's Report

I. Park Board Comments

J. Adjournment

Notice: Subject to Revisions

It is possible that sometime between 5:15 and 6:00 pm immediately prior to this meeting, during breaks, and directly after the meeting, a majority of the Park Advisory Board may be present in the commission chambers or lobby of City Hall. No one is excluded from these areas during those times.

**STERLING PARK ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
02/24/2026**

The Sterling Park Board met for a Regular Meeting Tuesday, February 24, 2026, at 5:15 P.M in the meeting room at City Hall. Those present were Dwight Nichols, Chairman; McKenzie Farney, Vice-Chairwoman, Kent Anthony, Lynne Bush, Jed Miller, Board Members; Ian Hutcheson, Secretary / City Manager; Stephanie Burford, President, Library Board; Debbie Gibson, Director, Sterling Free Public Library, Kathy Booth, Public.

Ashley Connolly, Board Member, was absent.

Chairman Nichols called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Board Member Miller moved, and Board Member Anthony seconded to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried 5-0.

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None

APPOINTMENTS, PROCLAMATIONS, RECOGNITIONS, & NOMINATIONS: None.

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Approval of September 24, 2025, Meeting Minutes.

Board Member Miller moved, and Board Member Bush seconded to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion carried 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Discuss adoption of new by-laws for the Park Advisory Board.

Chairman Nichols presented the new draft by-laws for the Park Advisory Board. The Board reviewed the draft document, and there were no suggestions for additional changes. The Board discussed the one-year term beginning January 1 and ending December 31 for officer positions as presented in Section V-A(1) of the by-laws, and whether there was a desire to retain the current officers through the end of 2026. There was a consensus among the Board Members retain the same officers through the end of the calendar year, with elections for new officers occurring in 2027.

Chairman Nichols explained that upon the Board's approval of new-by-laws, the by-laws would be recommended for final approval to the City Commission.

Board Member Miller moved, and Board Member Bush seconded to recommend the new Park Advisory Board by-laws for approval to the City Commission, and to retain the current officers until December 31, 2026, with elections for the 2027 officers to take place at the last Board meeting in 2026. The motion carried 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Approve the installation of a story walk at Sterling Lake Park by the Sterling Free Public Library.

Stephanie Burford, President of the Library Board and Debbie Gibson, Director of the Sterling Free Public Library, presented the Library Board's proposal to install a story walk at a City park, preferably at Sterling Lake Park. As one of the original Carnegie libraries constructed across the U.S., the Sterling library was the recipient of a \$10,000 donation from the Carnegie Corporation of New York. The Library Board intends to use a portion of this donation towards the installation of a story walk.

President Burford and Director Gibson explained that a story walk is an interactive, outdoor educational feature intended to promote literacy and outdoor play for children. A story walk presents a narrative which can be read by progressing through a series of installations positioned along an outdoor path, typically located in a public park. The installations containing the different parts of the story are designed to withstand the elements and may be placed on free-standing pedestals or attached to some other durable outdoor feature, such as a tree or a fence. The stories can be changed on a regular basis to maintain the interest of children and families in engaging in the story walk.

The Library Board intends to fund the entirety of the project, including installation and ongoing maintenance costs. The Library Board may request that the City consider providing some of the labor to initially install the equipment as an in-kind donation. City Manager Hutcheson responded that this would likely be possible.

The Board discussed the proposed project and the ideal location for it. It was recommended that Library Park may be a more suitable location for the story walk, given its proximity to the library building. Burford and Gibson agreed that there would be many advantages to installing the story walk at Library Park.

Board Member Bush asked if the remainder of the Carnegie donation could be used towards additional amenities at Library Park, such as public restroom facilities. Gibson explained that the library accessibility improvements project, which is currently being planned, may take priority over other needs in the allocation of the remaining Carnegie funds.

Board Member Anthony remarked that a statue or memorial to the late Max Moxley would be a suitable addition to Library Park as well, given Moxley's dedication to maintaining and improving Sterling's library.

Chairman Nichols requested that the Library Board return to the next Park Advisory Board meeting to present final plans for the story walk, at which time the Board could consider recommending the project for approval to the City Commission. Burford and Gibson agreed to return with their final proposal at such a time.

At this time, Board Member Miller exited the meeting. Before exiting, Miller offered comments related to items G.2, G.3, G.4 and G.5, which are presented below.

No action was taken.

2. Discuss matters related to Sterling Lake Park.

NEW BUSINESS (cont.):

The Board discussed various improvements and maintenance items related to Sterling Lake Park, including sealing the wooden gazebos and benches, the regular restocking of dog waste bags, the installation of new water fountains, and the possibility of decorating the park with lights during the holiday season.

No action was taken.

3. Discuss matters related to Evergreen Park.

Vice-Chairwoman Farney discussed the installation of additional shade features at Evergreen Park. Farney has corresponded with a local grant specialist about funding opportunities for new shade features. Farney shared that a shade structure large enough to cover the playground at the park may cost approximately \$50,000. Farney reported that the grant specialist noted that the inactive municipal water wells located in the park may present a challenge to securing funding through some grant programs. City Manager Hutcheson noted that the shade structure donated by the Sterling Rotary Club still needs to be installed. The Board discussed other ideas and possibilities for providing additional shade to park patrons.

Farney noted that the airplane play equipment that was removed by the City from the park still needs to be replaced with another play feature.

No action was taken.

4. Discuss matters related to Library Park.

Board Member Miller advised that improvements which provide additional shade to patrons of Library Park are still needed.

No action taken.

5. Discuss matters related to Dysart Park.

Board Member Bush presented the status of Sterling Main Street's plans for renovating Dysart Park. The organization is planning to organize an expansion of the mural on the east and south facing walls, the installation of a brick patio / performance area in the southwest corner of the park, and the planting of additional bushes. Bush advised that a rededication of the park be delayed until the renovation of the park is closer to completion. Chairman Nichols stated that he is opposed to the planting of any additional trees in the park. Board Member Miller suggested that the planting of bushes designed to attract butterflies would be a valuable improvement to the park.

No action taken.

6. Discuss matters related to Peace Park.

Board Member Anthony remarked that the close vicinity of the railroad easements to Peace Park make it difficult to consider any major improvements to Peace Park.

NEW BUSINESS (cont.):

No action taken.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:

City Manager Hutcheson informed the Board Members that if they have any ideas for projects for the annual Love Sterling event to be held on April 18, 2026, to please refer their suggestions to the City or Sterling College.

PARK BOARD COMMENTS:

Chairman Nichols mentioned that the second quarter Board meeting is tentatively scheduled for May 14, 2026. Nichols recommended that the Board schedule the third and fourth quarter meetings soon.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Board, it was moved by Chairman Nichols and seconded by Board Member Bush to adjourn. The motion carried 4-0.

Dwight Nichols, Chairman

G.1 Discuss matters related to Sterling Lake Park.

G.2 Discuss matters related to Evergreen Park.

G.3 Discuss matters related to Evergreen Park.

G.4 Discuss matters related to Dysart Park.

G.5 Discuss matters related to Peace Park.