

YOUTH AND RECREATION

Tuesday, November 18, 2025 – 7:00 p.m.
Council Chambers – Olean Municipal Building

Present: Members: Chairman Forney, Vice Chairman McCall, Alderman Crawford, Alderman Robinson, and Alderman Anastasia. Others: Alderman Bennion; Alderman Keary; Lens Martial, City Auditor; James Sprague, Director of Public Works; Eric Maurouard, Fire Chief, and Tiffany Taylor, Managerial Confidential Administrative Secretary.

1. Roll Call

Alderman Forney called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and asked that the record show that all committee members were present.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Committee Meeting (Tuesday, November 4, 2025)

A motion to approve the minutes of the November 4, 2025 committee meeting was made by Alderman Forney, seconded by Alderman Robinson. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried.

3. Unfinished Business

None

4. New Referrals for Consideration

a. Oak Hill Park

Alderman McCall explained there are trees that need to be cut down in the park and we need to have a firm plan on that. She explained a larger, longer-standing issue is to the left of the main entrance where the area is unsightly and detracts from the beauty of the park. She explained this has been brought up ever since she has been on the Council, and it has gotten nowhere. She explained she thinks that we can address this issue going forward and have a plan in place so that this can get this done in the spring. She explained part of this is going over capital funds and finding that there is funding in place that will help with this project. She explained we need to come up with a plan, even if we only put hardscaping in this area, or we can reach out to Dr. Bilacki who at one time had a plan for this area. She explained he could be a great resource for this moving forward. She explained she would like a plan in place by the spring so we can see things get done.

Alderman Forney asked if we have ever thought about the area in question being cemented or concreted and stamped with the name and establishment date of the park. Alderman McCall

explained at this point she is open to just about everything. Alderman Robinson explained he feels hardscaping would be the best option, but we need to ensure we use the right size rocks due to the steepness of the area. He explained he feels the City should be investing in more hardscaping City-wide as it is much easier to maintain in the long run. He explained hardscaping would make this area look much better than it does now.

Alderman McCall reiterated that she would like to see something in place by spring in terms of a plan for the park. Director Sprague noted we have a good handle on the tree issues in the park and as soon as the tree contract is awarded we will get this portion started.

b. Forness Park

Alderman Forney explained when we last met we talked about what a bad shape this park is in. She explained we have been working on the lights and last year with a previous DPW Director we asked for work to be done on the fields to move the field 10 backstop. She explained that was delayed or never finished. Alderman Bennion explained he feels spending money on field 10 is not needed. He explained lights were added to fields 8 and 9 and there are also lights on field one so spending money on field 10 would be foolish. Alderman Crawford asked if all the lights are working and Director Sprague explained there are two fields that still have work in progress.

Alderman Forney asked, in addition to the playground that is really old, what else the Council would like to see updated. Alderman McCall explained she thinks that we shouldn't just fix what is broken, but also keep what is there updated and in good shape. She explained we need to have a plan and ask the Parks Department to look at parks as they are going around them to see what things will be coming up for repair as well as what a wish list would be. She explained she would like to see a comprehensive plan for all of the parks driven by what the Parks Department says needs are. Alderman Forney explained Mayor Aiello noted at the last meeting there was a plan created that was not moved forward. Ms. Taylor explained this was a large plan for Forness Park but the Council decided not to apply for grant funding at that time. She advised she would send this information to the Council. Alderman McCall explained we need to create a comprehensive plan for all parks.

c. Homer Street Park

Alderman Anastasia explained he brought this up earlier this month and explained the Mayor had asked everyone to take a look at the park. He explained he is looking for two things that he would like an estimate for and to be put in the next budget. He explained the first is for a gate to be installed at the entrance to keep kids from running out of the park since it is a short distance from the road and Homer Street is an industrial zone. He explained he would also like a quote for fencing in a portion of the front of the park facing Buffalo Street to create a dog park.

Alderman Bennion asked if we can make a part of the park a dog park without reducing the area of parkland in the City and Alderman Crawford explained we can as it is still greenspace. Alderman Robinson explained he doesn't think we should waste the time and money for a gate for the park. He explained we need to leave some responsibility for the parents to watch their children, especially in a park that size. He explained there are parks in the City that have more traffic than that park and they are not fenced in at all. He explained he feels this would be a waste of City funds, although he does support the dog park. Alderman McCall explained she agrees and that King Street Park is much busier, while there is no fencing. She explained she is not supportive of the gate but is supportive of the dog park. She noted there are parental responsibilities. She does not see the investment in the safety issue there, and asked how we would justify a fully enclosed park for one park, but not another. Alderman Crawford explained he has said for a long time to take that playground equipment and move it to Forness, and make that a dog park. He explained he would not be in favor of the gate but would support a dog park as there is a lot of area on that side of the park. He explained he would support moving forward to get a quote for some fencing in that section with an entrance gate for dogs to go in and out.

Alderman Anastasia explained he is asking for quotes for both and for the items to be placed in the next budget. He explained if they are passed then we can do the work and if not, they can be taken out. Alderman Bennion explained six aldermen just stated they would not support the gate and asked why he is still looking for a quote, and Alderman Anastasia explained he has been here for 17 years and it is his right to ask for a quote. Alderman McCall explained the DPW Director should not be chasing down a quote for something the Council does not want. Alderman Forney explained we need to go through the approval piece first and it should not go in the budget if it is not approved by the Council. Alderman McCall explained we should not be putting things into the budget hoping they stick.

5. Committee Reports

None

6. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Alderman Forney, seconded by Alderman McCall. Voice vote, ayes all. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:30 p.m.