

MINUTES

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING
AV ROOM #308
CITY HALL

6:00 P. M., MAY 4, 2026

Caitlin Cook, Chairperson, called the meeting of the Charleston City Council Committee on Parks and Recreation to order at 6:00p.m., May 4, 2026.

Committee Members Present:

Caitlin Cook, Chair
Bruce King, Vice Chair
Michael Ferrell
Harper Gardner
Pat Jones
Chad Robinson
Patrick Salango

Committee Members Absent:

Other Councilmembers Present:

Frank Annie
Emmett Pepper
Joseph Jenkins

A roll call was taken, and it was determined that a quorum was not present.

1. Approval of previous minutes – 11-17-2023
Councilmember Gardner motioned to approve the previous minutes.
Councilmember Jones seconded. With those present voting unanimously in the affirmative, the Chair declared the previous minutes approved.

May 4, 2026

2. Bill No. 8076 - A BILL to amend the Code of the City of Charleston, relating to the fees, rates, and charges for use of City owned parks and recreational facilities.

Councilmember Cook stated that the two items on the agenda work together. Their purpose is to provide clarity as to the fees and guidelines for the recreational facilities as there has been an increase in usage.

City Attorney Joe Baldwin stated that the bill will remove the schedule of fees from the City Code. It would then go through a resolution process, which will allow for easier public access and to more quickly change with the needs of the facilities.

3. Resolution No. 26-049 – Adopting the initial rental fees for Parks and Rec pursuant to Bill No.8076. -

Baldwin added that the attached schedule of fees combines all of the existing charges, rentals, rules and guidelines into one document.

Councilmember King confirmed that Council would have to approve any changes to the rates.

Councilmember Ferrell stated that there are issues with Little League Football excluding certain teams and was concerned about monopolizing the fields. Baldwin replied that the Bill and Resolution ensures that all individuals have access to the fields. Priority is always given to local youth teams. Councilmember Robinson stated that any City team should be allowed to practice on the fields and should be playing in the same league, so if one of the teams aren't allowed to play in a league then neither team should be allowed to practice or play in that league. Baldwin added that the documents just deal with the fields, not the policies of other organizations. Chief of Staff Matt Sutton added that the free rental would apply to the team renting the field regardless of what organization or league they belonged to.

Councilmember Robinson referenced the portion of the document that mentions tournaments. He did not see any exclusion where local little leagues were not allowed to host tournaments. Baldwin added that travel-based teams are already excluded from exemption. Councilmember Robinson replied that it is still happening. Councilmember Cook confirmed with the Parks and Recreation Director Dax Miller that there are no existing penalties for violating those rules. Chief of Staff Matt Sutton added that in that case, the rental agreement should be adjusted.

Councilmember Robinson stated that the fees were too low. Councilmembers Ferrell and King agreed. Nearby comparable fields are charging \$50-60/hour for travel-ball tournaments. Baldwin reminded the Committee that the listed fees are the current fees that are currently being charged. Baldwin suggested that a penalty for the discussed violations would be to lose field priority. Councilmember Robinson confirmed that the fees go into the General Fund.

Councilmember Cook recommended that the items would pass, and the fees for travel ball tournaments could be revisited.

Councilmember Jones asked Miller if he thought the rates were too low. Miller replied that he preferred to keep everything affordable but agreed they could be more competitive. Councilmember Robinson added that the majority of tournaments were not from Charleston residents. Councilmember King said the rate should be a minimum of \$50/hr. Councilmember Cook asked for their proposed alternative price for the \$300/day fee. Councilmember King replied it should be \$500/day at least.

Councilmember Robinson motioned to lay over Bill No. 8076. Councilmember Gardner seconded the motion. With those present voting unanimously in the affirmative, the Chair declared Bill No. 8076 held over until the next meeting.

Councilmember King motioned to lay over Resolution No. 26-049. Councilmember Gardner seconded the motion. With those present voting unanimously in the affirmative, the Chair declared Resolution No. 26-049 held over until the next meeting.

Councilmember King motioned to adjourn. Councilmember Gardner seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned.