

RECREATION COMMISSION TASK FORCE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

28 SEPTEMBER 2021

INTRODUCTION

Community members have long volunteered their time to provide recreational activities for our youth sports. These community members have carried the weight for Paola recreation opportunities. However, the volunteer base has dwindled as sporting options have increased, and many in the community recognize the growing need to expand recreational activity options to a wider age range of participants.

In early August, Paola Unified School District and the City of Paola passed a joint resolution to submit a question to the qualified electors regarding the creation of a Joint Recreation System. This question will be on the November 2, 2021 ballot.

FAQs

1. Why form this recreation commission now?

The commission has been discussed by many community people over the years. Our recreation offerings are stunted because of a lack of organization while other towns are seeing their commissions as a boon to their community. Also, we are seeing a dwindling number of volunteers to help administer our traditional programs. A recreation commission will provide better and consistent funding and offer a wider range of activities and programs to a variety of age groups.

2. How is the commission run?

The School Board and City Council will each appoint two members to serve on the Recreation Commission. These four members will then select a fifth member. The five-member board will provide the general governance for the Joint Recreation System, which includes establishing a strategic direction, setting policy, and approving the annual budget. The Recreation Commission will hire a recreation director to conduct daily operations and administer programming.

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3. How would the recreation commission be funded?

The recreation commission would be funded by a combination of Ad Valorem Property Tax and user fees. For the proposed joint recreation system, an initial one mill will be levied through the School District's taxing authority. The recreation commission would also charge user fees for the recreational programming that it provides. State Statute limits the first-year mill levy to one mill. The mill levy can be increased in future years, but it is limited to no more than one mill per year and a maximum of four mills.

A levy of one mill for the proposed Joint Recreation System would generate approximately \$180,000 in Ad Valorem Property Tax revenue.

4. How will a recreation commission affect the availability of activities for me?

A recreation commission centralizes planning, organization, and leadership such that the community is better served by:

- Centralized location (office) for information and communication, sign-ups, administration, and opportunities for individuals to volunteer and help lead, plan, and organize programs, officiate games, etc.
- Increased capacity to offer a wide range of programs and activities for all ages
 - Participate in programs/classes/sports in which you are interested
- Opportunities to help lead a program/class/team/ league
- More affordable programming costs

5. How will sports and other programs be different with a recreation commission in place?

- Options for new activities where there is patron interest and leadership
- Lower cost for participation
- Opportunity to connect to regional and state organizations
- Consistent maintenance of facilities

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6. Besides youth sports, what other activities would the Recreation Commission oversee?

Some possible activities could be:

- Adult Softball and Flag Football
- Family Fun Nights
- Daddy/Daughter and Mother/Son Dances
- Day Trips for Seniors
- Enrichment Activities
 - Lunch & Learn
 - Summer Educational Camps for Kids

7. Statutes for Reference

Below are the links to statutes relevant to forming a recreation commission. While some of these statutes reference city or school recreation systems, the proposed ballot question explores the creation of a joint (school district and city) recreation commission.

Relevant Statutes

- [KSA 12-1924](#). Establishment of system of public recreation; joint systems; operation of system.
- [KSA 12-1925](#). Establishment by petition or by action of city or school district; election.
- [KSA 12-1926](#). Recreation commission; membership; selection; terms; removal; vacancies; existing commissions; treasurer.
- [KSA 12-1927](#). Annual budget; hearing; notice; submission to district board of education; tax levy; increase in levy, subject to protest; annual audit, when required.
- [KSA 12-1928](#). Powers of recreation commission.
- [KSA 12-1929](#). Combining operation of park system and public recreation system; protest election; jointly operated systems; transfer of property.
- [KSA 12-1930](#). Same; park and recreation advisory board; membership; appointment; term.
- [KSA 12-1931](#). Same; reference of matters to board; reports and recommendations; action by city governing body.
- [KSA 12-1932](#). Same; transfer of funds; tax levy, use of proceeds.

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8. What facilities would the Recreation Commission utilize?

Since the Recreation Commission may not own any facilities, it will work with the School District, City, and other community partners to accommodate and conduct programming activities.

9. If approved, when does the Recreation Commission start?

If voters approve the creation of a Joint Recreation System, the School Board and City will take action to formally establish the Recreation Commission. While the Recreation Commission can be formally established by early 2022, it will take time for the Commission to develop its bylaws, create a strategic direction, and search for a recreation director. Additionally, the Recreation Commission would not receive any funding from Ad Valorem Property Tax until January of 2023. The Recreation Commission will still rely heavily upon volunteers throughout 2022 until it can get fully “up and running” in early 2023. From early 2023 on, the Recreation Commission would look to build upon the existing programming and grow the recreational programming options for the community.

10. What other communities have a recreation commission similar to the one being proposed?

- Baldwin City: [Baldwin City Recreation Commission](#)
- Louisburg: [Louisburg Recreation Commission](#)
- Ottawa: [Ottawa Recreation Commission](#)
- Spring Hill: [Spring Hill Recreation Commission](#)
- Wellsville: [Wellsville Joint Recreation Commission](#)