

Planning Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, December 17, 2025; 8:15 am
Fargo Parks Sports Center
Alex Stern Boardroom

Present: Vicki Dawson, Joe Deutsch, Aaron Hill, Zoe Absey, Dave Bietz, Jayne Gust, Broc Lietz, Paul Grindeland, Carmen Johnson, Cassie Doll, Kenna Krchnavy

1. Broadway Station / Senior Services Discussion

- The lease at Broadway Station has increased significantly (from about \$68K to \$80K per year, plus growing maintenance on an aging building).
- Valley Senior Services is now shouldering the full lease (park district's previous contribution ended), raising questions of fiscal responsibility vs. community value.

Community concerns

- Strong desire to keep Broadway Station open until a viable long-term solution exists.
- Concern that Trollwood Village and Yonker Farm are not equivalent replacements:
 - Seen as a downgrade in space and amenities.
 - Worries about capacity limits (e.g., accommodating 60+ people and multiple simultaneous activities).
 - Many seniors say they would not go to Trollwood/Yonker if Broadway closes.
- Emphasis on:
 - Location and transportation (driving distance, freeway avoidance, routes like 25th St vs University).
 - Existing community and social groups (cards, bingo, exercise, classes).

Park District & Valley Senior Services perspective

- No final decision has been made; rumors of a decision to close Broadway are incorrect.
- They must consider:
 - Whether Broadway is the best use of taxpayer dollars, given a potential 5-year / \$500K+ lease.
 - Other needs such as nutrition funding, transit, and marketing.
- They've:
 - Explored alternative sites (churches like First Lutheran, Holy Spirit, other organizations), though scheduling conflicts and control issues exist.
 - Verified Trollwood's capacity (137 people, space reconfiguration, added hours) as a possible fallback if needed.
- They stress they value Trollwood as a long-standing community meal site and don't want it disparaged; they see value in both Trollwood and Broadway.

Long-term vision

- Working on an overall Park District master plan and North Fargo community/senior center concept:
 - Likely a multi-generational community center, not just a senior center (shared use, "bang for the buck").
 - Possible opportunities tied to school properties (e.g., Roosevelt) or other sites.
 - Acknowledgment that planning, funding, community engagement, and construction will take years.

- Seniors express desire to be part of the solution and support a new facility, but insist on a workable transition plan so seniors aren't left without a suitable place in the interim.
- Donations have been discussed (e.g., \$50K/year concepts), with interest in possibly directing such funds toward a future permanent center.

Key unresolved items

- Whether to:
 - Stay at Broadway short- to medium-term.
 - Move to Trollwood or another temporary site.
 - Or some combination, while planning and fundraising for a new center.
- Need to balance localized community needs with citywide equity (who currently lacks convenient access to a senior center).

2. Scholarship Program Update (Recreation & Facilities)

2025 changes

- Expanded scholarships to include adults, not just youth.
- Major use in pool passes and recreation programs; strong success in improving access.

Outreach & eligibility

- Collaboration with groups like Legacy Children's Foundation and YWCA.
- Presence at Fargo Public School back-to-school nights.
- Eligibility criteria now aligned exactly with Fargo Public Schools' free/reduced lunch standards.
- Marketing via flyers, website, activity guide, and targeted outreach.

Impact

- 112% increase in scholarships over the prior year.
- About \$83,900 in scholarship value in 2025 (submitted to the Foundation for reimbursement).

2026 enhancements

- Scholarships to apply to all individual registration programs (youth and adult).
- Expansion to:
 - Sports Center: six-punch passes (twice a year if eligible).
 - Courts Plus: STAR tennis, Active Agers classes, playground punch cards.
- Work underway to streamline the application process (currently can be 30–150 minutes per person).
- New RecTrac software (planned Feb–Mar launch) will:
 - Digitize applications where possible.
 - Enable detailed tracking of how scholarships are used (e.g., specific programs, passes).
 - Support digital punch cards, with physical options for those without smartphones.

Future considerations

- Possible donor messaging (e.g., "\$X funds one punch card / one session") for Giving Hearts Day and other fundraising.
- Discussion of whether to extend scholarships to memberships (e.g., Courts Plus, golf), likely starting with programs only and exploring partial discounts later.
- Idea to involve business sponsors (e.g., Bell Bank for youth golf) and collect impact stories from scholarship users.

3. Depository of Public Funds

- Routine, state-required action: every even-numbered year the Park District must designate official bank depositories.
- List includes primary operating banks and several investment banks (CDs, money markets), plus local banks in outlying counties for Valley Senior Services.
- Investments (CDs/money markets) are shopped at maturity for best rates.
- Operating bank changes are rare due to service quality and transition workload.

The committee recommends moving this to the full board and placing it on the Consent Agenda for consideration and approval.

4. Beverage Contract: Pepsi → Coke

- Park District is transitioning concessions from Pepsi to Coca-Cola.
- New Coke coolers have been delivered; product deliveries are beginning (e.g., North shop).
- Pepsi is retrieving equipment; staff had to inventory all coolers across facilities.
- Some locations (e.g., CJs, Edgewood Tavern) will transition in early January.
- Park-operated sales sites will shift to Coke; privately operated beverage carts at golf courses will coordinate directly with Coke.

Meeting adjourned at 9:46 am.

Minutes submitted by Carmen Johnson, Executive Assistant