

Symons Recreation Complex Board Minutes December 8, 2025

The Symons Recreation Complex Board met on December 8th, 2025 at 5:30 pm. The following people were in attendance: Todd Coppernoll, Dave Turk, Larry Engel, Mary Miller, Melony Walters, John Cler, Rachel Schultz and Al Lins. Staff members Mike Hardy and Kyle Ewing were also present. Craig Hoepner (Innovative Public Advisors) was in attendance online.

1. Call to Order - Cler called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.
2. Roll Call of Membership
3. Open Meetings Compliance - Verification was met, per Hardy.
4. Approve Agenda – Engel made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Coppernoll seconded. Motion carried.
5. Approval of Minutes of October 13th, 2025 – Schultz made a motion to approve the minutes. Engel seconded. Motion carried.
6. Public Comment – none

Administrative Reports:

7. Staff Report – Hardy provided updates on November membership and visitor counts and YTD budget report. The Ugly Sweater Fun Run/Walk had just over 60 participants, and the post-race soup, cookies & social time was moved to the campus gym, which was very well received and noted that many people stuck around longer this year. Celebrate Pink silent auction fundraiser finished with just over \$3,200 raised to purchase a new leg extension/curl machine.
8. Symons Recreation Complex Foundation Report – Al Lins reviewed notes from the SRCF meeting held earlier, including the Foundation working to establish an endowment fund to support future SRC expenses. To date, just over \$100,000 is in the endowment.
9. Innovation Grant project update– Hardy introduced Craig Hoepner, a consultant with IPA who the City contracted with to provide the study. Hoepner thanked the Board for their work on Symons to date, and noted that in comparison, Symons operates about as efficiently financially as most of the other 6 comparable facilities that we visited. The 6 site visits that were made with SRC staff and SRCF representatives included TAG Center (City of Mayville), Cambridge Community Activities Program (Cambridge School District), Whitewater Aquatic & Fitness Center (City of Whitewater/Whitewater School District), Sauk Prairie Aquatic Center (Sauk Prairie School District), Lunda Community Center (Lunda Foundation-Black River Falls) and Bloomer Area Aquatic & Recreation Center (Bloomer). While the study included a mix of different examples of management including school district/Fund 80, City and Non-Profit (as well as a shared City-School District model in Whitewater), SRC currently most closely mirrors TAG center operations in Mayville, which has a city population the same as Richland Center, but a facility 20 years newer and a budget twice as much as Symons with about 400 fewer members and a subsidy about twice as much. Both SRC and TAG have subsidies of about 20% of their respective budgets, and no other facility had a subsidy less than 20%, so the City and County should feel pretty good about where SRC currently sits on public spending. Hoepner did note that the age of SRC really stood out against the other facilities, and the lack of family locker rooms at SRC was not present in other facilities and while he knows that issue is a priority and being discussed, he encouraged the Board to keep working on adding family locker rooms as a priority while updating the facility in other areas. Hoepner added that IPA will be putting together a more formal presentation of comparable site visits after the holidays, and the next step will likely be the collection of community surveys in early 2026 from both member and non-members.

Action Items:

10. Consider accepting donations – Hardy reported that the following donations were offered to Symons: \$11,000 from the Symons Foundation to install new benches in the locker rooms and corridors; \$4,000 from the Symons Foundation for a leg extension/curl machine; and \$500 from the Symons Foundation for a new table covering for marketing/special event promotions. Walters moved to accept the donations as presented, seconded by Coppernoll. Motion carried.

11. Consider request from St. Mary's School to use the pool for Sea Perch activities – Hardy reported that like last year, the St. Mary's middle school students would be participating in the Sea Perch program and would like to use the pool to practice with their underwater robots. Last year we charged \$15 per hour which essentially covers the cost of lifeguards and allows for private use of the pool.

Engel moved to recommend allowing St. Mary's to use the pool for Sea Perch activities at the same rate (\$15 per hour) as last year, seconded by Coppernoll. Motion carried.

12. Consider solicitation of RFPs to design and construct the outdoor tennis/BB courts - Hardy noted with the County finalizing use of the UW grant funds, the tennis/BB/pickleball courts have been included. There has been some requests to keep one tennis court in the re-design, as there currently in only one in the City (and surrounding area) which is often flooded and in poor shape. Hardy provided an aerial phot of the current complex at Krouskop Park which includes 1 basketball, 1 tennis and 6 pickleball court which would fit on the current campus court footprint. Additionally, Hardy noted that as this is a complete rebuild now would be the time to move the courts if they wanted to consider the future building addition on the west end rather than north, and there is adequate space behind (north) of the current building, although there would likely be a small increase in excavation/base material costs. Regarding lighting questions, Hardy suggested to keep costs down, the current wiring for lights could be capped and installed later if lighting was desired. The current poles are no good and will need to be removed anyway. Board will consider at future meeting after seeing how costs are impacted by moving courts behind SRC.

13. Consider solicitation of RFPs to design maps and signage for Marty Brewer Nature Trails– Cler presented sample sign wording he created to use in the new signs. He walked the trails and located several sites where signs could be placed. To get the wording included with graphics, trail wayfinding maps, and consistent theme as well as solicit manufacturing, we need an RFP to select a vendor. Money would come from the 2026 Stewardship grant we were awarded from the DNR. Engel moved to solicit RFPs for Marty Brewer Trails, seconded by Lins. Motion carried.

14. Consider future space needs/priorities of Symons Recreation Complex– Hardy presented maps of proposed land division dedicated to Symons as well as Marty Brewer Trails (County) which will allow the County to survey property to market to potential re-use for the rest of the campus. The maps included lands recently dedicated to the Richland School District. Members would like to see more land on the east side of Symons, extending to the current library building, to ensure accessibility on all sides if needed as well as to maximize parking to accommodate future member growth. Hardy will re-submit parcel request with additional land on the east side of Symons included for Campus Reconfiguration Committee for their 12/17/25 meeting.

Closing:

14. Committee Correspondence – None

15. Future Agenda Items – None.

16. Adjourn—Coppernoll made a motion to adjourn at 6:38pm. Lins seconded. Motion carried.