



WHERE COMMUNITY AND SPIRIT MEET®

WORK SESSION MINUTES

A work session of the Kirkwood City Council was held on December 11, 2025, at 4:30 p.m. at Kirkwood City Hall, 139 S. Kirkwood Road, Kirkwood, Missouri. Present were: Mayor Gibbons, Council Members Jaksetic, Luetzow, McLean, Rheinnecker, Schaefer, and Zimmer. Also in attendance were Chief Administrative Officer Russell Hawes, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer David Weidler, City Clerk Laurie Asche, Director of Parks and Recreation Kyle Henke, Communications Manager Jessica Winter, City Attorney Jackie Graves, and Labor Attorney Sarah Mullen.

APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 4, 2025 WORK SESSION MINUTES

Motion was made by Council Member Jaksetic and seconded by Council Member Rheinnecker to continue the approval of the December 4, 2025 work session minutes to January 8, 2026. The motion was unanimously approved.

GREAT RIVERS GREENWAY, MERAMEC GREENWAY PRESENTATION

Catherine Hamacher and Eileen Hill with PGAV Engineering on behalf of Great Rivers Greenway, presented to the City Council a proposal for a pedestrian and bicycle bridge connection between Greentree Park in the City of Kirkwood and Unger Park in the City of Fenton. This bridge would connect two trails of the Meramec Greenway currently separated by the Meramec River. Great Rivers Greenway (GRG) is seeking permission to conduct a feasibility study within Kirkwood and Fenton for the project.

History of the Meramec Greenway, a regional greenway within GRG's system, and its benefits were presented, which included: preservation of nature, fostering enjoyment of parks and trails, and connection of communities within the Meramec corridor, the latter of which serving as the vision of this project. Public interest in connection between Unger and Greentree Parks specifically was highlighted in a 2025 open house for the Unger Park Realignment Project, wherein Greentree was the second most requested connection to Unger.

Current potential specs for the bridge are as follows:

- Width spanning from Club Road to the west side of Unger Park Lake in Fenton
- Length spanning the north and south sides of the Meramec River, connecting two greenway trails covering 3.6 miles
- Connection to construction related to the Unger Park Realignment Project

Question regarding which jurisdictions the bridge will be built under and questioned if the US Army Corps of Engineers has been contacted regarding the no-rise requirement was raised. The no-rise requirement will be met with a 50-foot wide stress relief cut on the Unger Park side; jurisdiction discussions still need to take place between GRG, the City of Fenton, and St. Louis County.

GRG is funded by State sales tax. The current cost is estimated for the project ranges between \$4.5 – \$9 million, none of which would be asked to be funded by the City.

The timeline of construction would be approximately one to two years for construction documents in hand and three years for construction, for a five-year total project lifespan, after the feasibility study and upon.



It was the consensus of the Council to defer the topic to the Park Board for further consideration.

COMMUNITY CENTER PHASE I & II FINAL REPORT, AND PHASE III UPDATE

David Bradley with Navigate Building Solutions reported on the Kirkwood Community Center renovation project. Phases I and II are nearing completion, with an open house taking place on Friday, December 12.

Structural vulnerabilities were repaired and old materials were replaced. There was an overall goal of creating more modern and welcoming spaces, and staff felt this was achieved well.

Question was raised regarding a known issue with peeling paint in the gyms. This issue was addressed and will be monitored.

The Phase III progress report summarized construction duration. The actual project substantial completion duration (18 months) came in two months beneath what was anticipated (20 months). However, there were delays:

- A 7-week postpone on construction start for value engineering, which resulted in a saved \$176,000
- A 60-day Phase I extension for “unforeseen conditions”
- A late delivery of an electrical switchgear
- A 2-week shutdown

The project has come in at \$82,682 under budget overall. Certain appropriations were measured high due to contingent work; with a grant reimbursement in the amount of \$575,000 contributing to the price reduction. Negotiations and strategy from Navigate and Christner netted an overall program savings of about \$788,000 in avoided expenses.

Question was raised regarding if the new sprinkler system required upgraded water service. The current service was deemed satisfactory by the Fire Marshal. Another question was raised on contract clauses prohibiting material escalation price increases. While stated it was difficult to quantify, staff relied on contractors to account for this, and it was managed successfully. Phase III project completion is projected for July 17, 2026.

AQUATIC CENTER FEASIBILITY PROGRESS REPORT

Director of Parks and Recreation Kyle Henke, and George Deines and Darren Bevard with Counsilman-Hunsaker, presented to the Council the Aquatic Center Feasibility Study. With a 95% level of confidence, the swimming pool consistently ranked among residents’ most valued Parks & Recreation facility; conjointly, a majority agreed that improvement and maintenance of the Aquatic Center is needed.

Neighboring cities Oakland and Glendale were discussed for partnership opportunities. It was requested that a summary of data displaying aquatic facility usage per municipality be provided.



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Question was raised regarding personnel difficulties and expenses. The facility is labor intensive and the annual subsidy is predicted to increase to almost \$250,000 in 2027 from \$50,000 in 2022. Potential immediate repairs are estimated to cost \$2.5 – \$3 million. However, these repairs will lower yearly expenses of current short-term repairs caused by outdated conditions of the facility, and cost-efficient, full renovations of amenities will continue to save money over time.

Six concepts of renovations were shown with costs ranging from \$8,100,000 to \$18,600,000. Design concepts proposed additions, removals, and rearrangements of amenities. Discussion took place regarding an all-season aquatic facility.

Discussion took place regarding costs. It was the consensus of the Council to remove concepts #1 and #6 and for staff to move forward with developing a budget analyses on concepts #2, #4, and #5.

BENEFITS DISCUSSION

Assistant Chief Administrative Officer David Weidler presented to the Council the renewal cost of employee medical benefits. The City of Kirkwood’s medical and prescription plans are stop-loss, identifying the City as a self-insured entity which protects it against large claims. Symetra is the current stop-loss carrier, and that retaining Symetra will result in a 0% increase on all benefits they provide.

Question was raised regarding if employees paid for benefits, and staff confirmed, stating that there are multiple plans to choose from with varying percentage rates. It was also mentioned that early retirement benefits should be considered for next year’s benefits package.

Legislation will be presented at the December 18, 2025 Council meeting for Council consideration.

MOTION TO CLOSE THE MEETING

Motion was made by Council Member Zimmer and seconded by Council Member Luetzow to close the meeting pursuant to RSMo Chapter 610.021 (1 – Legal & 12 – Contract Negotiations).

Roll Call:

Mayor Gibbons	“Yes”
Council Member Jaksetic	“Yes”
Council Member Luetzow	“Yes”
Council Member McLean	“Yes”
Council Member Rheinnecker	“Yes”
Council Member Schaefer	“Yes”
Council Member Zimmer	“Yes”

The meeting was closed.



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MOTION TO OPEN THE MEETING

Motion was made by Council Member Luetzow and seconded by Council Member Zimmer to open the meeting.

Roll Call:

Mayor Gibbons	“Yes”
Council Member Jaksetic	“Yes”
Council Member Luetzow	“Yes”
Council Member McLean	“Yes”
Council Member Rheinnecker	“Yes”
Council Member Schaefer	“Yes”
Council Member Zimmer	“Yes”

The meeting was opened. Since no further matters were to come before the council, the meeting was adjourned.

Laurie Asche
City Clerk