



THE

CITY of PELLA

STAFF MEMO TO COUNCIL

ITEM NO: I-1
SUBJECT: Discuss proposed formation of a Recreation Department
DATE: August 19, 2025

BACKGROUND:

The purpose of this Policy and Planning session is to discuss the formation of a Recreation Department which would be responsible for the operation of the Indoor Recreation & Aquatics Center, outdoor pool, and programming at the Pella Sports Park and Soccer Complex. Additionally, City Administration is proposing to make changes to the current responsibilities of the Community Services Department. Staff would like for Council to be aware that the proposal to form a Recreation Department is being driven by the following factors:

1. Operations of the Indoor Recreation & Aquatics Center will be new for the City of Pella, including the initial start-up of the facility. As a result, it is imperative that the city recruits a director with significant experience operating recreation centers. Furthermore, it is believed that the city will be able to recruit a higher qualified candidate if the position is a department head rather than a manager level role within the Community Services Department.
2. During Council meetings for the new Indoor Recreation & Aquatics Center, there were several discussions regarding the desire to hold tournaments at the facility. In addition, it was noted there is a significant economic benefit to Pella's businesses if we host several youth tournaments. Staff believes creating a separate department is our best option to ensure an adequate number of tournaments occur at the new facility and the Pella Sports Park.
3. Based on the city's experience with the Bos Landen Golf Course, City Administration believes city staff can operate and maintain the Indoor Recreation & Aquatics Center more effectively and at approximately the same cost as if we hired a contractor for that purpose.

Organizational Note

Please keep in mind that the proposal included within this memo is a broad view of responsibilities between the proposed Recreation Department and the existing Community Services Department. If Council proceeds with this organizational proposal, future adjustments in responsibilities may be necessary between the two departments. Furthermore, additional staff for the Recreation Center will be hired incrementally over time, based on programming demands. Ultimately, staff's goal is to provide outstanding services to Pella citizens while operating within the City of Pella's budgetary requirements.

Proposed Recreation Department Responsibilities

- **Facilities:** The Recreation Department will be responsible for the maintenance of the Indoor Recreation & Aquatics Center and Outdoor Pool.
- **Recreation Programs:** The Recreation Department will be responsible for recreation programs at the Indoor Recreation & Aquatics Center, Outdoor Pool, Pella Sports Park, and Soccer Complex. In addition, this department will be responsible for administration of the city's recreation programs which will include our flag football and soccer programs.

Community Services Department Responsibilities

- **Facilities:** The Community Services Department will be responsible for the Community Center, Bos Landen Golf Course, city parks, and ground maintenance of the Sports Park and Soccer Complex.
- **Programming:** The Community Services Department will be responsible for programming at the Community Center, Bos Landen Golf Course, and city parks.
- **City Administration:** Staff is proposing the Community Services Director be responsible for the following administrative duties:
 - Coordinate the City of Pella's Special Event Application and Permitting Processes.
 - Responsible for the city's website.
 - Serve as the City of Pella's representative for the Convention and Visitor's Bureau (CVB) and Spirit of Pella.
 - Coordinates the city's Low- and Moderate-Income (LMI) housing program committee.

Community Center Programming

The city's Business & Community Center Manager is scheduled to retire on February 6, 2026. City Administration is appreciative and thankful for the service Brenda Ross has provided to the City of Pella. Since staff is proposing to replace Brenda's position with a Community Services Director, staff believes it is prudent to perform an evaluation of current and proposed programming at the Community Center before advertising the Community Services Director position. Staff anticipates performing this evaluation this fall.

Next Steps

At this time, staff is requesting to advertise for the Recreation Director position. As mentioned earlier, staff also anticipates advertising for the Community Services Director position after an evaluation of the Community Center needs is performed. The funding for the Recreation Director and Community Services Director positions are currently included in the Fiscal Year 25-26 Budget. Listed below is the preliminary timeline for filling these positions:

Recreation Director

Advertise Position	August/September 2025
Conduct Candidate Interviews	September/October 2025
New Director Starts	November 2025

Community Services Director

Evaluate Programming	September 2025
Advertise Position	October 2025
Conduct Candidate Interviews	November 2025
New Director Starts	January 2026

ATTACHMENTS: Organizational Chart Proposal

REPORT PREPARED BY: City Administration

REVIEWED BY: City Administrator, City Clerk, Deputy City Clerk

RECOMMENDATION: Seeking Council direction

Proposed Department Restructuring

CURRENT



PROPOSED

