

Town of Munster
Department of Parks and Recreation
Board Report February 17, 2026

DIRECTOR/ADMINISTRATION

West Lakes Park washroom building: We finally heard back from NIPSCO last week since our on site meeting with them in November. Some additional information was provided by them about this project. The contractor and architect are now reviewing that additional information and hope to be able to begin construction once the weather breaks this spring.

Bridges over Ditches: The bridges over ditches project stopped during the last two months due to weather. The bridges themselves have still been built and are supposed to arrive in March per the manufacturer.

Golf Course Management: The Golf Course Management agreement was finalized and executed by the Town and Orion Golf staff following the Board's authorization last month to execute the final negotiated agreement. Today's agenda includes an item for the Board to ratify that action. The transition from Troon to Orion Golf for management of the golf course has begun. Several meetings and discussions are taking place. Orion should be on site 100% as of March 2nd.

Clubhouse Electrical Redistribution: The fountains and associated panels/wiring for these was sent out for quotes in the last few weeks. This item is on the Board's agenda today for consideration. If approved, the items will be purchased by the Town and the installation will be done by a contractor along with all of the electrical work as planned by SEH for the electrical redistribution after its bid out and awarded.

Park Equipment Ordered: The equipment purchases approved at the January Park Board meeting have all been ordered.

Parks Annual Report: The year-in-review/annual report was shared with the Town Council and posted on the Town's website for any interested parties to peruse.

Welcome to Member Cara Karter: Staff was able to meet with new Park Board member Cara Karter after the Town Council appointed her to the Board at their February 2nd meeting. Several items were given to her in an effort to bring her up to speed on past, current, and future projects.

Independence Day Festivities: The department has begun to coordinate efforts across Town departments for the Independence Day festivities on July 3rd and 4th. Additionally, the Town will be heavily involved in a 250 Fest that the Junior Historical Society is seeking to hold on June 14th at Heritage Park.

2026 Athletic Permits issued: Athletic Facility permit applications were sent to various community organizations in January. The permits were issued to nine different organizations that routinely use the Town parks and facilities. These include: Babe Ruth, Girls Softball, Little League, Pop Warner, Munster Soccer, Midwest Wings Soccer, Region Lacrosse, and NWI Gully Cricket. We are awaiting final requests from Munster Challenger too.

RECREATION

Winter/Spring registration has been in full swing for quite some time now. Summer brochure brainstorming will soon be underway.

The summer Intern position has been posted publicly. Interviews are scheduled for next week.

The office clerk position has been posted publicly.

Marketing Coordinator has applied for grants to help offset summer event costs. Centier Bank, Legacy Foundation and Levitt Foundation grants worth \$10,000 in total for Decades Fest and North Shore Health worth \$2,100 for Movies in the Park.

Superintendent attended: Munster Chamber's Instagram 'Posts to Profits', Aquatics Trends Webinar, Semiquincentennial event meeting and IPRA webinar: Connected Communities: Turning purposeful outreach into real results.

Superintendent and Marketing Coordinator attended South Shore Convention and Visitor's Authority presentation from the New York Sherpa on local tourism.

Marketing Coordinator has mailed out the advertising and sponsorship packet to over 800 local businesses.

Recreation Supervisor and Marketing Coordinator attended the Munster Chamber's Senior Call Out Meeting. Seniors were given an opportunity to share their ideas, questions and concerns through surveys and posters so ways can be found to work together to update Munster's future senior programming.

Chamber of Commerce monthly luncheon meeting: Marketing Coordinator attended January, and the Recreation Supervisor w/ Aquatics attended the February meeting.

Munster Pool coupon book donations were given to Eads, Elliott and Frank Hammond Fun Fairs. Also, to Munster Junior Women's Club and Munster High School Choir for their upcoming fundraisers.

Premier Port-a-Potty was sent the 2026 park and event calendar.

People's Bank will again sponsor the 2026 Summer Concert Series. Munster Historical Society will continue concessions and Southside Christian Church will continue to be the rain location. Entertainment is currently being researched.

Due to demand, two Daddy Daughter Date Night events were held. The afternoon dance ran with 109 in attendance while the evening once ran with 250. Events like this couldn't be possible without our sponsors: Kiddie Academy (corsages) and Orthodontic Specialists (photobooth). Many in-kind businesses helped to offset costs like Doc's Smokehouse and Munster Strack and Van Til's. Sixteen local businesses donated raffle prizes totaling 21 for each dance!

Recreation Supervisor w/ Aquatics has reached out to multiple business and has already secured 38 raffle items for the upcoming egg hunts.

The Summer Camp permit was submitted to the School Town of Munster. Fourteen counselors will be returning, while 1 is questionable due to a possible internship. Interviews will be held later this month to fill the remaining 6 counselor and substitute positions. Themed weeks and days, dessert vendors, field trips, lunches out and special Friday entertainment are still in the planning phase. The school location is yet TBD, so registration information is not yet available.

Munster Pool management is still in the works. Staff are looking to hire 10 more lifeguards and 14 more attendants. Information has been posted on the social media and Munster High School's morning announcements.

A google spreadsheet was emailed to Munster High School volunteer coordinators for upcoming events that students can volunteer for. Also included on that spreadsheet, were all summer job opportunities.

Curiosity and interest in AI are bringing the public to register for the Chat GPT Courses. This past month, there were 2 classes that ran w/ 12 total. All classes are via zoom, since the instructor is located in Colorado.

Sister Act at Drury Lane filled with 25 in attendance. Before heading to Drury Lane, attendees enjoyed a Potbelly boxed lunch at the Social Center as a cost-savings measure.

Winter Swim Lessons had 33 kids registered for the first session. Fourteen staff are onsite and overall lessons ran well.

Holiday Arts and Craft Fair applications continue to trickle in. All applications will be submitted to the jury after the March 6 deadline. 73 applications have been submitted thus far with 11 of them being new.

Arts/Crafts and Business Fair vendor applications are currently being accepted for all events.

Food Vendors have until February 20 to submit their interest application. After that deadline, staff will choose vendors best suited for each of the 20 events scheduled.

Thus far, we have had 22 season pass pool memberships purchased, 1 Private Pool Party reserved (2 on hold for payment) and 181 Keen-Ager memberships and 250 dog park memberships renewed.

<u>Month</u>	<u># of Rentals completed</u>
	Lion's Club Social Center, weddings, shelter rentals + Munster Pool
January	8
2026 Total	8

FINANCIAL SUMMARY OF COMPLETED PROGRAMS

PROGRAM	R	NR	REVENUE	EXPENSE	VARIANCE
Chat GPT Courses	12	0	\$360.00	\$240.00	\$120.00
Daddy Daughter Date Night 1-4PM, 6-9PM + After 7PM option	336	23	\$9,808.00	\$4,529.28	\$5,278.72
Day Off School Camp	12	2	\$350.00	\$71.40	\$278.60
Jumpstart Hoops	12	2	\$480.00	\$160.00	\$320.00
Hawks + Owls of Northwest Indiana	15	8	\$115.00	\$69.00	\$46.00
Patti's All American	1	0	\$196.00	\$117.60	\$78.40
Rookie Rundown	9	1	\$405.00	\$160.00	\$245.00
Sister Act at Drury Lane	7	18	\$3,642.00	\$2,491.73	\$1,150.27
Tiny Punters	3	2	\$210.00	\$160.00	\$50.00
Wado-Ki Karate	21	11	\$599.00	\$20.00	\$579.00
Winter Swim Lessons – Session #1	34	1	\$3,360.00	\$2,003.79	\$1,356.21
TOTAL:	461	68	\$19,329.00	\$9,905.20	\$9,423.80

PARK MAINTENANCE

In addition to daily trash pickup, bathroom cleaning, Social Center set up, gas plant monitoring/maintenance and leachate pump operation/recording, the following tasks were completed;

Plowed snow for parks and public works.

Trimmed trees in all parks, cleared brush and trees from the Briar Creek Park fence line, Raked the playground mulch under all of the swings.

Replaced the water separator on the Fisher Street air compressor, replaced the heater in the Babe Ruth men's bathroom and repaired partitions, replaced rotted floor boards in the Conex storage container and caulked the roof, and installed a new threshold and door sweep on the Triple Play concession stand door.

Repaired cracks in the Social Center walls and painted the base boards and scrubbed the floors. Christmas decorations were taken down.

Removed the Monon Trailhead sign and delivered it to Landmark Signs so it can be duplicated in High density urethane foam.

Started picnic table repairs.

Scrubbed the pro shop floors and Pressure washed the mats. Painted the Centennial break room and pro shop walls. Did tune ups on Centennial weed whips and chain saws. Installed new Liftmaster door openers at the cart barn.

Wrapped the cooling skid for the methane flare with a tarp and set up torpedo heaters to thaw condensation lines.

Ordered two new Z-Tracs for park maintenance and two compact tractors for Centennial.

Jenbacher Engine Production

Date	Run Hours	MWh	Methane Flow
12/9/25	3,637	1042	2,230,386
2/12/26	4,399	1173	2,598,653

CENTENNIAL PARK GOLF COURSE

	YTD
Rounds	\$195 (18 Rounds)
Membership Sales	\$6,950
Merchandise Sales	\$44.87

It has been a cold start to the year. Weather conditions allowed us to only be open four days in 2026. Even with a slow start overall sales are up 300% over the same time in 2025.

Management has been working closely with both Troon and Orion transition teams. All outstanding AP has been paid off. The kitchen and storage room have been cleaned and reorganized to improve efficiency.

Two kids' camps have been confirmed; one in June and one in July that will be run by the PGA First tee program. The PGA First Tee Program is a youth development initiative that integrates the game of golf with a life skills curriculum. It aims to empower kids and teens by building character strengths and important life skills through the game. Centennial Park has agreed to host Munster Chamber of Commerce and K9 outing again in 2026. Also, met with the Munster High School Golf Coach and will begin building out their match and practice schedule.

The Park continues to experience issues with individuals' sledding and dog walkers on the golf course, particularly from the range side where no fence is present. Staff addresses these situations by asking people to leave the course when observed, with weekends being the most problematic.

In January, the General Manager passed the Indiana Pesticide Applicator test, which is required every five years for recertification.

Three companies have renewed their tee sign sponsorships: Gus Bock Ace Hardware, Shoreline Sand and Land O'Frost. Gus Bock Ace Hardware sponsored two holes.

Grounds Report

Staff is continuing preventative maintenance on equipment. Maintenance has been completed on two green mowers and two tee mowers, and currently is finishing up three fairway mowers.

These fairway mowers require the most time due to the need to grind 27 reels, which is done at the shop.

On warmer days, Staff has been pruning trees and shrubs on several holes with overhanging branches, and have also removed several dead trees. Additionally, garbage was cleared from between the fence and the Pennsey Path, collecting two cans full of debris. This effort was appreciated by a walker, as it significantly improved the appearance of the area, which was unsightly and visible from the golf course and the path. Many aluminum beer cans were collected for recycling. On days with inclement weather, course accessories are being washed, sanded and painted.

The annual water usage report has been completed for the DNR, which tracks monthly water pumped for both the golf course and the park. 2025 was the driest year since 2016, resulting in the second-highest amount of water pumped in a season. This year, staff had to be particularly mindful of water usage, as Clay Hole lake was ran nearly dry.

Pre-orders for fertilizer and chemicals have been suspended due to the transition to a new management company, which could result in the loss of rebates credited to the golf course.

Matt Kalwasinski, a local birder and Munster resident, provided an update on bird sightings. In 2025, 69 species were recorded, bringing the total to 97 species since he began his observations a couple of years ago. Some of his photographs are scheduled for publication on the Audubon website soon.