

Laurel Park-Tree Board Minutes for June 4, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 by Tom Canape in Council Chambers.

In attendance were Paul Kober, Brent Edgmond, Rene Studiner, Joe Holzwarth, Tom Canape, Richard Klose, and Jon Rutt.

Guests – Laura Kirschman, Chuck Hull, and Jack Sterling.

Public input – Chuck and Jack from Yellowstone River Research Center propose cleaning up the junk on the east side of the berm of the shooting range for the Rod and Gun Club Range. They presented a waiver of liability to the City. See attached proposal.

General Items

1. LPB Minutes for May 7, 2026 – Richard Klose moved to approve and Brent Edgmond 2nd the motion. Approved

New Business

Old Business

2. Floating Island for South Pond – City Council to review.
3. Other Parks – Going well. School gave back Fir Field, and the soccer team the “Storm” agreed to maintain. Nutting Park sprinkler contractor did a poor job.
4. Billie Riddle Splash Park Toilets – Jon Rutt made a motion to investigate installing permanent toilets at Splash Park, Richard Klose 2nd. Approved.
5. Riverside Park Campground – Slight homeless problem, police working on a solution. Otherwise, good and being used.
6. American Legion Building at Riverside Park – Nothing new
7. Riverside Hall/Lions Club – Focusing on getting it rented. Getting busier. Discussion followed about the future operation of renting.
8. Laurel Rod and Gun Club Building – Council has not moved on deciding whether the building can be used.
9. Tree Board Business – Smaller trees are available but it was decided to try for next year. The library is interested in replacing the “Elsie Johnson Memorial Tree” with a bench.

Other Items.

Discussion on Sensory Park for new W 12th Park or Murray Park. Chip Seal the walking path at South Pond.

Next month’s meeting will be on July 2, 2026.

Adjourn 6:28

Submitted Jon Rutt



Chuck
Hull

Jack
Sturbing



ROCKY MOUNTAIN
COLLEGE

Dear Laurel Public Works,

For the past 20 years, the Yellowstone River Research Center at Rocky Mountain College has conducted river cleanup work on the Yellowstone River. This is the longest running and largest river cleanup effort in the state. To date we have removed nearly 400,000 lbs. of trash. We have worked with over 30 different organizations including the City of Billings, Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks, Billings Bench Water Association, Yellowstone Conservation District and most recently Zoo Montana to conduct targeted cleanups at fishing access sites and tributaries of the Yellowstone River.

Much of the “trash” that we remove is considered legacy trash that was often legally placed near or in the river to stabilize banks or for easy disposal. Our goal is to work with public and private landowners/mangers to assist with removing materials that might pose a risk to river users and to keep working to restore the river health and beautify adjacent public and private lands. We do not excavate items that are stabilizing banks.

We now cover over 100 river miles from Reed Point to the Bighorn River. You can follow some of this work on Instagram: [@yellowstoneriverresearch](https://www.instagram.com/yellowstoneriverresearch). This year we have already removed more than **35,000 lbs of trash**.

We are interested in helping the Laurel Public works department remove some legacy trash items at Riverside Park. The items include old car parts, tires and other rusty metal. We will not be using heavy equipment or excavating into the ground. We will remove items on the surface with a truck mounted winch or cut items flush (see attached pictures). Ideally we will be able to back a trailer down the trail past the site with the large boulder (see attached picture). That boulder will need to be moved so we can access the site and then returned once the items are removed.

We will gladly sign indemnity waivers for any volunteers that will help remove the items. Please let us know of any questions.

Regards,

Kayhan Ostovar

Professor - Environmental Science & Fish and Wildlife Conservation
Director – [Yellowstone River Research Center](https://www.yellowstoneriverresearch.com)

Email: Kayhan.ostovar@rocky.edu Ph: 406-657-1175, Instagram: [@yellowstoneriverresearch](https://www.instagram.com/yellowstoneriverresearch)



Example of some of the car parts



Trail with boulder that will need to be moved for trailer loading access

City of Laurel

Public Works Department

115 West 1ST Street

Laurel, MT 59044

Indemnification:

The parties agree that the volunteer, shall indemnify, hold harmless and defend the City, it's agents, employees and officials, against any and all claims, demands, causes of action, damages, cost expenses, liability or judgement for personal injury, death or property damages caused by the negligence of the applicant, growing out of, or in any way connected with or incidental to the maintenance work being conducted within the park.

Name _____ Date _____

Signature _____

(Guardian/Parent) if volunteer is under 18.

Contact Information

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____