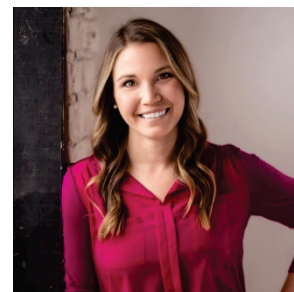


GENERAL DEPARTMENT UPDATES

NEW Recreation Superintendent: Kelly Willadsen joins the City of Marion as the new Recreation Superintendent, bringing over 12.5 years of experience as the Parks and Recreation Director for the City of Hiawatha. She is passionate about enhancing community spaces and recreation opportunities and looks forward to continuing her dedication to the field to make a positive impact in Marion. Outside of work, she enjoys spending time with her husband, Blayne and two daughters, Sadie and Sydney, running, reading, and visiting various parks.



IPRA Spring Conference: Director Staashelm, Recreation Superintendent Willadsen, and Recreation Coordinators Braden and Waterman attended the Iowa Parks & Recreation Association Spring Conference in Coralville the last week of March. This is always a great an opportunity for staff to sit in on educational sessions to hear about the latest updates, new and exciting programs, ways to better serve the community, and more.



This year two Marion staff members received awards. Equipment Operator Josh Storla received the 2025 T. Ray Frame Park

Maintenance Award for his exceptional maintenance work, dedication to the community and commitment to going above and beyond what is expected in his position. Administrative Clerk Pat Carlson received the 2025 Part-Time Team Member Award. Pat's outstanding contributions, positive attitude and willingness to step in wherever needed make her an invaluable asset to the department. Congratulations Josh and Pat!



PROJECTS

Marion Central Plaza: Marion's Central Plaza project is on track and a ribbon cutting is scheduled for May 8. Rinderknecht has made considerable progress on the Depot, ice loop mechanical system, splash pad, and landscaping. Subcontractors graded the side for final sod installation and an irrigation subcontractor has installed an in-ground turf sprinkler system so City staff can keep the turf from going dormant during dry periods. A unique turf feature is that there are two sections of reinforced turf grid system laid over a rock base under the sod. One section will allow for a stage to be placed on it and the other is for maintenance vehicle access from 10th Street into the park. The turf grids are designed to hold the weight of vehicles without causing ruts and related compaction.

Oak Shade Cemetery Crypt Wall: One bid was received for the project to remove and replace the failing crypt wall at Oak Shade Cemetery along the main road through the cemetery. Along with the wall replacement each crypt will be repaired as needed after they are exposed. The original Cooper crypt farthest to the south will retain its wall as the wall is made from thicker and larger block which has retained its integrity. This is to maintain the historical character of the

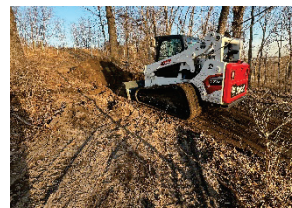
wall as much as possible while still making needed repairs as necessary. Work will begin after Memorial Day and is to be completed by September 26, 2025.

PARKS

Legion Disc Golf Course: Parks Maintenance and Forestry staff have been actively working to improve the Legion Disc Golf Course, focusing on enhancing playability and streamlining future maintenance. A rental disc mulcher was used to clear areas for new hole locations, as well as improve existing rough areas. Additionally, a brush mower was utilized to remove multiflora rose and establish new fairways for upcoming course expansions. To further enhance the course, over 100 stumps



were ground, and five truckloads of scrap metal and barbed wire fencing were removed from the site. These efforts not only improve the overall safety and accessibility of the course but also create a more enjoyable playing experience. The recent upgrades will allow for easier ongoing maintenance while supporting the addition of new holes and improving existing ones.



Lowe Concessions: Grounds staff worked on setting up the water system at the Lowe concessions to prepare for water turn on. Staff also completed repairs on all the toilets and replaced the toilet paper dispensers to hold larger rolls of toilet paper.

Holiday Light Removal: Operations staff worked to remove all the lighting in the Artway Alley and the holiday tree. A combination of lifts and the bucket truck were used.



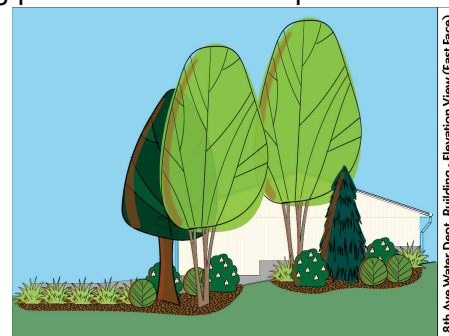
Lowe Park Baseball Diamonds: With assistance from the Engineering Department, new points were laid out on the Lowe ball diamonds to help straighten fields and ensure the dimensions are accurate.



Lowe Community Gardens: Grounds staff worked to layout and till the rentable gardens at Lowe Park. Water will be turned on once temperatures are consistently above freezing. All garden plots have been leased for the year.

Horticulture: Designs were completed, and orders were placed for new flowerbeds at Prairie Hill Park and Hanna Park and will be planted in April and May. These plantings focus on using plants chosen to complement the specific site requirements of these parks while incorporating both natives and ornamental perennials to prolong the blooming and aesthetic appeal throughout the year.

Designs and orders were also completed for the Water Department Shop on 8th Avenue (photo right). These are shrub and tree dominant to help soften the look of the new shop. The Water Department staff will plant and care for these beds.



8th Ave Water Dept. Building - Elevation View (East face)

Volunteers were contacted for the Adopt-A-Flowerbed program and for the Migratory Bird & Arbor Day event on May 10. Landscape design samples were given to the Aquatics Center design team. Plans were reviewed for the Lowe A&E/Greenhouse addition. The horticulturist and Master Gardeners also potted-up annual flower plugs to be grown out for the 2025 summer planters at the end of the month.

URBAN FORESTRY

Fruit Tree Pruning Event: Trees Forever, Linn County Master Gardeners and the City Arborist hosted another successful Fruit Tree Pruning event at the Lowe Park Demonstration Orchard in early March. More than a dozen participants attended to assist with tree pruning and educational instruction on how to properly approach the task.

Cover Crop Seeding: Native Prairie, Buffalo Grass and some Annual Oat cover crop seeding has been completed on two sites by Parks staff with support from Linn County Conservation. The new Public Works site(photo right) and the addition of approximately 45 acres along the north boundary of Lowe Park have been seeded.



Legion Disc Golf Course: Parks Operations and Forestry staff worked together to complete heavy vegetation and woody brush mowing in Legion Park to open up the Disc Golf course and clear debris from fairways so it could be expanded and realign some holes. Other activities completed with this project include stump grinding, refuse clean up and disposal, grading and erosion mitigation and seeding of native grass mixes back into the landscape.

Cemetery: The third-party contractor, Advantage Tree Care, has completed some scheduled Oak pruning in designated sections at the Oak Shade Cemetery.

Annual Presentation: The City Arborist and Trees Forever provided an annual report to City Council on project highlights from 2024 and plans for the upcoming season.

REQUESTS FOR SERVICE

CODE COMPLIANCE	JAN 2025	FEB 2025	MAR 2025
New Complaints	15	32	1
Resolved Complaints	14	25	6
Active Complaints	21	28	23

COMPLAINT TYPE	JAN 2025	FEB 2025	MAR 2025
Tree – Right of Way	1	1	1
Tree – Private Property	0	0	0
Sidewalk Obstruction	1	0	0
Sidewalk Not Cleared (Snow or Ice)	13	31	0
Tall Grass and Weeds	0	0	0
TOTAL	15	32	1

CEMETERY

OAK SHADE CEMETERY	JAN 2025	FEB 2025	MAR 2025
Spaces Sold	3	5	10
Burials	2	5	4

RECREATION

Spring Break Camp: This year's Spring Break Camp was another great success with a full house the entire week. The four-day program was held at the Arts & Environment Center



beginning March 17, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. with 18 participants each day. One day the Master Gardeners gave the participants a tour of the greenhouse, led some creative crafts, and taught the kids exciting information about trees. The other days were filled with crafts, games, a trip to the Lowe Park playground, and movie time.



Agility Camp Session II: The January Agility Camp was so popular (23 kids on the waitlist) that a second session was added in March. Session II was able to accommodate 27 kids and was held in the Indian Creek Elementary gym on Tuesdays and Thursdays with



two-time options. Rec staff lead participants through various games and activities which focus on strength, speed, balance, jumping, running, and more.



Putt-Putt Indoor Golf: This program was held at the Indian Creek Elementary gym on Mondays and Wednesdays. The 50 participants, ages 4 to 8, were taught proper grip, stance, pace, and accuracy.

ARTS COUNCIL

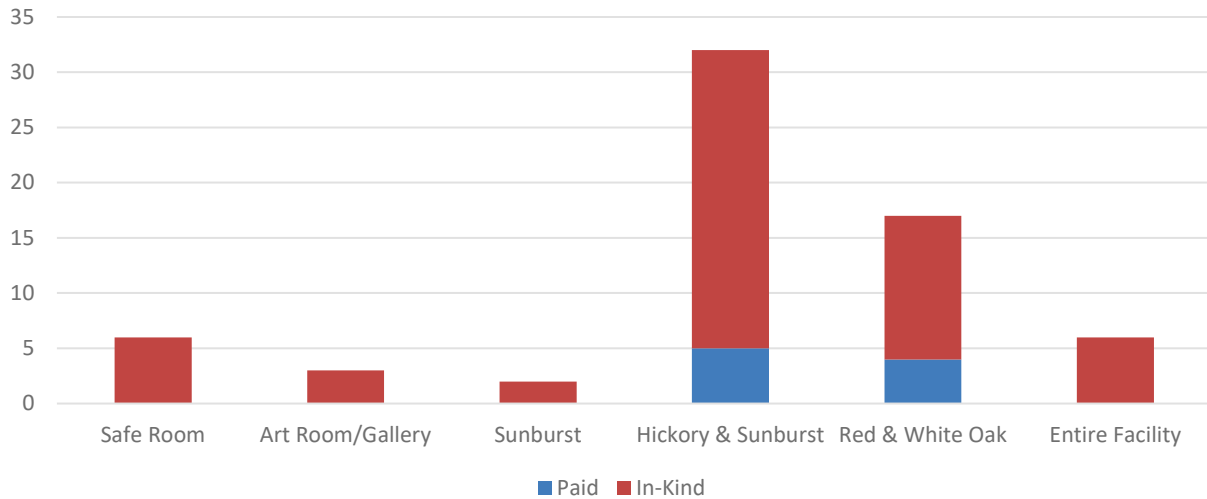
The Gallery: A new display began mid-month featuring Candi Darling. The Artists Reception was held on March 20. Gallery hours are Monday to Friday 7 a.m. to 4 p.m., and the first Saturday of each month from 1 to 3 p.m.

Coffeehouse Nights: Irish Jam performed at the Arts & Environment Center on March 7 with 28 people attending. The April 4 Coffeehouse Night will feature Tangle Creek.

Utility Box Artwork: The Arts Council established a subcommittee for the utility box artwork project and will determine criteria for selecting artists.

FACILITY RESERVATIONS

2025: In-Kind 57; Paid 9
 2024: In-Kind 71; Paid 6
 2023: In-Kind 64; Paid 18



ACTIVITIES USAGE (Pavilion data not reflected)

2025 - 60
 2024 - 77
 2023 - 83

