



City Council Agenda Item Report

FROM: Ryan Cummins, City Manager

MEETING DATE: October 20, 2025

SUBJECT: Park Rules

DESCRIPTION:

Chapter 95 of the City Code establishes certain regulations related to parks and recreation such as injury to park property, intoxicating beverages, waste containers, ball games, and motorized vehicles. They can be viewed here:

https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/saugatuck/latest/saugatuck_mi/0-0-0-2661

Several other ordinances also apply to conduct within City parks. In cases where there isn't an established ordinance, the City Code provides that:

§ 95.06 ADDITIONAL RULES.

The City Manager is hereby empowered to make such rules and regulations, subject to the approval of the City Council, pertaining to the conduct and use of parks and public grounds as are necessary to administer the same and to protect public property and the safety, health, morals and welfare of the public, and no person shall fail to comply with the rules and regulations.

Staff have observed that there are rules posted at Mt. Baldhead Park, Oval Beach and Saugatuck Harbor Natural Area. However, the rules are not formally approved by the City Council. There have also been additional questions about whether overnight sleeping is permitted in City parks.

Attached is a draft set of park rules that would make the posted rules more formal and enforceable. The draft also contains a general prohibition on overnight sleeping or camping in any park, natural area, beach, or associated parking area.

BUDGET ACTION REQUIRED:

N/A

LEGAL REVIEW:

Legal has been consulted. Legal will be at your meeting to answer any questions.

SAMPLE MOTION:

Motion to approve the park rules as presented.

Policy/Procedure: Park Rules

Date Adopted or Implemented: 10-27-2025

Revision Date: N/A

Resolution Number (if applicable): N/A

CITY OF SAUGATUCK

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish rules governing the use of City of Saugatuck parks and public recreation areas to ensure the safety, enjoyment, and preservation of public property for residents and visitors.

Authority

Pursuant to § 95.06 of the City Code, the City Manager may establish additional park rules and regulations, subject to City Council approval, as necessary to ensure the safety, health, and welfare of the public and the proper management of City park properties.

General Park Rules

- No overnight sleeping or camping in any park, natural area, beach, or associated public parking area.
- The City Manager may restrict access or close any park or portion thereof when necessary for maintenance, habitat preservation, construction, safety, or public welfare. Entry into restricted or closed areas is prohibited.

Additional Park Specific Rules

Mt. Baldhead Park

- Park closes at 10:00 p.m.
- Stay on stairs and trails
- No dogs

Oval Beach and Saugatuck Harbor Natural Area

- Open 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.
- No dogs
- No fires
- No personal grilling
- No smoking
- No nudity
- Stay off dune grass
- Stay on trails

Saugatuck Wilds Nature Preserve

- Stay on trails
- No horses, bicycles, or motorized traffic
- Do not pick plants without permission

- Do not remove, collect, or harass wildlife

Additional Park Regulations

These rules do not encompass all park related regulations. For example, other regulations such as possession or consumption of alcohol, skateboarding, injury to park property, noise, fireworks, trash deposits in waste containers, ball game restrictions, hawking/peddling, hunting, Oval Beach parking passes, and motorized vehicle location and operation are currently established in the City Code of Ordinances.

Enforcement

Violation of this policy or any applicable City ordinance may result in:

- Removal from the park or public grounds; and/or
- Additional penalties as provided under City ordinance or State law.

Temporary Waivers

The City Council may, by motion or resolution, temporarily waive park rules for a designated period or special event.