



**Recreation & Parks  
Department Report  
February 2025**

- Eight groups used the Hughes Center during the month of January for a total of 120 hours. Events included an Arkansas Blood Institute blood drive, the Progressive Men's Club Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration and an Arkansas Valley Soccer Association coaches meeting.
- The Parks Commission did not meet in January. Minutes from previous meetings are available for viewing at [www.russellvillearkansas.org](http://www.russellvillearkansas.org). The Department is currently seeking candidates to serve on the Parks Commission. Anyone that is interested may contact Parks Director Terry Thomas at 479-968-1272.
- Quarterly safety inspections were conducted by the department. All fire extinguishers, AEDs, vehicles, heavy equipment, emergency lights and exit lights were inspected to ensure that they work properly. An unannounced fire drill was held at the Hughes Community Center in January and no problems were encountered. Regular inspections protect workers from accidents and injuries by making sure the equipment is safe to use. Moreover, the safety inspection procedure also increases employee awareness and reminds them to be mindful of potential hazards.
- Maintenance staff removed the Christmas decorations and lights from downtown Russellville and put them in storage until next year.
- Athletic Director Matt Gray is working hard on getting softball and baseball tournaments booked for 2025. Currently he has booked twenty tournaments for Pleasant View Park and M.J. Hickey Park.
- City employees Pam Faulkner, Matt Gray and Ken Chandler completed a Red Cross CPR/AED recertification class. The class instructor, Aquatic Center Manager Janna Martin, was very thorough, and the employees are now confident in their lifesaving skills.
- Renovations on the Ouita boat launch began in January. Maintenance has started cleaning the shoreline in preparation for new shoreline blocks and a new fifty-two foot dock with a twenty-foot gangway ramp. This project is scheduled to be finished by mid-March.
- Maintenance staff began preparing for spring by mulching leaves, cleaning parks, trimming trees, repairing bathrooms and preparing their equipment for the upcoming mowing season.
- Projects for 2025 include pickleball court construction, replacing the playground at James School Park and replacing the boat docks at the Ouita boat launch and the ski area. The boat dock at the ski area will include a kayak launch. Other projects include replacing the pavilion at Washburn Park and expanding the skate park.
- A grant from the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism in the amount of \$239,850 was secured by the Russellville Grant Administrator Kellie Dinkel. The grant is for improvements to the skate park, which include construction of ADA bathrooms and expanding the skate area to include beginner type features. She also obtained a \$75,000 grant with the help of Ron Knost from the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission for a new boat dock at Ouita boat launch.