

## AGENDA REPORT

TO: Mayor Pat Humphrey and the Clare City Commission  
FROM: Jeremy Howard, City Manager  
DATE: February 26, 2026  
RE: Approval of Ballot Language – Parks and Recreation Millage Renewal

For the Agenda of March 2, 2026

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*Background.* The voter-approved 0.75-mill parks and recreation levy, which has been reduced to 0.7363 mills through required millage rollbacks, is scheduled to expire at the end of FY 2026–2027. Since its initial approval, this dedicated funding has enabled the City of Clare to complete significant parks and recreation projects, including acquisition of 303 Pinecrest and development of the Emerald Isle Recreation Complex; acquisition and relocation of the historic Clare Railroad Depot and support for rehabilitation of the depot and railcars; closure of the 2.3-mile gap in the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail; and purchase of numerous park benches, tables, and related amenities.

A substantial list of additional capital improvements remains, including continued development of the Emerald Isle Recreation Complex and the skate and bike park; campground upgrades at Pettit Park; improvements to existing park restrooms, ballfields, and playgrounds; completion of Lake Shamrock dredging and beach restoration; construction of a kayak/canoe launch; and construction of an outdoor restroom at the Clare Historic Union Depot trailhead. Many of these priority projects, as identified in the City’s Parks and Recreation 5-Year Master Plan, will not be completed—or will be significantly delayed—if the millage is not renewed by the electorate.

The City Staff and the City’s Parks & Recreation Advisory Board consider the proposed future capital improvements essential to maintaining and improving quality of life for Clare residents and suggest that the continuance of this dedicated millage is imperative to continue the type of improvements that have been made to date as a result of the millage.

If this millage is to continue, the Clerk’s office must provide the proposed ballot language to the Clare County Clerk by Tuesday, April 28, 2026, for inclusion on the August ballot. Therefore, the City Commission is asked to consider approving this topic as an item on the August ballot. Suggested ballot language for this millage proposal is attached. The Commission is asked to approve the proposed ballot language.

**NOTE:** This millage is a renewal of an existing millage that has been in place for many years and includes no new taxes or any increase in taxes related to this existing millage.

*Issues & Questions Specified.* Should the City Commission approve the proposed parks and recreation millage proposal ballot language?

*Alternatives.*

1. Approve the proposed ballot language.
2. Amend and approve the ballot language.
3. Do not approve the ballot language, thereby terminating the parks facilities improvement program.
4. Defer/delay decision of this matter to a subsequently scheduled City Commission meeting.

*Financial Impact.* If the millage is not approved, any future recreation capital improvements will have to be funded using general tax funds and will be required to “compete” with other City requirements funded in this manner.

*Recommendation.* I recommend the City Commission approve the proposed ballot language by adoption of Resolution 2026-013.

*Attachments.*

1. Proposed ballot language.
2. Resolution 2026-013.

## **PROPOSED BALLOT LANGUAGE**

### **City of Clare Proposal 1**

#### **Title: Parks and Recreation Millage Renewal**

Shall the City of Clare, Clare and Isabella Counties continue to levy 0.7363 mills (\$.7363 per \$1,000.00) on taxable value of property located in the City of Clare for four years beginning with the 2027 tax year and running through 2030 tax levy year (inclusive), which will raise in the first year of such levy an estimated revenue of \$87,420.90 to be used for parks and recreation purposes. This is a renewal of a millage that will otherwise expire in 2026. Taxes within the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and Tax Increment Finance Authority (TIFA) districts will be distributed as prescribed by law.

**RESOLUTION 2026-013**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CLARE CITY COMMISSION APPROVING THE BALLOT LANGUAGE FOR A PARKS AND RECREATION MILLAGE FOR THE AUGUST 4, 2026 ELECTION.**

**WHEREAS**, the electorate of Clare has historically approved a millage for the improvement of parks facilities within the City; and

**WHEREAS**, said millage is due to expire at the end of the FY26/27; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Staff and the Clare Parks & Recreation Advisory Board have recommended that said millage again be submitted to the City’s electorate for consideration; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Commission has considered and concurs with said recommendations; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Attorney has reviewed the proposed ballot language for legal sufficiency.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the City Commission of the City of Clare hereby approves proposed ballot language for the renewal of .75 mills, reduced to 0.7363 mills by the required millage rollbacks, for improvement of parks facilities throughout the City of Clare, said millage proposal to be presented at the August 4, 2026 election, and said ballot language to read, “Shall the City of Clare, Clare and Isabella Counties continue to levy 0.7363 mills (\$.7363 per \$1,000.00) on taxable value of property located in the City of Clare for four years beginning with the 2027 tax year and running through 2030 tax levy year (inclusive), which will raise in the first year of such levy an estimated revenue of \$87,420.90 to be used for parks and recreation purposes. This is a renewal of a millage that will otherwise expire in 2026. Taxes within the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and Tax Increment Finance Authority (TIFA) districts will be distributed as prescribed by law.”

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the City Commission hereby directs its City Clerk to take all necessary actions required to place said millage proposal on the August 4, 2026 election ballot.

**ALL RESOLUTIONS AND PARTS OF RESOLUTIONS INSOFAR AS THEY CONFLICT WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THIS RESOLUTION BE AND THE SAME ARE HEREBY RESCINDED.**

**This Resolution was introduced by Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_ and supported by Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_. The Resolution declared adopted by the following roll call vote:**

**YEAS:**

**NAYS:**

**ABSENT:**

Resolution approved for adoption on this 2<sup>nd</sup> day of March, 2026.

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Diane M. Lyon, City Clerk