

Wallingford Parks & Recreation Commission

**Regular Meeting**

Wednesday, December 11, 2024 @ 5:30 PM

6 Fairfield Blvd. Wallingford

Room 4 Conference Room

MEETING MINUTES

- **Call Meeting to Order** - John Sullivan Called the meeting to order @ 5:30 p.m.
- **Pledge of Allegiance**
- **Roll Call**

**Commissioners in Attendance:** Chairman John Sullivan (left meeting at 6:09pm), Vice Chairman Don Crouch (arrived at 5:39), Steve Rossacci, Lori Cooke-Marra, Lars Edeen

**Recreation Staff in Attendance:** Kenny Michaels, Director and Shawn Keogh, Superintendent

**Others in Attendance:** Scott Gray, Trails Working Group

- **Approval of prior meeting(s) minutes** - A motion was made by Lori Cooke-Marra and seconded by Lars Edeen to approve the minutes from the Regular Meeting on November 13, 2024. Approved unanimously.
- **Public Comment (10 minutes)** – none
- **Trails Work Group Update** – Scott Gray reviewed the November Report (*attached*) with the Commission. Gray stated that the Trails Group is working to increase the professionalism of the Wallingford Trails. They are working to upgrade trails, signage, blazes, maps, kiosks, etc...at all trails in Wallingford. Gray would like to include a blurb about the work they've completed and current projects in the Spring 2025 Parks & Rec Brochure. They are also looking to bring National Trails Day to Wallingford.  
**Next update:** April 9, 2025
- **Discuss/Adopt 2025 Meeting Schedule** – The Commission reviewed and discussed the 2025 meeting schedule. Adopted schedule to be forwarded to Town Clerk and posted to the Town website by Secretary Hoppes.  
**A motion was made by Lori Cooke-Marra to adopt the 2025 Meeting Schedule, seconded by Steve Rossacci. Approved unanimously.**
- **Bylaws review** – Commission had a brief discussion about reviewing the by-laws yearly vs bi-yearly. Discussion will continue at the February 2025 meeting.
- **Review Grant Letter to Mayor** – Kenny Michaels stated that he spoke with Mayor Cervoni. The Mayor is open to researching possible grants and funding options for field projects. There was a brief discussion regarding what type of projects to promote. Michaels will write a letter to the Mayor and meet with Shelia Dravis-Cosgrove, Town of Wallingford Grants Coordinator. Discussion will continue at the next meeting.
- **Parks & Recreation Updates** – Kenny Michaels, Director – Kenny reviewed the December Director's Report. (*attached*)

RECEIVED FOR RECORD

AT

2:50 PM

12/18/24 AND RECEIVED BY

Michael Pango (16) TOWN CLERK

- **Next Parks & Recreation Meeting:** Wednesday, February 12, 2025
- **Motion to adjourn made by:** Lars Edeen **Seconded by:** Lori Cooke-Marra **Vote:** Unanimous
- **Adjourned @ 6:29 pm**

Respectfully submitted,

*Stacey Hoppes*

Stacey Hoppes  
Secretary  
Wallingford Parks & Recreation Commission

## Recreation Commission Director's Report December 11, 2024

### Programs/Events:

- Nine and A Chicken Scavenger Hunt Sponsored By Chick Fil A November 15<sup>th</sup> had a very nice turnout closed to 50-60 families participated in the annual event.
- Holiday Stroll was a great success again on December 6<sup>th</sup>. Very cold night, event was very well received as it is each year.
- Seasons of Celebration Saturday December 7<sup>th</sup> was well attended. Not as busy as it has been, but a steady turnout consistently through out the day and a great turnout for the parade and tree lighting to conclude the event.
- **Fall 2024 Program Totals** (September 1<sup>st</sup> – December 15<sup>th</sup>)  
Total Programs: 192  
Total Ran: 172  
Total Canceled: 22  
Percentage Running: 89%  
Total Program Registrations: 3201  
**Fall/Winter 2024-2025 Youth & Adult Leagues**  
Weber/Gannon Youth Basketball Current Total: 652 (had 623 in 2023-2024)  
Men's Adult Basketball Teams: 12 (had 6 in 2023-2024)  
Co-Ed Adult Volleyball Teams: 13 (had 14 in 2023-2024)

### Projects/Facilities:

- This fall we will obtain quotes on the shoreline land clearing at Community Lake. This project is done (2) times a year. In the late fall and Spring. **Project has been awarded to BCI Inc. Awaiting Scheduling.**
- Parker Farms LL Project Update **Project underway, field 1 has been regraded, sod has been installed. Mound is completed. Still working on field 1 to complete the fence work. Field 2 and 3 are in progress and with winter coming, work estimated to continue and completed in early spring.**
- Town Council approved on November 12, 2024 an appropriation of \$11,300 of ARPA Funding to install a sidewalk/walkway and (2) benches along the new basketball court at Doolittle Park on Wall St. side. **UPDATE: Purchase Order has been sent out to Bee Mac who is the towns sidewalk vendor. In the process of PO requisition for the purchase of (2) 5ft benches. Work to be done early spring.**
- Pragemann Park Basketball Court project went out to bid and has been awarded to Hinding Sport Courts \$160,625. **Project start date TBD.**
- Working with Eagle Scout Noah Cutler and Bob Beaumont with Noah's Eagle Scout Project on re-plaquin the monumental trees at upper Harrison. **IN PROGRESS**
- Public Works began light bulb replacement at park ball fields November 4<sup>th</sup> West Side Softball/Baseball, Pat Wall Field, Doolittle Park have been completed. Pragemann Park in progress. **ALL FIELDS HAVE BEEN COMPLETED**
- Community Lake Parking Lot was repaved and line stripped this past fall. Pragemann Park parking lots were also lined and striped in late fall. Other parking lots that will need to be done are Harrison Park, Upper Vietnam Vets and Doolittle Park.

**Parks and Recreation Staff**

- We are happy and excited to announce we have hired Robert Kilpatrick to fill the Recreation Programs Specialist position. Bob comes to us from Norwich Parks and Recreation Department where he has been the Program Coordinator for the last 5 ½ years. Bob's official start date is Thursday December 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Upcoming –**

- Discuss Potential Landscape Design Project for Dutton
- Gym Floor Painting End of Winter / Early Spring 2025
- Pragemann Park Dugout Expansion
- Pragemann Park Pavilion Conversion into storage garage for Lacrosse and Football

## WALLINGFORD TRAILS WORK GROUP

### REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 2024

- Extreme weather patterns due to Climate Disruption continue to negatively affect the town of Wallingford's trail systems. Typically, wind and rainfall are the driving factors, and the following recent data exemplifies the dramatic swings we've been experiencing: July & August of this year we received a total of over 10" of rain, while in September & October we received less than 1". November saw a normal 3"...
- Several work parties completed the Pink trail reroute in the Tyler Mill Recreation Area (at the Northern terminus). The routed sign was relocated, and the trail section eliminated will now be rehabilitated.
- Multiple work parties conducted the many and varied stages needed to accomplish the completion of the Bogbridge at Ferguson Woods: Purchase & Transport of materials; Wrapping the tread boards with wire mesh; Cutting cedar footings; Hauling materials from trailhead to work site; and the final assembly of the 60 foot long Bogbridge. Along with the Yellow trail reroute, this significant upgrade has vastly improved the Ferguson Woods trail system. The kiosk there will be our next project.
- The final stages of trail blazing color changes have begun in the Tyler Mill Recreation Area. Multiple notices were posted throughout Tyler Mill explaining to the public the need for these reblazing changes, as well as assurance that new maps will soon be posted on kiosks and available on line. *Yellow north was reblazed Orange*, as will be portions of Red north. The Blue/Red is being extended west and south, and will be a major trail in the northern section of Tyler Mill, continuing to Tamarack Swamp Road.
- Trails Work Group Coordinators hosted the first annual **Volunteer Appreciation Dinner** to formally recognize the many members of the public who have volunteered their time & energy throughout our first 1 ½ years. The amazing support from our volunteers has allowed us to accomplish a tremendous number of achievements in the short time span we've had "boots on the ground", serving the Town of Wallingford and our recreational trail systems. Hats off to all who have volunteered !

Since the last report dated 11/7/24, a total of **117** hours volunteer hours were completed. This brings the total Trails Work Group volunteer hours since 6/1/23 to **1,656**.

Scott Gray ~ 12/4/24