

Wallingford Parks & Recreation Department
Parks & Recreation Commission
Meeting Minutes for Wednesday April 5, 2023
5:30 pm at Parks & Recreation Department
6 Fairfield Blvd. Wallingford
Room 4 Conference Room

Call Meeting to Order: Chairman John Sullivan called the meeting to order @ 5:30 pm

Special Guests: None

Agenda Items:

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call

Commissioners in Attendance: Chairman John Sullivan, Vice Chairman Don Crouch, Lori Cooke-Marra, Lars Edeen, Steve Rossacci

3. Approval of prior meeting(s) minutes
A motion was made by Don Crouch and seconded by Steve Rossacci to approve the minutes from the January 11, 2023 meeting. Vote: unanimous
4. Welcome new commissioner Lori Cooke-Marra to Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission
Lori Cooke-Marra introduced herself to the group. She has been a resident in Wallingford for many years. She is involved with Wallingford Youth Soccer 1988 - 2006 and TWIST. She has been involved with Wallingford Women's Soccer League since 1986.
5. Public comment
Cathy Granucci co-chair of the Linear Trail was present at the meeting. She is interested in knowing what the Commission has in mind for cleanup and is interested in partnering with the Commission in cleanups. The Trail Committee holds two cleanups per year at the Community Linear Trail in April and October.
6. Discussion on organizing park cleanups
There are many parks in town. Many of which can use some kind of cleanup, painting or some other kind of minor work. Maybe even having the local residents around the neighborhood parks help in some capacity. Don Crouch mentioned that the Elks offered in the past to help with cleanup. Steve Rossacci would like to see an organized plan put together. He would like to have his LAX team help with the cleanup. Lori Cooke-Marra

suggested to reach out to all the service clubs in town and they can supervise the children needing community service hours. John suggested going to the different parks with Kenny to see what needs to be done and obtain materials for this. Lori Cooke-Marra suggested that it would be a good idea to make this a town wide project done yearly. Kenny Michaels mentioned that he gets a lot of requests from volunteer groups that would like to help clean up Doolittle Paek. Ben Haven reached out to Kenny to volunteer to cleanup parks this Spring at multiple locations around town. Lori Cooke-Marra feels that the leagues should help with the cleanup process since they are the ones using the fields. Lori Cooke-Marra would like to see a list of all parks in town and their addresses. Kenny mentioned that Westside field can use some painting done in back of the concession stand. Cathy Granucci asked if graffiti-proof paint was ever used. Sherwin Williams donated the paint and it was used on the Community Trail in the tunnel. John wants to work with Kenny and drive around town to come up with a list of parks for volunteer cleanup projects.

7. Discussion on developing a Parks & Recreation Service Recognition Process
John mentioned there is a couple ways of handling this. A process can be developed so it's fair to everyone and you must meet certain criteria before you can even be looked at. The other possibility is to determine who should be recognized. Don Crouch agrees there should be a process in determining who gets recognized and how they are recognized.
8. Review, discussion and approval of updated Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission bylaws.
Don Crouch updated the bylaws and John met with Janice Small to review. Some things were eliminated because they were already covered under FOI or ordinance. John eliminated the attendance portion.

A motioned was made by: Lori Cooke-Marra, 2nd by Don Crouch to approve the bylaws.
Vote: unanimous

9. Parks & Recreation updates – Director Kenny Michaels
(See attached document)

Next Commission Meeting: Wednesday June 14, 2023 at 5:30pm

Adjourn @ 6:41 pm Motioned By: Lori Cooke-Marra, 2nd By: Don Crouch. Vote: unanimous

Recreation Commission Director's Report April 5, 2023

Programs/Events:

- New Easter Party Event at the Parks and Recreation Department on Friday March 31, 2023 drew close to 300 participants who were treated to a kids performance, stations of Easter themed arts and craft stations, candy bags and raffle prizes.
- **Winter Programs:**
Total Activities - 101
Canceled Activities - 13
Activities Ran - 88
Participants - 2445
running rate – 87%
- Spring Program Session Began Monday March 17th
- Adult Softball Men's and Women's 52 teams for the 2023 season (Up 3 teams from 2022 season)
- Summer Camp Registrations began over a 3-week period in March
Current Registration Numbers:
Pop Shots MWF Session FULL 25 per session
Pop Shots T/TH Session 15 (10 spots remaining)
Tiny Bubbles MWF & T/TH Both FULL with 25
Summer Sizzlers FULL 125
Playgrounds
MYB Session 1: 49 Session 2: 54
Stevens Session 1: 82 Session 2: 71
Fritz Session 1: 97 Session 2: 98
- Currently in the process of interviews for summer playground employment.
- Summer Brochure, Specialty Camps and Program development and planning under way.

Projects/Facilities:

Current -

- Public Works Completed major infield work on Pragemann Park Field 5. Removed all lips and high spots on the infield, regraded and added clay, rolled to level. Also rolled the lips from the infield to the outfield to minimized hops on ground balls. PW also continued field prep around town turning over the clay and prepping fields at Pat Wall, Pire Park, additional 5 fields at Pragemann, Harrison Park, Doolittle, CL and West Side. Fields still to be done are Vietnam Veterans and Keller Fields 1-5 (Parker Farms). Thanks to Rob Baltramaitis and Steve Palermo and their crew for their efforts in getting the ball fields ready for the season.
- In preparation for the 2023 season, our Parttime Maintainers did a great job painting the dugouts at Keller Fields for the start of the YLL season. Both have also been out checking and replacing various bases on ball fields as needed.
- **Still working with WLL on quotes to repair the fence top and posts on the batting cages at Vietnam Veterans Park. Cages used by Wallingford LL**

- Working on Bid specs for new park signs that are in the 2022-2023 budget – PO has been sent and signs have been ordered for Harriet Wallace, Community Lake, Pat Wall
- Park Portolet Bid sent to purchasing to go out for new vendor as current bid expired. Bid awarded to United Site Services again. Will continue working relationship with the vendor who has delivered portolets to the scheduled park locations for the season.
- Need to discuss with Public Works the line striping in parking lots at parks and playing fields. Most notably West Side Field, Pragemann, Harrison and Community Lake. NO UPDATE
- NO UPDATED AWAITING WORK TO BE SCHEDULED BY PW Completed Ball Field Light Audit end of December. This shows the amount of light bulbs out at each field that need to be repaired. This audit was also sent over to the PW Department so they can coordinate the lift and replacement of bulbs.
 - West Side Baseball - 11 (Need to do West Side SB as winter locks are on the building)
 - Doolittle Park - 2
 - Woodhouse Soccer Field 1 - NONE
 - Community Lake Baseball – NONE
 - Pat Wall – 12
 - Prag Soccer – 2
 - Prag Quad Softball Fields – 13
 - Prag Field #6 – 1
 - Prag Field #5 – 1
- Met with Engineering Department on January 6th to review plans and bid specifications for basketball court replacement at Doolittle Park. Looking to replace both courts (Henry St. and Wall St) all contingent on cost as the price of post tension concrete courts have gone up significantly. Bid closed on March 30 with a proposed price of \$327k to do the entire project of both basketball courts. Engineering said to plan for 10% in incidentals just in case. Project cost estimated \$360k. Currently \$200k in the 2022-2023 cap and non budget. May look to request the balance to be covered with sitting ARPA funds so both courts are completed at the same time. This would complete all of the sport courts at Doolittle Park.
- Bid Opening for the replacement of the OF field Fence at West Side Softball Field is April 4th. This would replace the entire outfield fence on the softball field foul pole to foul pole and increase the height to 24ft to eliminated the layers of netting that has been used in the past and has been remove due to the continued damage during wind storms.
- Meeting with the Mayor, Scott Gray (Trail Steward) and Mike Miller (Conservation Chair) about the possibility of having the Conservation Trails Committee fall under Parks and Recreation to work with our department directly on improvements and upgrades to the Towns Trail Systems. From this meeting we have developed the Wallingford Trails Work Group which will be a volunteer group that will work directly with the Parks and Recreation Department on trail development, re-routing and mapping of all of the trails and trail systems in town. This concept spearheaded by Tyler Mill Trail Steward Scott Gray and presented to the Mayor and Parks and Recreation will be a group of individuals representing each of the various users within the Town's trails systems (Mountain Bikers, Hikers, Horseback Riders, Ecologist, Hunters, to name a few). This group will be led by Scott Gray, Dianne Lendler (Conservation Commissioner) and Mike Miller (Conservation Chair). The goal is to increase, establish and maintain a viable trail system for all users of our trail facilities.

Budget –

- Items submitted in the Parks and Recreation FYI 2023-2024 Budget
 1. 12 Picnic Tables (4 ADA / 8 Regular) to continue the town wide upgrade at pavilions.
 2. 1 New Volleyball System for Gymnasium
 3. 2 New Volleyball Referee Stands
 4. Flagpole for 6 Fairfield Blvd
 5. New Cargo Van for transporting equipment and supplies to programs and events. Last new vehicle purchased was in 2001.
 6. New Playground Slide to replace the current one at Pire Park

- Items Submitted into the Cap & Non Portion of the 2023-2024 Budget
 1. New Pavilion Lufbury Park
 2. New Playgroud Equipment Lufbury Park

Upcoming –

- Look to extend dugouts at Prag Fields 1-4 using Prag Endowment

This Spring –

- Send out bid to have gym floor repainted and lined
- Get cost to expand the dugouts at Prageman Quad Fields 1-4