



Waterford Recreation and Parks Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
September 24th, 2024 @ 4:30 pm
Waterford Community Center

The Recreation and Parks Commission held a regular scheduled meeting on September 24th, 2024 at the Waterford Community Center. Meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by Chairman, E. Murphy and a quorum was established.

Members in attendance: L. Beaney, J. Gregg, R. Erricson, E. Murphy, N. Scheiber, T. Stino, T. Santos, M. Gwudz

Members Absent: M. Chiappone

Staff: R. McNamara (Director), T. Cieplik (Program Coordinator), E. Sullivan (Office Coordinator)

Guests: J. Auwood, E. Peterson, J. Mariani (American Legion Rep), B. Bono (American Legion Rep) and, B. Hogarty (Little League President)

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

(Motion #1): R. Erricson made a motion and J. Gregg seconded to approve the September 3rd, 2024 special meeting minutes. So voted 8/0

Public Comments:

J. Auwood and E. Peterson spoke in regards to the pickle ball courts and the much needed attention to get some of them playable. R. McNamara gave an update and shared that there is funding that is being reviewed and the First Selectman is supporting court surfacing project at Leary. J. Auwood shared the amount of people that show up to supporting towns and if we build it they will come. Team Reach has approximately 300 members, Waterford Community Center has 116, Waterford Beach has 205 and East Lyme has over 900. 6 courts is the optimal amount to have. The tennis courts at the high school would be good but unfortunately can not be used while children are in school.

L. Beaney spoke on behalf of American Legion and Babe Ruth merging into one. There would not be much of a change with maintenance that is already being done and the Babe Ruth Charter would stay as is. A cost analysis was done and families would actually save money with the cost being \$130 less per player. Tryouts begin in November for the Spring season of 2025. The ages would be 13-19. Both Legion and Babe Ruth are co-sponsored sports. Both Boards are in approval of the merge and parent organization show no conflict.

(Motion #2) N. Scheiber made a motion and R. Erricson seconded to give approval to move forward with combining Legion with Babe Ruth contingent upon review and approval at the next commission meeting. So voted 7/ 1 abstain

T. Stino left meeting at 5:12 pm

Correspondence:

M. White sent a wonderful thank you note for working as a gatehouse attendant this past summer. E. Opasek from Save the River, Save the Hills sent a thank you email for a job well done with the Fred Grimsey Plaque and the Kayak Regatta. P. Serluca gave Recreation and Parks a compliment for a job well done on the summer concerts this year. V. Thompson sent a letter concerning the pets at Waterford Beach and we will be looking to keep a stronger eye on the situation with pet owners and post signage. D. Riley sent an email in regards to assistance with the Little League North fields. The commission allowed discussion with B. Hogarty (Little League President) in regards to the email and comments were heard.

E. Murphy and M. Gwudz left the meeting at 5:30.

Staff Reports:**Director - R. McNamara**

We have a few projects in progress like the Leary French Drain that is now in a state where machines can access and finalize the end of the trench around the hillside (right field) of Leary softball field. Schedule completion date of October 2024. Call before you dig is complete and the French drain will be installed in the park side of the parking lot at Jordan Mill Park. The Barry Farm Eagle Scout project is moving along and signage is being finalized and once we have a proof we will be able to present to commission. The Pleasure Beach access walk bids opened and they range from 157K to 375K. We are prioritizing ARPA funds to provide equipment to renovate the infield of the WHS Baseball field: Initial cost estimates are \$24,500 to laser grade the infield, provide accurate pitching mound dimension and slope, and proper edging and re-sodding of infield/outfield.

Maintenance has regular operations of mowing/trimming all parks and properties, including BOE. We will be down one of our seasonal maintainers the end of the month and then 6-8 week the other seasonal maintainer will be done. The replacement for the position of our Maintainer II has been filled and working out nicely. We have been painting athletic fields and lining ballfields with the new robo-painter. Another new addition is the Goosinator. This is a safe friendly way to get the geese to move off our fields and parks. Fleet Management replacements have been processed. We have a current truck that will require a request for variance, as the truck is inoperable.

The review of Arnie Holms Jr. park rules was discussed and a motion was made **(Motion #3)** by N. Scheiber and seconded by R. Erricson to table the discussion with the allowance to use the temporary signs until R. McNamara gets clarification from Chief Ballestrasi and this will be reviewed at our next meeting to either approve or change. So voted 4/1 abstained.

Project Coordinator – T. Cieplik

Wooden Bat Softball League – not following rules with parking on new grass when asked not to and some drinking after games and littering. Police were called to a few games to enforce the rules. Need to discuss what we would like to do next year. 21 programs running and most are filled to capacity. Space is difficult.

Adjournment:

(Motion #4): Made by R. Erricson and seconded by N. Scheiber to adjourn the meeting. So voted 5-0.
Meeting adjourned at 5:54 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Eileen Sullivan
Recreation and Parks Commission