

**Wallingford Parks & Recreation Department
Parks & Recreation Commission
Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, February 9, 2022
8:00 a.m. at Parks and Recreation Department**

Commissioners in Attendance:

Dave Gelo, Jason Michael and Mike Savenelli Sr.

Recreation Commission Members Absent: Steve Rossacci and Don Crouch

Recreation Department Staff Present: Kenny Michaels, Director of Recreation Parks & Recreation

Special Guests:

Opening Remarks: Chairperson Jason Michael called the meeting to order @ 8:08 a.m.

Minutes:

A motion was made by Mike Savenelli to approve the minutes from the January 12, 2022 meeting; seconded by Jason Michael.

Public Question/Answer Period:

Agenda Items:

- 1. Advertising signs in parks:** Kenny Michaels had more pressing matters that needed to be addressed. He's been occupied with the budget and putting together bid specs for Doolittle security camera project with the Police Chief Ventura. Dave Gelo mentioned that this agenda item has been on the agenda for three years.

- 2. Devine Mercy International Widows and Orphans request:**
The Parks & Rec has been approached by a woman who wants to set up a table in the Parks & Rec lobby during business hours to solicit the public and to sell raffle tickets for Devine Mercy. This organization is a Wallingford organization raising money for widows and orphans in Nigeria. Kenny told her he will discuss it with the Rec Commission at today's meeting and get back to her. Jason wants the request to get sent to the Mayor's office. Kenny feels that because this is not benefiting the Wallingford community by selling these raffle tickets, we should deny this request. Dave said that they should say no to this request and Mike agrees. It was suggested to call the Mayor to get his opinion on this and determine if there is an ordinance or policy on soliciting on town property. The Mayor will be informed that the Rec Commission discussed this request and doesn't think it should be allowed, but would like his thoughts on it.

3. Community Pool:

Kenny believes that the Community pool project qualifies for the ARPA funding, according to the state outline for use of these funds. The funds received by Wallingford is \$13 million. A meeting will be set up with the Mayor before the next Rec Commission meeting to discuss this item.

4. Town-wide parks review and assessment:

Mike Savenelli: Pat Wall – Park is overgrown in the outfield and the gate is open. The gate needs to be latched. Overall, the park looks good. If Public Works can't get over there to take care of the grounds, maybe we can get quotes from land clearing companies to cut the overgrowth so there will be an eight foot path. Public Works should mow it continuously. Wallace Park- The entrance to the park would look nice if we had a blossoming tree when you enter the park. The posts at the entrance need to be painted again. The playground border and surfacing are ready to be installed but it has been a year waiting for Public works to install it. The playground surfacing was ordered last June waiting to be installed. Mike will also work on Moses Y, Harrison and Marcus Cooke.

Dave Gelo: Community Lake Park – The little League field has a broken gate at the 3rd base line. The pavilion roof is rotted and the rake edges need to be replaced. The plywood is rotted and the support posts are rotted. Kenny said that a metal roof was talked about for the pavilion similar to Marcus Cooke. The roof repair is in the Public Works 2021-2022 budget. The ground around the swing set is unsafe, and it needs an updated border or at least needs to be filled in with sand until the area can be done properly. The tennis courts and basketball courts are badly cracked. The bench by the canoe entrance is badly rotted on the seat. The bottom rail is broken on the fence along the trail by the little league field.

Doolittle Park - The new tennis courts have some standing water on the east end within the court and all along the south side outside the court. Being new courts, water should not be an issue. The rear basketball courts need a new net and the surface is cracked. The shade structure by the playscape has a ripped cover.

Dutton Park - The Christmas tree is in bad shape and should be cut down.

Harriet Wallace Park on North Elm St is good.

Fishbein Park – The gazebo needs to be replaced. It is in this year's budget to have it replaced.

Jason Michael: Lufbery Park – People are driving on the field. Using it as a turnaround because the fence is not there. The roof needs to be painted on the pavilion. The wood was never painted. Kenny suggested that the Parks & Rec part-time maintainer can go out

and paint it when weather permits. The wooden bench at the end of the hiking trail needs to be replaced.

Westside field – No update

Vietnam Veterans Memorial Park – No update

Update for next meeting: Steve’s parks were Parker Farms & Pragemann

Don has Kendrick Park, Pire Park, Richard Sheehan Park and Grand Street Park

5. Harrison Park pickle ball courts:

Kenny said that the bid did go out on reconstruction of the court. The parking lot can be expanded per the Engineering Department, if parking becomes an issue in the future.

6. Lufbery Park reconfiguration:

Lufbery reconfiguration for new the pavilion. Public works has been notified. Kenny thinks that this project may get shifted to Engineering to handle per conversation with the Public Works Director.

7. FOI continuance training:

Kenny suggested that during the beginning of the March meeting, would be a good time to do the training. Kenny will see if arrangements can be made with Janis Small to conduct the training at 8:00 a.m. on Wednesday, March 9, and we can continue with the monthly meeting after training is completed. This training should be anticipated yearly. Training should take about 40-50 minutes to complete. An email to the commissioners will be sent out letting them know this training is mandatory.

8. Community Lake shoreline clearing:

Community Lake seasonal clearing schedule – Jason wants to set an annual schedule. The clearing needs to be done in June and again in October.

9. Wallingford Community Women memorial bench and mini library:

Wallingford Community Women would like to donate a memorial bench and mini library in memory of Amy Blakeslee at Vets park. – A request for a memorial bench and library in the memory of Amy Blakeslee who has been a lifelong resident of Wallingford has been made. Jason is concerned that other memorial benches have been denied in the past. We need to find out if there is a policy for memorial items in town. Dave requested that an agenda item be put on next agenda to come up with a suggestion on a policy for memorial benches.

10. 2022 meeting schedule voted and passed

2022 meeting schedule voted and passed. The April meeting is a conflict for Jason

11. Consideration for public swimming at Mark T. Sheehan High School:

Jason feels that the Sheehan High School pool should be an option for town residents to use for public open swimming and possible swim lessons, when not being used by the high school swim teams. Mike suggested they discuss it with the Mayor when they meet with him. Jason wanted to point out that the town has a functionable pool and he feels that it should be open to town residents to use. Kenny will contact the Athletic Director to find out the summer schedule for the use of the pool.

Open Discussion: (2/3 votes required to discuss item)

Mike Savenelli made a motion to go to open discussion, seconded by Jason Michael.

Dave Gelo wanted to know the Rec Commission involvement for the Jubilee. Kenny said nothing is needed as of right now. Dave Gelo mentioned that TWIST may be happening this year, if Choate agrees to the use of their fields. TWIST usually takes place 3rd week of August.

Directors Report: Kenny Michaels

(see copy attached)

Next Commission Meeting – Wednesday, March 9, 2022 @ 8:00 AM

Meeting Adjourned at: 9:38 a.m. motion by Michael Savenelli seconded by Jason Michael

Respectfully submitted,

Loriann Ouellette, Senior Clerk
Wallingford Parks and Recreation

Director's Report

Recreation Commission Meeting February 9, 2022

1. Doolittle Park Playscape replacement parts have been delivered from Koman. Working on bid specs to send out for a Kompan Certified playgrounds installer to complete the repairs.
2. Ski Bums program for grades 4th – 10th was a huge success this winter with 69 snowboarders and skiers registered for the program.
3. Spring Brochure out online January 30th and hit the homes in the mail beginning February 7th. Registration for both residents and non-residents is now underway.
4. Working on upcoming quotes for parts of the building at Fairfield Blvd to be painted at the conclusion of the basketball season.
5. Met with Chief Ventura, I will be putting together bid specifications in the upcoming weeks for the surveillance camera system to get pricing for Doolittle Park. Hoping this project will fall under ARPA Funding as it is not budgeted under the PD or Parks and Recreation Chief and I have been invited by the Bridgeport PD to check out how their camera system works in the parks and other city owned facilities. Working on a date that works for all parties.
6. 2022-2023 Budget prep is underway. Department is scheduled to present to the Mayor on Friday March 11th.

Items looking to pursue:

- Continued replacement of picnic benches at town pavilions
 - Upgrade and replace park signs at Pat Wall, Harriet Wallace Parks
 - Reconstruction of the Community Lake Tennis Courts (2) Fencing and Basketball Court (Cap & Non)
 - (2) New Office Computer Work Stations
7. Based on Governor Lamonts press conference on Monday February 7th, effective March 1, 2022 masks will be optional for all Parks and Recreation Programs.
 8. **STILL WAITING TO HEAR ON A MEETING** - Upcoming budgeted projects I will be meeting in the next few weeks to discuss with Rob Baltramaitis Director of Public Works:
 1. Roof Repair Community Lake Pavilion
 2. Outfield Fence Repair Westside Field Softball
 3. Pavilion Replacement at Lufbery Park

9. **CURRENTLY ONGOING** - Going to discuss with Girls Little League Softball, using Pragemann Endowment money, expanding the dugouts on fields in the inner quad. Dugouts will be similar in size to the ones on field 5 and 6.

10. Spring/Summer Field Users Meetings Coming Up:

- Wednesday February 16 - Small Diamond Baseball/Softball
- Wednesday February 23 – Big Diamond Baseball
- Wednesday March 2 – Lacrosse and Soccer