

**Wallingford Parks & Recreation Department**  
**Parks & Recreation Commission**  
**Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, January 12, 2022**  
**8:00 a.m. at Parks and Recreation Department**

**Commissioners in Attendance:**

Don Crouch, Dave Gelo, Jason Michael, Steve Rossacci, and Mike Savenelli Sr.

**Recreation Commission Members Absent:**

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

**Special Guests:**

**Opening Remarks:** Chairperson Jason Michael called the meeting to order @ 8:10 a.m.

**Minutes:**

A motion was made by Dave Gelo to approve the minutes from the October 13, 2021 meeting; seconded by Don Crouch.

**Public Question/Answer Period:**

**Agenda Items:**

**1. Advertising signs in parks:**

Kenny Michaels expressed concern over the logistics involved in overseeing advertising signs installed at parks. In an effort to prioritize the process, it was determined that first a workshop will be scheduled with Planning and Zoning to go over details for each of the parks with regard to signage. Once this has been accomplished the next step will be to seek Council approval to allow advertising signs. Upon approval, details for best management practices can be discussed. Don Crouch suggested that town leagues who actively use the fields and are recipients of town contributions may be of some assistance in overseeing the advertising program; Steve Rossacci agreed that this suggestion may be a viable option to consider. Kenny will set up a date to meet with the P&Z.

**2. Community Pool:**

Mike Savenelli reported that a discussion with Mike Fortuna of TLB Architecture revealed that the previously awarded bid price would no longer be valid. The decision as to how or when to proceed with the pool remains with the Mayor and Town Council. A determination on needs to be made on the pool's current condition as to whether or not it can be reopened and what repairs and costs will be required. Both the State of CT and Town of Wallingford Health Departments have deemed opening and operating a public pool allowable in the current health climate.

**3. Town-wide parks review and assessment:**

The previously established base-line for park requirements is need of revisiting. The list of parks was divided amongst the Director and each of the Commissioners who will visit each park and report their assessments at the next meeting. Kenny indicated that the Town is in receipt of ARPA Funds that perhaps can be used toward park improvements.

**4. Harrison Park pickle ball courts:**

Mike said he observed the amount of cars parking at Harrison Park during little league games and believes that with the additional cars parking for pickle ball there may be an issue; he has seen cars parking on grass in the outfield. Don Crouch suggested they add this topic to the planned workshop with P&Z. Kenny said there are presently 42 parking spots available. He pointed out that the schedules for these activities can be controlled to avoid congestion. There is a wetland in the back of the park. Kenny said he would contact Engineering to see about installation of wood rail fencing to prevent parking in certain areas and the possibility of parking expansion in the future. Dave Gelo inquired about the use of power equipment by pickle ball players who are using items such as snowblowers to clear the courts. Kenny answered that this should not be happening and that he will contact those individuals. Jason reported that there are products on the market to provide for sound dampening on pickle ball courts; he suggested this be added to future bid specifications as an option. This to accommodate area residents who may be subject to the noise.

**5. Lufbery Park reconfiguration:** Short discussion by Jason and Kenny on the possible relocation of the new pavilion at Lufbery being moved closer to the restrooms from the existing location. Kenny will talk to PW about the possibility of new location and the removal of trees for the location to be viable.

**6. Upper Harrison Park development:**

(Agenda item originally listed as Lower Harrison in error)

In reference to discussion on Harrison Park (agenda item #4) Jason would like to invite Steve Palermo, Public Works Superintendent, to the next meeting to discuss the trail system at the park and plans for overall development.

**7. Community Lake shoreline clearing:**

Jason wanted to report that the shoreline area at Community Lake looks better than it ever has. The successive clearings have definitely made a significant improvement in the area, providing good clear views. The most recent clearing was done in November by BCI, Inc. dba Butler Company out of Windsor, CT.

**8. Delivery time-line of Director's Reports:**

Dave wanted to point out that the Commission by-laws were edited last year. The section pertaining to distribution of the Director's Report currently requires delivery 7 days prior to the next meeting. Dave suggested that a day or two would be sufficient; Jason commented that they should amend the by-laws. Don said he will take care of making the change and they can vote on it next month.

Mike asked Kenny to indicate in red any items on the report that are new business so they can direct their attention immediately to those items.

**9. Ulbrich basketball tournament admissions fees:**

Steve Rossacci raised the question of the Ulbrich Basketball Tournament charging an admission fee to spectators, considering that they were not charged to rent the gym at 6 Fairfield Boulevard because they're a non-profit. There is the question of accountability and who is running the tournament; he recommended that at least a representative from the BGC be on site during these events. Don Crouch responded that the bookkeeper and treasurer at the Boys and Girls Club did do a daily accounting. Jason stated that it is a question of a private entity charging for an event held at a public facility; and asked if it is the job of the Rec Commission to police that? Should a Profit and Loss statement be required? Don commented that a discussion with the Director of the BGC may be in order to determine if charging is in fact necessary.

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

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

Kenny brought up the fact that the Recreation Commission meeting schedule for 2022 was not voted on. It was decided to hold a Special Meeting at 9:00 a.m. next Wednesday, January 19, 2022 to vote on the schedule. It was also suggested that at the same Special Meeting, Atty. Janice Small, Corporation Counsel for the Town of Wallingford, be invited to attend to accomplish the FOI updated training that they require. Kenny said he would make those arrangements.

Dave asked about the status of the most recent Legacy Garden markers. Kenny said they have not yet been installed but should be completed and ready to go in. An inquiry will be made.

**Directors Report: Kenny Michaels**

(see copy attached)

Regarding Pragemann Park and item #11 on the report, Steve asked about the status of a new field building being installed. Kenny answered that there is a drainage issue in that area of the park and it is prone to 6" or more of flooding under the right conditions. Plans are on hold for the time being.

Kenny also wanted to add that the Gaylord Wheelchair Rugby group is holding their practice in the gym for 2 hours on Sundays through March.

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

**Meeting Adjourned at:** 9:43 a.m. motion by Jason Michael seconded by Dave Gelo

Respectfully submitted,

Jen Griswold, Ex. Secretary  
Wallingford Parks and Recreation

## Director's Report

Recreation Commission Meeting January 12, 2022

1. After Shirley Barillaro's retirement, I am happy to announce the Parks and Recreation Department hired Loriann Ouellette as the new Senior Clerk. Loriann comes to us after 4 years with the Wallingford Police Department. We are excited to have her and she has hit the ground running in her new role.
2. Doolittle Park Tennis Court Project was completed. There is a small section of paint bubbling. North East side of the courts by hardball field. Engineering has notified the contractor and the contractor did not seem concerned as this is something that can happen. They will be back in the Spring to repair. Engineering has also completed the curbing project at Doolittle Parking Lot, replacing the existing curbing with concrete curbing. Will discuss with PW the possibility of plantings in the islands.
3. Bill Farm long time Adult Softball and Adult Basketball Supervisor has retired after over 25 years with the department. For his efforts and 30 years with the town, we have named the softball league after Bill. It will now be called the William Farm Slow Pitch Softball League. Bill was very instrumental in the success of our adult sports leagues. In his place we have hired Stan Capp, long time umpire to be the new Adult Softball Supervisor. To date, we have not hired an Adult Basketball Supervisor as post covid, we have struggled to get teams to return to play.
4. Community Lake Backstop and first base line fencing was completed. This has now doubled the height of the existing back stop, extending to both the first and third base dugouts and raised the first base fencing from 4 feet to 8 feet to better protect balls from leaving the playing field and entering onto the new on ramp of the Merit Parkway.
5. Community Lake land clearing was done early November completed by BCI out of Windsor
6. 2021-2022 Weber & Gannon Youth Basketball Season is underway.  
Weber Boys: 450  
Gannon Girls: 137  
Total: 587  
  
Increase of 142 kids from 2020-2021  
Decrease of 145 kids from 2019-2020
7. Had meeting with Mayor and Chief Ventura on December 17, 2021 regarding cameras in Doolittle. Chief and I met with 3 companies, 2 who can specifically handle this type of project. The mayor gave the Chief and I the go ahead to put together bid specs to see what the cost of the project would be. I will be working with Chief Ventura on this in the upcoming weeks.

8. Spring 2022 Brochure being finalized and will be online in 2-3 weeks and in the homes via mail by end of January/Early Feb.
  
9. Working with the Wallingford Health Department using the Parks and Recreation Department as a host site every Thursday in the month of January to distribute COVID booster shots to Wallingford residents.
  
10. 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 Lufbury Park
  
11. 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.