

**Town of Chester**  
203 Middlesex Avenue  
Chester Connecticut 06412



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Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting  
January 22, 2024

Meeting was called to order at 6:34pm.

Motion to accept minutes from special meeting on 1/8/2024 was made by Kristin Dean  
2nd it was Linda Carlson  
All were in favor

Audience of citizens: Linda Carlson, Kristin Dean, Paul McAndrew, Tom Enright, John  
Saunders, Aaron Page, Dawn Saunders, Keith Lundgren; Pete & Bob from the rotary

Directors Report: Rotary Members Pete & Bob came and discussed the allotted money they  
raised to build a 18x24 pavilion at North Quarter Park.

1/22/23 Park and Recreation Director's Report:

1. Programming

a. *Current*

1. **Youth Basketball**

1. Kindergarten clinic at CES Mondays 1/22/24- 2/12/24 3p-4p

1. 6 participants, volunteer coach Jillian Zupan (\$25 fee)

2. First Grade clinic at CES Tuesdays 1/23-2/13 3p-4p (\$25 fee)

1. 11 participants, volunteer coaches Brian Williams and Jay Burton

3. 2-3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Rec Basketball Practices at CES Mondays 5p-6:00p Games Friday  
evening at CES, Coaches Eric Rice, Zach Merrill, Allsion Deptula, Christie St.  
Martin. 16 participants (\$100 fee)

4. 4-6<sup>th</sup> Grade Girls Rec Basketball (combined with DR and ESX) Practices at CES  
Thursdays 5p-6:00p Games Friday evening at DRES, coaches Nick Rioux and  
Bryant Ziobron 6 Chester participants (\$100 fee)

5. 4-6<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys Rec Basketball practices Wednesdays 5p-6:00p games at ESX  
Friday evenings, coach Nick Graham 7 Chester participants (\$100 fee)

6. \*CHESTER March Madness- trying to bring back kids vs parents night.

Date/Time TBA at CES gym for all Rec basketball participants. Tee shirt? Fee?  
Pizza?

2. **Chester Ski Club**



1. 15 participants, Powder Ridge Tuesday evenings 4p-8p. Half price lift tickets, rentals, lessons. Started 1/16 and goes for 6 weeks.

**3. Yogas and Acrobatics at Chester Meeting House**

1. Monday night Yoga 6:30p with Annette
2. Tuesday night Acrobatics 6:30p with Sasha
3. Wednesday 10am Yoga with Samantha

**4. Pickleball at North Quarter Park**

1. Group of 4-5 players every Tuesday and Thursday 9:30a at NQP. Weather has cancelled only a couple sessions, must recently because of the ice/snow.

b. *Future*

1. **Adult Basketball** at CES gym Thursday nights 6:30p-8:30p. Pattaconk offering 20% off any player's tab for that same night.

2. **CPR/First Aid** taught by Chester Hose Company 1/29/24 for Chester volunteers and Commission members. Currently 5 registered.

3. **Summer Camp/Pelletier Park** 2024 update: Registration will begin Saturday March 2<sup>nd</sup> at 10am for Chester Residents only entering grades 1-6. Non-residents can register starting March 9<sup>th</sup>. Cost \$125 for most weeks, \$200 for field trip weeks. Financial Aid available through Human Services. Field Trips to Quassy, Brownstone, and potentially CT Sun vs NY Liberty. Staffing is ongoing, with many returning counselors and Tyler returning as Director. Outreach to local 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> graders for CIT positions will begin in early February. Training for staff is scheduled the week of July 17<sup>th</sup> with camp starting on June 24<sup>th</sup>. 6 sessions of camp ending on August 2<sup>nd</sup>. Pelletier Park at Cedar Lake to open with lifeguards and passes starting June 6<sup>th</sup> and will end on August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024. \*Potential for "day passes" in summer 2024 = \$10 per adult (18+) \$5 per child in addition to the \$125 seasonal pass.

4. **\*Potential Chester Adults Run Club this Spring** Idea is to have Chester adults join in with the children in order to train for the 4 on the Fourth. Looking to get a leader for this to coordinate training. Great opportunity for multi-generational exercise.

5. **\*Potential Zoomba for Children/Adults** at CES gym after basketball season

6. **\*Potential Flag Football League** met with Essex and Deep River Parks and Recreation about bringing back Valley Jr Warriors Football League; meeting with NFL Flag Football group on January 31<sup>st</sup> to learn more. Would likely need a tri-town board similar to DRCLL or VSC.



## 2. Parks

### a. Maintenance/Grounds

1. Met with Paul Giroux regarding fertilization/weed control of CES ballfields and North Quarter Park. Quote provided for future service contract.
2. Met with Bill Merola about safety of Bates/Brooks baseball fields. Over 150 tons of ballfield clay needed to create safe playable area for children. Asked Rick Miles to discuss potential fundraiser from DRCLL to help defray cost of repairs.
3. Met with multiple companies regarding the safety of NQP basketball court. Currently the gap between the fence and court is a safety issue that needs correcting. Proposal is to extend the court surface through asphalt paving around the entire court 1-2' and then install 5' high fencing around the entire court area, with no gaps. Quotes have been provided.
4. Met with DPW regarding beach sand for Pelletier Park and Lakeview Park. Flooding and erosion have left both beaches in need of sand. Estimates have been provided for sand, equipment, and labor.
5. Met with Steve Merola and small group of Chester residents interested in establishing a kayak/canoe/SUP rack for resident use. With volunteer help, the rack would be built this spring for 2024 use. Lottery system would allow up to 18 spaces for residents, volunteers who helped build the rack would get automatic spot in 2024 only. Lottery winners would pay \$150 for a space from April to October, and provided their own locking system. More details to follow.
6. Met with John LaRue from Big Toys regarding NQP playscape needs. Monkey bars are next in line to be replaced. Playscape areas are safe and in working order, but looking to replace/repair proactively instead of reactively.
7. Met with Chester Rotary to discuss pavilion donation for NQP. Ongoing discussion with First Selectmen's office with potential funding from State of CT.
8. Met with Esquared regarding surveillance cameras at Cedar Lake Snack Shack. Quote for cameras and DVR forthcoming.
9. Met with Dick Leighton regarding storage shed at Pelletier Park. Recommendation is to re-organize shed with metal racks for more efficient storage. Would help alleviate storage issues with CES (currently lots of P&R materials being stored in PTO shed.)



10. Met with John Williams and Chris Dubord from One Look Signs regarding Pelletier Park and L'Hommedieu Park signage. Quote provided. Currently no sign at L'Hommedieu Park, many residents don't know it's a public recreation space.
11. Met with Mike Lauretano at Regatta Dock out of Morris CT regarding dock system installation at Pelletier Park. Early steps- still have to connect with Conservation Commission, Cedar Lake Watershed Commission. Dock system would provide swim lanes, more efficient and safe lifeguarding surveillance positions, and more structured aquatic recreation area for residents and pass holders. Meeting to discuss dock design and aquatic safety environment scheduled for Monday 1/29 at 11am.
12. Met with Tree Warden Cam Evangelisti regarding dead and dying trees at Pelletier Park. At least 3-4 trees along the southern edge of the park (between the entrance and porta-potties) need to come down before the 2024 summer season. This will eliminate the shade in that area, but is needed so nobody gets hurt from falling branches/trees. Consideration of additional shade structure is prudent for the future.
13. Parker's Point continues to be open to the public for picnicking at the Rotary picnic area, offering beautiful views of the CT River.
14. Cedar Lake Snack Shack- working with Dick Leighton, DPW, and First Selectmen's office to provide public notice for 2024 season vendor at the snack shack. Public notice to be given and lease available for any interested party to submit their intentions, business plan, etc.. for the First Selectmen's office to consider before choosing a vendor. Date TBA, hopefully by February with vendor having sufficient time to prepare for summer service.
15. Boardwalk from NQP to Laurel Hill Cemetery moving into the grant writing stage. State of CT Recreational Trails Grant will be awarding \$9 million to CT grant applicants, hopefully we can benefit from a portion of that. Grant writing sessions at Town Hall:  
Town Hall: Wednesday January 31<sup>st</sup> 1p-2:15p, Wednesday, February 7<sup>th</sup> 1p-2:15p, Wednesday, February 14<sup>th</sup> 1p-2:15p, Wednesday, February 21<sup>st</sup> 1p-2:15p, Wednesday, February 28<sup>th</sup> 1p-2:15p (if needed)

### 3. Grant Received:

- Received \$3,500 from Community Foundation of Middlesex County for the Story Walk project at North Quarter Park; a joint project between Chester Library and

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Chester Parks and Recreation. 20 water/ weather proof stations with 18"x24" story displays that house pages of a picture book. Would begin at the playscape area, then every 20-30 feet or so until the Anna Sweeney Trail, where it would continue. Opportunities for programming, nature-based books with guides and naturalist talks, etc..

**- Will be seeking out Chester volunteers to help install these posts.**

#### **4. Connection with Essex, Deep River Parks and Recreation Departments**

a. Meeting on January 18<sup>th</sup> to connect all three town departments. Discussion and strategy session re: potential 2 week middle school summer camp led by TTYSB, coordinating bus trips among the three towns, flag football league, advertising each other's programming, working together to help all three towns residents.

Chairman's Report: Everything was well covered by the Director.

Next meeting is March 18, 2024 at 6:30pm.

Meeting adjourned at 7:59pm.

Motion to close the meeting was made by Kristin Dean  
2nd it was made by Paul McAndrew  
All were in Favor.

Minutes were respectfully submitted by:  
Dawn Saunders  
Chairwoman of Park & Rec Commission