

## Chester Parks and Recreation Commission Minutes

April 22nd, 2024  
6:35 p.m - 7:53 p.m

<b>Location:</b> Chester Town Hall	<b>Attendees:</b> Aaron Page, Dawn Saunders, Paul McAndrew, Linda Carlson, John Saunders, Tom Enright
<b>Type of Meeting:</b> General Commission Meeting	<b>Recorder:</b> Mikaela Carlin <i>Senior at Valley Regional High School</i>
<b>Motion to accept minutes from March 18<sup>th</sup> meeting made by Tom Enright, seconded by Linda Carlson.</b>	
<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>DISCUSSION / ACTION STEPS</b>
<b>Programming</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The walking club has taken off with walks scheduled on Mondays and Thursdays, free for town residents</li><li>2. Card game nights begin at Chester Village West on Fridays from 10 p.m. to 12 p.m., with a maximum of 10 residents per night. Chester Village West is interested in getting more involved with the town and offering its space for events.</li><li>3. In the fall, Aaron seeks to implement a youth program at Chester Village West starting in October for 7 weeks, for no more than 8 elementary school-age children. Chester Village West will be a stop on a bus route, and students will participate in activities with residents (arts, bingo, writing, quilting)</li><li>4. The only downside is that children will have to ride the bus for roughly 35 minutes, as Chester Village West would be the last stop. Parents would pick them up around 4:45.</li><li>5. Zumba is going well for the younger age group- 8 children are participating. There have been discussions of starting adult Zumba.</li><li>6. Challenge programming wise- finding the time in the day that people want to do things, what is best for the participants</li><li>7. Discussion of adding an evening to the walking club to increase attendance</li><li>8. Adult soccer is projected to start May 5th. No sign-ups yet, the field has been measured, and the program has been written. The goal is to get more use out of the Chester Elementary School</li></ol>

	<p>fields</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. Old Saybrook and the Middle School already have soccer programming going on, which may be a reason for the lack of interest</li> <li>10. Dawn suggested kickball programming</li> <li>11. With signage, people would know the field is more available. Aaron seeks to do permanent signage</li> <li>12. Little League is at CES 5 days a week from 5 to dark, but between 3-5 after school is free to the public</li> <li>13. Two sessions of summer camp are full, July 4th week has 14 spots left, and another week has 12 spots left. Families from Essex, Haddam, and Old Saybrook have signed up</li> <li>14. Aaron has received another anonymous grant (upwards of \$4,000), there is now more money for financial aid, which offers three sessions at half price. Aaron has applied for another grant of \$3,900 that will go towards camp scholarships and lunch for financial aid families</li> <li>15. There is money for Honeycone, pizza, bouncy house, etc. in the budget. Dawn may inquire about a discount at Moravella's.</li> <li>16. The morning run club on the Chester Elementary School fields has begun and has 15 sign ups of both youth and adults</li> <li>17. TO DO: Reach out to Karen Shaefer, request an email promoting run club, consider photographing the children and putting it on the email (raises concerns about child photography)</li> </ol>
<b>Parks</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Updates to snack shack: New propane tank sitting on a platform with brand new regulator done by a certified installer, shiplap ceiling, new flooring, new countertop, recess lighting, new trim, fan, flooring, new outlets, propane line moved to the floor, three new sinks, town-funded project</li> <li>2. The town benefits because we're up to code, the rent used to be \$500 for the season, which has been raised to \$3500 for the season. This is an extra \$3,000 a year the town is getting which goes to the general fund</li> <li>3. Park and Rec commission works in conjunction with the vendor</li> <li>4. Snack Shack will continue making meals for kids at summer camp</li> <li>5. Concrete on the west side is cracking and falling apart, Aaron is showing it to capital finance floods have been eroding the barrier. The area near the snack shack also falling apart, sand near lifeguard chair eroded</li> <li>6. Kayak rack at lake view park has been built, Eric, Tim, Elijah, and Aaron built it in roughly 4 hours</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. The next step is numbering the rack (18 spaces for kayaks) trying to get the fire department to donate an old fire hose, Aaron asked Karen</li> <li>8. Beard Lumber donated \$500 worth of lumber, plans to create a thank you sign for Beard Lumber on the structure</li> <li>9. The process of getting a kayak spot is as follows: people express interest in putting their boat on the rack, names are placed in a hat, people who get pulled first get priority for what spot they want, they pay \$120 for the season.</li> <li>10. Add a step stool to the kayak stand?</li> <li>11. Cedar Lake Watershed Commission supportive of the kayak stand. Linda says we could raffle off a slot for a fundraiser at the Chester Fair, etc.</li> <li>12. Tree cutting at North Quarter Park is starting tomorrow April 23rd</li> </ol>
<b>Capital</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. For the basketball court, the DPW will come in and do millings between fence and court, so that if there is a loan for more projects, fixing up the court could come to fruition</li> <li>2. Monkey bars need to be replaced <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 7,000 for concrete slab still in budget</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Pelletier Park: 1500 of battery-powered cameras (test run), shed racks and storage still in budget, t-box repair is still in the budget, field repair (3250 for seeding, bobcat rental) in Park signage got tabled, ball field repair tabled, sea wall repair (1,000) for two entry ways into the water and refortification of area around lifeguard chair, the 10,000 for the upcoming years is for fixing the concrete</li> <li>3. Aaron considering a social media intern from Valley Regional or Emma Burton at the Library.</li> <li>4. Chester Park and Rec Facebook page should repost the Town of Chester social media page</li> <li>5. Aaron will be posting in Townwide Email about the kayak rack</li> </ol>
<b>Tree Planting and Ecology</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Linda attended a talk at the Village Bistro, where a woman from Greenwich discussed the importance of planting trees within communities. Greenwich has a program of memorial trees (on town-owned property, they have signs of all the mature trees with their genus, etc), residents would be able to donate a tree in memorial, the town could designate places where volunteers could plant trees</li> <li>2. Linda in support of the creation of a re-planting program, which would involve researching different kinds of trees to replant</li> <li>3. Conservation commission also feels strongly about it- this could be a joint effort with other</li> </ol>

	<p>departments</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Educational opportunity, must have arborist</li> <li>5. Paul suggests we survey where to place the trees</li> <li>6. Suggestion to call Acer Gardens, we don't need a committee</li> <li>7. Flowers at cedar lake, could be planters near the gate</li> <li>8. TO-DO: Linda to research quotes for tree-replanting programming</li> </ol>
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**Motion to adjourn meeting at 7:53p by Paul McAndrew, seconded by Tom Enright.**

**Next meeting scheduled for May 20th at 6:30pm Town Hall Community Room**