



**Parks & Recreation Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
January 22, 2024
Elmwood Community Center, Room 24**

Meeting called to order by Anna Park, Chair at 5:50 PM.

1. **Roll Call:** In Attendance: Shawn Daly, Nancy Gierlich, Kristen Jezerski, Lisa Karam, Andres Lopez , Anna Park. Absent: Steve Garneau, Tanja Low, Narayan Paudel.
Staff in Attendance: Helen Rubino-Turco.
2. Anna Park will serve as Chair and Nancy Gierlich volunteered to be Secretary.
3. Adoption of September 18, 2023 Minutes – passed unanimously (new members abstained).
4. **Old Business:**
 - **New Elmwood Community Center (Mayflower Property Update)**
Eleven design proposals were received for a new multi-use community center. The final three have been vetted by an internal town committee, and a decision on the winning proposal is expected shortly. A feasibility study for the project is on the town's library website. A traffic study will be conducted regarding access and egress onto South Quaker Lane.
 - **Capital Improvements Update**
 - Eisenhower Bathhouse/Pool: The bathhouse renovation is underway with an anticipated completion date of June 1, 2024. The pool will be demolished after the summer and rebuilt with a deep end, to be completed by June 1, 2025.
 - Wolcott Park Improvements: Improvements to the western side have been completed, now featuring 4 tennis courts and 6 pickleball courts. A request to reline one of the tennis courts for pickleball use has been submitted. Work on the restrooms and eastern parking lot is now underway. We-Fi service will be added once the restroom building construction is completed.
 - Rockledge Restaurant - HVAC replacement is underway.
 - Rockledge Driving Range - A special use permit is to be reviewed by the Town Plan & Zoning Division on February 12, 2024. The proposal is to construct an upgraded covered driving range including 20 bays with technology capable of simulating 10-12 courses including Rockledge. With a snack bar and ADA-compliant bathrooms, this will be an entire activity as well as a place for lessons.
 - **Veterans Memorial Skating Rink** - The rink hosted a practice by the Hartford Wolf Pack on New Year's Eve. They signed autographs for youth skaters afterwards in the lobby, and generally had a wonderful time.
 - **Senior Centers** - New equipment was installed at the Bishops Corner branch's fitness center. A bus purchase is in process with plans to resume service in FY25 for both branches.

5. **New Business:**

- **2024 Meeting Schedule**
The committee will meet bi-monthly as follows: January 22, March 25, May 20, July 22, September 23, November 18 and January 27, 2025.
- **Golf Course Operations**
A new Golf Pro is to be selected by February 1. The Assistant Supervisor position is open and interviews are being conducted.
- **2024 Fee Increases at Golf Courses and Elmwood Community Center**
There will be no change in green fees. Golf passes will increase in the range of 4.1%-6.8% at Rockledge and 7% at Buena Vista so that the courses remain competitive in the marketplace. Most rental prices at Elmwood have increased 10% (there were no increases since 2016-2018). The multi-purpose room is not being rented so that the gym is available for pickleball.
- **Summer Camps and Spring Programs** - The program guide was posted today. Sign up for summer camps opens at noon on February 1, 2024. Sign up for Spring programs will commence on March 1, 2024.
- **John G. Martin Foundation Grant:** A grant of \$75,000 will fund two docks at Westmoor Park and Wolcott Park and a shoreline platform deck at Spicebush Swamp Park.
- **Sustainability Projects:** Discussion was postponed to the next committee meeting.

6. **Friends of West Hartford Parks Report**

Lisa Karam, a board member of this non-profit (formerly Friends of Fernridge Park) whose goal is to advocate for use of the town's many parks, reported that the board is seeking additional members. As a 501(c)(3) non-profit, it can accept donations for the parks, for which the town may not be eligible. Ideally, a Park Ambassador would serve to promote each park with activities such as movies, concerts, clean up days or walks such as the very successful Walk in the Park on Trout Brook Trail last year. This group may partner with the WH Garden Club, Wolcott PTO, the Tree Action Group or the Sustainability Commission on various projects.

7. **Public Comment**

- None made.

Meeting adjourned at 6:58 PM.

Next Meeting: Monday, March 25, location TBD.

Minutes submitted by Nancy Gierlich.