



Beacon Falls Parks &
Recreation Commission
10 Maple Avenue
Beacon Falls, CT 06403

BEACON FALLS PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
Special Monthly Meeting
January 22, 2024
MINUTES (Subject to Revision)

1. **Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance:** P. Monti called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and led the assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance.
Members Present: P. Monti, L. DeGeorge, R. Egan, M. Betti, D. Ferretti
Members Absent: V. Santos, ME Fernandes
Public Present: Joann Delonick, Chris Sutton, Woodland Boys Tennis Coach
2. **Read and Approve Minutes from Previous Meetings:** Motion to approve the December 2023 meeting minutes as presented. L. DeGeorge made a motion to approve the minutes. R. Egan seconded the motion. All ayes.
3. **Comments from the Public:**

Chris Sutton, Tennis Coach for Woodland, is proposing a summer tennis camp, located at Woodland Regional High School using their courts over several weeks in the summer. He provided a proposed schedule with costs for himself as Instructor and an Assistant Instructor - \$150 per week per child. He provided his coaching qualifications. The Board discussed how we would sponsor the camp on Region 16 facilities. P. Monti suggested that Chris iron out the details and we can put it up for vote next month.

J. Delonick of 243 Bethany Road from Conservation Commission member looking to collaborate on trails grant oriented projects, particularly the project to join Parcel 39 with the RecPlex. Conservation member Larry Wissick has put together a comprehensive plan for trails in Beacon Falls, which is forty pages that she will share. Hiking trails in Beacon Falls is a significant lifestyle and she is encouraging continued attention for future development and collaboration between Conservation and Parks & Recreation. P. Monti noted that Victor Santos is the liaison between both groups as he is a member of both commissions. He noted that the next step would be to get cost estimates for the work that Parcel 39 for the purpose of applying for the DEEP Trails grant. He noted the importance of correct planning. J. Delonick stated there should be a focus on Pent Road and recognize that there is a shortage of parking there. She is recommending expanding parking at the trailhead with an eye towards further expansion at Pent Road. Planning would attract more people to the facility, which would be seeing more use. P. Monti noted that projects would need to be done in phases and include the Department of Public Works. J. Delonick emphasized that she believes parking needs to be addressed as soon as possible, and Conservation looks forward to collaborating with Parks & Recreation.

M. Krenesky is putting together a nomination package to put Matthies Park on the State Historic Register. He has a quote from a consultant for \$4000 to assist with the application and he is seeking funds from the Historic Society to cover this consultant and thought that Parks & Recreation might also contribute from their Special



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Activities fund. There may be funds available in the General Fund Engineering & Consultants line which can cover this amount.

M. Krenesky asked the commissioners do you care whether Matthies Park is on the Historic register or not? P. Monti is in favor of putting the park on the State register. When people see something designated as a preserved site, there may be more interest in preserving it. There may be a benefit when we start looking at the works that needs to be done for the spillways and the island house. Adding the park to the State Historic register does not change its status as a resident only park. The other side is that recognition as a historic site could bring more people to the park.

M. Krenesky also added that 7/4/2026 is the 250th Anniversary of the country. The Sons of the American Revolution are looking for locations to put on programs and reenactments and M. Krenesky suggested Matthies Park. Pent Road may be another eligible site. The Sons have funds to do all these reenactments. D. Ferretti noted that they take up a lot of space. M. Krenesky added they are in the planning stages.

4. Old Business

a. Matthies Park Pent Road;

Toby's Pond, Riverbend, Veterans and Volunteer Park – S. Moffat sent a text to D. Ferretti with maintenance updates which stated that only routine maintenance took place in all the parks.

b. Community Garden – V. Santos is looking to find a copy of the sign-up forms that people used to secure a plot.

c. Park Activities. –

i. Holiday Lights contest: Was successful.

ii. Snowman Building Contest: If we get a storm, the board considered a pop-up contest. Morgan Betti will put together a social media post if snow is predicted.

iii. Summer Concerts: R. Egan noted that he has 4 Concerts Booked: The concert budget needs to increase for next year. The June 2024 budget will also need to be increased.

iv. Fishing Rodeo – Date will be 4/27/24, the last Saturday in April. There is a \$3500 budget for stocking fish.

v. Fireworks – R. Egan will start the contract process. July 6, 2024, would be the date for the contract.

vi. Bike Rodeo: D. Ferretti will look to plan this for some time in the spring. This year, we will need funding for bikes.

vii. Regatta: Tentative date is the third weekend in July

D. Ferretti noted that we need more signage for events which brings more participation.

d. YMCA Update – Mark LaFortune sent a text and wants to continue having the monthly meetings. While the commission is not looking at bringing the YMCA back into the Town's budget, they will look to resume monthly meetings at Town Hall.

e. FY2025 Budget: P. Monti and D. Ferretti will be meeting to discuss FY2025 budget submission which is due February 1st. They will be looking to increase the summer camp line, as minimum wage has increased to \$15.69/hour. The concert line needs to be increased due to rising costs.



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Capital Projects: P. Monti wants to prioritize the Parks' top 3 to 5 projects over the next few years and cost them out, so that the commission has a plan in place for capital needs. Ideas which have arisen include replacement of the stairs down to the river at Volunteer Park. He would like Public Works to weigh in on the best way to replace those wooden treads. There is talk of a dog park at the upper pavilion at Pent Road, and if the bathrooms and pavilion were redone at that location, we would have another facility to use and rent. P. Monti noted that the project could be completed in phases; rehab the pavilion, then the bathrooms, then finalize a dog park. The commission needs to consider capital projects and modifications to their operating budget earlier in the budget year, beginning in the fall, so that costs can be examined.

f. Parks Signage – There is still no bulletin board at Pent Road. P. Monti asked L. DeGeorge to explore options and oversee updating signage at the parks.

5. New Business:

- POCD: SLR is looking for the commission's input on their draft of the POCD. This is an existing planning document and Parks & Recreation needs to add their comments. The Parks & Rec commission is seeking more guidance on what is needed from them for the POCD. They request that one of the Town planners or someone from SLR attend next month's Parks & Recreation meeting to provide an overview of what they should be addressing in the POCD.
- P. Monti mentioned maintenance of Matthies Park and the sluiceways which might be a priority to mention in the POCD. M. Krenesky noted the Haynes project on the Seymour line also has recreational space planned. There is some crossover with the Conservation Commission as they manage Open Space, and there is a new project called Hawk's View which will also have open space.

6. Correspondence: Beacon Falls Youth Theatre Group provided the Commission with a plaque as a thank you for their ad last year. The commission does not wish to receive a plaque in the future. The Youth Theatre group should save those funds. They included a request for advertisement in this year's program. **L. DeGeorge made a motion to approve \$250 for Gold Sponsorship to Beacon Falls Youth Theatre Company from the Special Activities Fund. R. Egan seconded the motion. All ayes.**

7. Facility Applications:

- D. Ferretti received Woodland Regional High School's spring facilities application. He made a change to the 2024 Facilities application which states that the COI should be in the name of the Town of Beacon Falls. He is awaiting Region 16's COI stating this. Event at Senior Center
- He also received an inquiry from Trout Unlimited about a space for 20-30 people for fly casting. Matthies Park is an option, but Toby's Pond may be a better space. Trout Unlimited is looking at the parks and will be in touch with Don. They are also hosting an event at the Senior Center on February 7th, which we can assist in promoting.

8. Grant Information:



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- a. K. Matthies Grant – The commission will be looking into ideas as they enter budget discussion for a K. Matthies application this May.
- b. DEEP Recreational Trail Grants –V. Santos will be the liaison with the Conservation Commission to put together a concept for this grant which is due in March. The FY2025 Budget would then need to support the 20% match.
- c. DECD: The Town is still awaiting a response from DECD on the community center application and responding to questions from the grantor.

9. **Other Business:** None at this time.

10. **Adjournment:** R. Egan made a motion to adjourn at 8:20 PM. M. Betti seconded the motion. All ayes.

Sincerely,

Erin A. Schwarz