

# HARTFORD PARKS & RECREATION MINUTES

3/14/24 5pm | Meeting called to order by Dave Crocco

## Commission Members In Attendance

Brett Mayfield, Tom McCleary, Joseph Denny, David M. Crocco Jr., Allison Childs

## Commission Members Absent

Nikki Boyle

## Others in Attendance

Scott Hausler, Director

## Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Allison Childs. Seconded by: Joe Denny

In Favor All Opposed None

The motion was Approved or Disapproved? Approved

## Citizen Comments

Brett Mayfield – Commented that the budget item of \$250,000 for improvements to Lyman Point picnic area and Municipal Building area playground were voted down, partly due to misunderstanding of how it was to be funded. Brett commented that there was a wide spread belief that approval of this budget item could have resulted in an increase in taxes. Many of the voters who voted no did not know the money would have come from the local option tax and would not have resulted in an increase in taxes. Brett said that he received feedback from Town of Hartford residents that there are bad things going on in Lyman Point area. Brett mentioned that a “working group” had been formed to look at improvements to Lyman Point area and that a liaison from the Recreation Commission could provide ideas and feedback to this group on what improvements could or should be made. And a liaison could report back to the Recreation Commission on discussions taking place in the working group.

## Commission Member Comments

## Directors Report

See Directors Report for Friday March 8<sup>th</sup>.

It was mentioned by Scott that WABA is winding down for the season and ice will be thawing out soon. Scott along with the Town’s Sustainability person will be leading a group, selectboard members and others through WABA on Saturday March 16<sup>th</sup>. WABA is the town’s 2<sup>nd</sup> biggest energy user after the sewage treatment plant.

Scott talked about how the envelope of the ice arena may not provide enough insulation. There is significant fluctuations in the internal temperature with the ice making operation inside and cold and warm weather on the outside.

Scott gave an overview of the Master Plan for Kilowatt North and South and he provided to commission members hand-outs about the dam re-licensing process and hydro power, in general. A re-permitting process for the Great River Hydro (GRH) dams is underway and the Town of Hartford is in a good position to give input into what to ask for in an approval document which will be issued by FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission) in order for the Great River Hydro dam in Wilder to stay in operation. The Master Plan states what the various uses of land owned by GRH and comprising Kilowatt North and South are. Because this opportunity occurs infrequently Scott and the Town are diligently preparing a letter to go to the FERC with the towns proposed GRH plan of action to comply with for licensing approval. One important item to be addressed is ADA (Americans with Disability Act) accessibility to river. Scott mentioned that a Connecticut River Conservancy person pointed out that the Town of Hartford should be receiving reimbursement for the cost of maintaining Kilowatt North and South recreational areas. Currently, Scott reported that it cost approximately \$60,000/year to maintain these two areas.

Scott mentioned a proposed request of \$85,000 one-time payment for capital improvements to Kilowatt North and South and \$35,000/year thereafter for maintenance.

Scott emphasized for Commission members to attend a meeting Monday March 18<sup>th</sup> about the re-licensing of the Wilder dam. Meeting at the Municipal building at 5:30 pm.

Scott provided a copy of the Spring and Summer Parks and Recreation Programs to each commission member. This is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of P&R inclusion in the town charter and is commemorated on cover of the program. Scott said there won't be one big 50<sup>th</sup> celebration just small celebrations throughout the season.

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## Old Business

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## New Business

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Scott commented that even though the proposal for the expenditure of \$250,000 for Lyman Point and Municipal building area playground was voted down, money from the Recreation and Parks reserve fund could be used to begin landscape and engineering design. Currently, there is approximately \$100,000 in the reserve fund. Federal money that was made available to the Town of Hartford through the ARRA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act) was approved to be used for purchase of a skid steer but was not approved for improvements to the playground. Money from the capital reserve fund, \$35,000, was approved for general beautification of the town, but not \$250,000, for Lyman Point and playground improvements.

Scott thought the disapproval of this proposal would give the Parks and Recreation Department breathing room to put together a better package of cost, actual design, concept drawings, etc., to present next time to residents of the town.

Scott mentioned that the proposed 1% increase in local sales tax may have contributed to people's aversion to the proposal. It is important to make clear that the increase in sales tax will not be used for improvements to the Lyman Point or playground areas. The money would come from the local options tax.

Scott mentioned that the Town Manager and Financial Manager would have to approve of the money coming from the reserve fund to begin engineering and design studies and a contract will have to be prepared and

then signed by the contractor. Scott mentioned that RFPs (request for proposal) have been sent out and discussions are underway with two firms being considered for doing design work and planning.

Scott mentioned that a \$10,000 Caring for the Canopy, State of Vermont grant, was awarded to the town for care of its trees.

Discussion about inviting Noah Crane, Nighthawks person, to next meeting to discuss All-Star baseball game being held at Maxfield Field. David Crocco agreed to contact Noah.

Code of Ethics and Administrative Manual review at next meeting.

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### Next Meeting

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4/11/24

Adjourn

Motion was made to adjourn the meeting by: Brett Mayfield @ 6:29 pm

Seconded by:

All in Favor: all

Opposed: none

Respectfully submitted by: Tom McCleary

Date: 3/14/24

**Hartford Parks & Recreation Commission Members**

Chair: : David M. Crocco Jr. (7/25/2024)

Vice Chair: Allison Childs (04/04/2025)

Clerk: Tom McCleary (03/08/2024)

Member: Brett Mayfield (05/16/2025)

Member: Joeseeph Denny (?)

Member: Nikki Boyle (04/04/2025)

Vacant: (1 position)