PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
EAST GRANBY, CONNECTICUT
MINUTES
January 8, 2026, 6:30pm

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
   A regular meeting of the East Granby Parks & Recreation Commission was held Thursday, January 8, 2025, in the rec building at East Granby Farms. Vice-chairperson Leona Bevins called the meeting to order at 6:28pm. Members also present were Ken Kovaleski, Ella DeSimone, Robert Ravens-Seger, Jim Lindberg, Alexa Bednarz, Marc Dlugolenski, Amanda Mele, and Nicole Sokolowski. Morgan Bengel and Jennifer Derleth were absent. Alicia Van Neil, Program Director, was also present.

2. **DISCUSSION WITH THE PUBLIC**
   None

3. **APPROVE MINUTES**
   R Ravens-Seger made a motion to approve the minutes as presented for December 4, 2025. M Dlugolenski seconded. 7 approved, 2 abstained (L Bevins and N Sokolowski). Motion passed.

4. **CORRESPONDENCE**
   None

5. **PROGRAM REPORT**
   A Van Neil reported that the winter programs are up and running. Most of the after-school programs are starting the third week in January. There will be another round of pickleball for kids and adults. There is another drawing class. A new after school cooking and art program is being tried in place of Art Ventures. It is a lower cost program for families. Basketball games for grades 3-8 are starting this weekend. The K-2 basketball program started today and runs for 8 weeks. The goal is to have the summer programming all set and open for registration by the end of February.

6. **TREASURERS REPORT**
   A Van Neil reported that everything will be on track once some program expenses to be reimbursed is cleared. The new equipment line will stay high all year, but funds should come out of another line to offset it by the end of the year.

7. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**
   A. **Cowles Park** – K Kovaleski mentioned that the first snowstorm brought down some branches on the trails and he cleared some away on his walk. A Van Neil mentioned that National Trails Day is on June 6th if the commission wants to plan an event. J Lindberg mentioned that the bridges still need to be repaired.
      a. **Emergency Management Markers**- see under Farmington Valley Heritage Trail.
      b. **Trails Day**- A Van Neil mentioned that dates for spring clean-up should be chosen as soon as possible to be able to advertise.

   B. Farmington Valley Heritage Trail – R Ravens-Seger walked the trail from Rt. 20 and traveled to Suffield. The trail was covered in ice. The area north from Copper Hill Rd is no longer being plowed this year, which is good. He did notice

a wheeled vehicle was driven on the trail, entering around the gate instead of through it. The fences all look good, with only a few rails down. There were a lot of tracks- one snowmobile, cross-country skis, dogs, people, deer, raccoon, bunnies, and squirrels. The stop sign near Copper Hill Rd that was down has been removed- hopefully by DPW to store for the winter.

a. **Emergency Management Markers** – quotes for signs are being obtained by L Bevins.
b. **CT Rec Trails Grant Update**- Second quarter report was submitted requesting reimbursement. The emergency management markers need to be purchased to complete the town's in-kind services portion.

C. **Granbrook Park** – No update
   a. **Playscape** – J Lindberg has narrowed the list down to three companies. All three are local and sent representatives to assess the playground area and met with him. He will meet with the subcommittee to go over the information.
   b. **Softball Field –** A Van Neil mentioned it is on AFS's schedule for the spring to install the batting cage, dugout and scoreboard. The goal is to have everything ready before the start of Little League season.

D. East Granby Farms – A Van Neil mentioned a new card reader system has been installed on the front doors of the rec building and the Sears House. Security cameras have also been installed.
   a. **STEAP Grant updates-** No update.
   b. **Gate at North Entrance-** A Van Neil reported that a gate could not be installed due to the frozen ground. There have been a lot of people down there and so far all has been ok.

E. **Sports Programs/Coaching/Training/Policies –** K Kovaleski researched the coaching policies of other nearby towns.

F. Program Committee – The program subcommittee will meet on Monday morning with the new selectperson, Jason Hayes, to discuss all-town programming for some new ideas. If members have any thoughts for new programs or to change current programs, please let A Van Neil know.
   a. **Tree Lighting-** 12/5- A Van Neil reported there was a smaller crowd than in previous years. L Bevins also mentioned that the attendance at the Women's Club event was also low. A Mele mentioned it was an early release day for grades K-5 so perhaps that affected attendance. A Van Neil thanks the Namnoun family and Andrew Pisati for bringing the Booster Club sound system and setting it up- it is much louder than the Parks and Rec system. M Dlugolenski will reach out to the store that the system was purchased at.
   b. **Dance Recital-** 12/14- The event went well with around 170-190 dancers. Thanks go to the student and member volunteers who helped make the event run smoothly.
   c. **Nutcracker-** 12/20- A Van Neil reported that it was an amazing event with dancers from a professional ballet company. Over 100 people attended, many that do not usually attend parks and rec events. There were

some technical difficulties. Thank you to Alison Chaloux, grades 5-12 band teacher, who came in and ran the sound system to get the program running.

d. **250th Celebration-** A Van Neil met with the new first select person, Jason Hayes. He will share event coordination. A Van Neil asked for a Parks and Rec Commission Member to step forward and join this committee to be a representative. So far Parks and Rec has secured the three bands and dates for concerts. 6/24 is Shout, 7/22 is Southern Boys Band, 8/21 is Mass Conn Fusion. Food trucks have also been secured for those dates. R Ravens-Seger mentioned Newgate Prison is putting together a play that will run in honor of America's 250th Anniversary. Plays in Place will perform this play in areas around the grounds and in the mine.

8. **NEW BUSINESS**
   - A. **Officer Elections-** Treasurer- tabled until February's meeting.
   - B. **Member Recruitment-** A Van Neil mentioned we need student member recommendations since our two students are graduating in June. She will ask the guidance counselors, and the high school principal. Ideally looking at students from grades 8-10.
   - C. **Review Subcommittee List-** A Van Neil asked commission members to review the subcommittee list and to confirm they are content with the committees they are listed in or if they want to make any changes.

9. **ADJOURNMENT**
   A motion was made by N Sokolowski and seconded by M Dlugolenski to adjourn the meeting at 7:09 pm. Votes in favor were unanimous. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Kovaleski
Commission Clerk