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

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
   A regular meeting of the East Granby Parks & Recreation Commission was held Thursday, August 6, 2026, in the town hall, large conference room. Chairperson Morgan Bengel called the meeting to order at 6:35pm. Members also present were Amanda Mele, Ken Kovaleski, Jim Lindberg, Kayla Lengyel, Leona Bevins, Nicole Sokolowski, and Marc Dlugolenski. Jon Mazzaferro, Robert Ravens-Seger, and Pat Arnott were absent. Alicia Van Neil, Program Director, was also absent. Jon Mazzaferro, new student member as of July 1st, was present.

2. **DISCUSSION WITH THE PUBLIC**
   None

3. **APPROVE MINUTES**
   L Bevins made a motion to approve the minutes as presented for June 4, 2026.
   A Mele seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

4. **CORRESPONDENCE**
   A Van Neil presented a thank you note from the Friend To Friend Pantry for the Easter Food Drive. M Bengel shared an email from Jennifer Frank, the resident trying to control poison ivy along the bike trail without chemicals. Jennifer Frank reported there is very minimal ivy within 4-5 feet of the path. She sprayed a vinegar solution on some and plans to manually remove some vines soon.

5. **DEPARTMENT REPORT**
   - A Van Neil reported that summer programs have been going well. Granbrook and Mini Adventures have had high attendance. There have been some challenges with camper behaviors that will need to be addressed. Some specialty camps have not run because of low attendance- possibly due to the higher cost of the programs. Soccer clinics was a new program this year. The first two sessions ran successfully; the third one did not but it was a hot weather week. A couple camps were run together with Granby and that worked well to have enough attendance.
   - The Steep and Trails Grants are wrapping up. The playscape at Granbrook Park will be installed in the next 2-3 weeks. The softball project has also been completed at Granbrook Park.
   - A Van Neil has been working with Jason Hayes to prepare for the joint Community Day/Lions Club Duck Derby. The event will be from 11-3 on Sept. 13th, with a 2:30 duck drop time. There will be a minibus shuttling overflow parking from Seymour School.
   - Fall programming will be kicking off soon.
   - Parks and Rec received two new grants from the EG Women's Club. One for dance scholarships and one for basketball court upgrades.

6. **TREASURERS REPORT**
   K Kovaleski reported that the fiscal year ended on track. About $800 will be used to repair bridges at Cowles Park and $5,000 will go back to the town. The town requested leftover funds be returned due to extra expenses in the winter. K Kovaleski urges the

committee to make their wish lists earlier next year. The budget this fiscal year has about $24,000 more than last year. Most of these funds will pay the extended salary hours of Mason Williams, program facilitator. Some will go towards additional staff training and park maintenance.

7. **MEMBER REPORTS (observations and reflections)**
   - **A. Morgan Bengel-** Both concerts were great. There has been good feedback on the new location, especially from families with younger children.
   - **B. Amanda Mele-** Great idea to have a scholarship fund for the dance program. Concerts have been great so far. Wonders how much fundraising would be needed to continue having two to three concerts a summer (without taking away from other parks and rec and town events).
   - **C. Pat Arnott-** absent
   - **D. Kayla Lengyel-** Concerts have been great with many families in attendance. Agrees that help managing behaviors at the summer camps is needed.
   - **E. Nicole Sokolowski-** Asked the commission to excuse her absence in a few previous meetings. Hope a lot of people go to the Duck Derby/Community Day. The concerts have been great.
   - **F. Marc Dlugolenski-** Would like to see the concerts continue to get bigger and better. The courts have been completed at the north entrance to the farms from the STEEP grant, other than grass needs to be planted. Hope to see funds raised to add additional lighting for night use. Notes that if basketballs roll off the court they continue to roll across the field. Perhaps adding a dirt border could stop a ball.
   - **G. Ken Kovaleski-** Has been enjoying the new pickleball courts and sees them being used by many people. One night 4 out of 6 courts were in use. Would like to see better grass seeded in the fields- currently it is all weeds. M Dlugolenski reported that grass seeding will be happening soon. K Kovaleski wondered how big EG Farms was and obtained the info at the town hall. He notes that the park is about 500 acres with only about 80-90 currently being used. The hill is about 400 acres and there are some wetlands.
   - **H. Jon Mazzaferro-** absent
   - **I. Jim Lindberg-** Suggested an additional detail for parking at the concerts- making sure that more closer spots are reserved for disabled and elderly. He also suggested bringing in a couple of retired teachers, including himself, to help train the camp counselors on how to work with the camper behaviors. Families should sign a code of conduct (A Van Neil said they currently do). A Van Neil added that it is difficult finding directors and co-directors that have the skill set of working with children with behaviors and wanting to be outside most of the time. It has also been difficult finding paraprofessionals to work with the children with special needs.
   - **J. Bob Ravens-Seger-** absent
   - **K. Leona Bevins-** Enjoyed having the Easter egg hunt jointly with the Veteran's pancake breakfast. Wonders how to get more volunteers to help at the town events.

8. **OLD BUSINESS-**
   - **A. Summer Concert Review-** see previous notes.
   - **B. Previous Evaluation Review-** N/A

9. **NEW BUSINESS-**
    - **A. Monthly Evaluation Discussion –** M Bengel noted it is her goal to have topics every month to accumulate and then review after a calendar year to help plan for the next year.
        - **a. Adult Programming (Morgan Bengel) –** M Bengel led a discussion on Parks and Rec Adult programming.
    - **B. Next Month's Topic**
        - **a. Last Blast of Summer –** A Van Neil reported it will be held on Aug 21. M Bengel and N Sokolowski are coordinating this event. Help with parking is needed starting at 4:30. Touch-A-Truck with about 10 trucks will be from 4-5:30. Food trucks will start setting up around 5:00. The band will play from 6-8, Jason Hayes will give a brief speech and then there will be a 20-minute firework show with music. Parking will be allowed at the North entrance and there are plans for a bus to shuttle people to overflow parking from the town complex. The committee has been mapping where all the activities will be located (food trucks, community groups, bounce house, petting zoo, photobooth, sports equip for kids to use, and possible the Farmer's market). Member volunteers are needed.
    - **C. Other New Business**
        - **a. A Van Neil financial requests –** A Van Neil requests the approval of $400 for new tables to replace broken ones at EG Farms, about $4,000 to pay Roger LeFleur for managing the STEEP Grant funds, and about $1,200 to setup a kiosk at EG Farms North entrance for signage and notices.

Motion: Morgan Bengel made a motion to approve an amount not to exceed $400 for tables to use at East Granby Farms. Ken Kovaleski seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Motion: Amanda Mele made a motion to approve an amount not to exceed $4,500 to pay Roger LeFleur. Nicole Sokolowski seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Motion: Morgan Bengel made a motion to approve an amount not to exceed $1,500 to purchase and install a kiosk at the north entrance to East Granby Farms. Leona Bevins seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

    A motion was made by K Kovaleski and seconded by J Lindberg to adjourn the meeting at 7:54pm. Votes in favor were unanimous. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Kovaleski
Commission Clerk