



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

**BEACON FALLS PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
Regular Monthly Meeting
December 18, 2023
MINUTES (Subject to Revision)**

1. **Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance:** D. Ferretti 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, V. Santos, M. Betti, D. Ferretti, ME Fernandes
Members Absent: None
Public Present: Selectman M. Krenesky and Joann Delenick

2. **Read and Approve Minutes from Previous Meetings:** Motion to approve the November 2023 meeting minutes as presented. V. Santos made a motion to approve the minutes. P. Monti seconded the motion. All ayes. D. Ferretti and ME Fernandes abstained.

3. **Comments from the Public:** J. Delenick of 243 Bethany Road called the board's attention to an article which appeared in the Philadelphia Inquirer regarding how PA becomes the dumping ground for discarded artificial turf. A copy of the excerpt is attached to these minutes.

Selectman M. Krenesky noted that on 7/4/2026, the country will be celebrating our 250th anniversary and as a member of the Historic Commission and Sons of American Revolution, he wanted to note the celebration. A committee has been formed by the town for this celebration and he wanted Parks & Recreation to be aware of and involved in the process. Selectman Betkoski is chairing that committee.

4. **Election of Officers:** At the November 2023 meeting, there was one nomination for P. Monti as Chairman and D. Ferretti as Vice Chair. **One single ballot is cast for P. Monti as Chairman and D. Ferretti as Vice Chairman. All in favor of P. Monti as Chairman and D. Ferretti as Vice Chairman. All ayes.**

5. **Old Business**

- a. Matthies Park – S. Moffat sent a text to D. Ferretti with maintenance updates. The swing set was installed, and the mulch is spread out. The swings were taken down and will be put up again in March. The surrounding area looks good.
- b. Pent Road – The shed and storage closet were cleaned, and they winterized the field equipment and put it in storage. Routine Park maintenance.
- c. Toby's Pond, Riverbend, Veterans and Volunteer Park – At Toby's they cut the brush along the road path near the pavilion. Routine maintenance and fall clean ups. At Volunteer Park, they removed the legs of memorial bench and are displaying the back/plaque in the mulch. P. Monti noted they did not cement it into a foundation into the ground. V. Santos noted that he visited many of the parks today and the water levels are very high. At Matthies, the falls are beautiful, and the sluiceways are all flowing, and they looked beautiful. At Riverbend, he noticed a trash can that was $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way under water.



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d. Community Garden – V. Santos has taken over the Community Garden from Todd Waldren. All the tools were stored in the Carriage house.

e. Park Activities. –

i. **Holiday Lights contest:** The commission drove around in several vehicles on Friday night to judge the entries, and they are still working on the results. D. Ferretti noted he would like a way to mark the houses for judging, as it was hard to see the house numbers. The commissioners noted that it took some time to do, and they will think about ways of improving the contest next year. They will tally the score sheets and post results later this week.

f. YMCA Update – No updates.

g. FY2024 Budget: The Parks & Rec Activities line will have \$26 remaining after the Holiday Lights expenses. Future event expenses can come from the Special Activities account. FY2025 budget call will be on January 9th and due in February. The commission needs to consider capital projects and modifications to their operating budget early in 2024. P. Monti noted residents have asked about a dog park. The Volunteer Park steps are another capital project consideration.

h. Parks Signage – There is still no bulletin board at Pent Road. D. Ferretti noted that S. Moffat has keys to the bulletin boards at the parks in the maintenance garage. We do not know if there are keys in the First Selectman's Office. Signs need to be updated and literature needs to be reviewed and replaced. V. Santos asked if we could get another set of keys made, so they can update the boards.

i. Volunteer Park signage – These NVCOG signs have been replaced and look good.

6. New Business:

- POCD: SLR is looking for the commission's input on their draft of the POCD. They are also looking for more community input via a survey on the Town website. There is a section of the POCD which speaks about Parks, Recreation and Open Space. There are questions being posed by the consultant to the board. The POCD looks at the next 10 years of the Town. They want Parks & Rec to review and comment on the strategies for the next 10 years. Recreational land is a sizable part of town land. This is a planning document and Parks & Recreation needs to add their comments.
- 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.

7. **Correspondence:** Email from the Library requesting \$150.00 to sponsor Zentangle art program. **V. Santos made a motion to sponsor \$150 for Zentangle. R. Egan seconded the motion.** The funds will come from the Special Activities Fund. **All ayes.**

8. **Facility Applications:** Revisions to the 2024 Facilities Application were discussed.

- D. Ferretti noted that we need to emphasize checks to be payable to the **Town of Beacon Falls.**
- They reviewed the fees and agreed to keep them the same. They reserve the right to waive fees for non-profits. The funds from pavilion rentals go into the Special Activities Fund.



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- ParkRecchair@beaconfallsct.org email will be added to the form.
- D. Ferretti noted that he would like to clarify the process for insurance. He would like people to complete the application before calling him. He needs to confirm the date is available to the applicant, before they can complete the insurance application – but he cannot approve the application without insurance.
- We will try to clarify the process on the top page.
- L. DeGeorge asked how many leagues send in applications. He needs schedules for leagues before approving their application and he completes a calendar for every league. He gives that information to Public Works.
- There is a space on the application to reserve courts: basketball, tennis and pickleball.
- We will bold the alcoholic beverages policy.

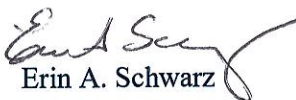
9. Grant Information:

- a. K. Matthies Grant – The swing set for Matthies is installed and completed and the final grant report is due 12/31/23. The commission should consider a K. Matthies request for FY2025.
- b. The Town has reapplied for the DECD Grant for a new Community Center at 35 Wolfe Avenue. The diagram of the Community Center is in the Assembly Room for review. A public input session was held with more input from the public.
- c. DEEP Recreational Trail Grants – V. Santos noted that the Conservation Commission is interested in putting together a project for this grant due in March. There is a 20% town match. The Finance Manager will complete the grant application with help from a board member leading the project. We have tried for this grant in the past for Toby's Pond, and the project scope was not feasible. Connectivity is a priority for this grant. The Conservation Commission was thinking of a project linking open space to one of the parks and working with Parks & Recreation on that, potentially linking a park to the Naugatuck State Forest or linking parks together. There is a webinar on the grant on January 11, 2024. J. Delenick stated that you cannot go wrong ecologically with connecting these spaces and she encouraged aggressive pursuit of grants. Planning is the key and bringing the ideas forward. This is a short window for the writing of this grant, and the Conservation Commission hopes to have an idea in January for the grant application. The FY2025 Budget would then need to support the 20% match.

10. Other Business: L. DeGeorge would like to see the commission do a couple of workshops outside of the regular meetings to cover some of these projects: POCD, budget and grants.

11. Adjournment: R. Egan made a motion to adjourn at 7:50 PM. V. Santos seconded the motion. All ayes.

Sincerely,


Erin A. Schwarz

Laker, Barbara, and David Gambacorta. “‘Forever Fields’: How Pennsylvania Became a Dumping Ground for Discarded Artificial Turf.” *Https://Www.Inquirer.Com*, 13 Dec. 2023, www.inquirer.com/news/pennsylvania/artificial-turf-pfas-rematch-pennsylvania-dumping-ground-20231213.html.

“Few people know as much about playing surfaces in Philadelphia as Michael DiBerardinis, who ran the city's Parks and Recreation Department for two mayors—Ed Rendell and Michael Nutter—and also served two years as Mayor Jim Kenney's managing director.

Children have access to nearly a dozen turf fields: five that are maintained by the city in South, North, and Northeast Philly, and six that are managed by the School District of Philadelphia. During his time in city government, DiBerardinis said, no one had yet sounded the alarm about PFAS in artificial turf. When the city replaced its turf fields in prior administrations, DiBerardinis said, he had no reason to ask where the old turf would be taken.

“There's now a new understanding about the dangers associated with artificial turf,”he said, “so people better be paying some attention to it”

Published December 13, 2023

Submitted for the record
Parks & Recreation Commission, Beacon Falls, CT
December 18,2023
By Joann Delenick
PO Box 37
Beacon Falls, CT 06403