



# Gates Recreation and Parks Commission Meeting

## March 10, 2026



### Those in Attendance:

Commissioners: Jim Battaglia (via Zoom) Christine Maurice Steve Murphy John Unson (via Zoom)  
Director: Dan Hoock  
Town Board Liaison: Chris DiPonzio  
Not in attendance: Brom Bianchi

The meeting was called to order by Steve Murphy at 3:00 PM.

The Commission would like to congratulate, and recognize, Brom Bianchi on his recent work related accomplishments and honors. Congratulations Brom...job well done!

The minutes from the February 10 meeting were reviewed. No changes were made. A motion was made by Jim Battaglia, and seconded by Christine Maurice the minutes be accepted as written. The vote was unanimous to accept this document.

The financial report was reviewed and discussed. Chris Maurice asked why the report came on multiple sheets, but had redundant information? Dan explained it was how the business office computer generated this information. No other questions were raised, and a motion was made by Christine Maurice, and seconded by Jim Battaglia, the financial report be accepted as written. The vote was unanimous to accept this document.

### Unfinished/Old Business:

\* Dan Hoock shared a recent event called "Animal Explorers" which was held this past Saturday. This was a well attended event (approximately 90 children/adults) and everyone had a good time. In addition to a petting zoo, which included an armadillo and also two baby kangaroos, there were games, puzzles and learning stations to participate in. It was a very successful program.

\* On Tuesday, March 17, the annual St. Patrick's Day luncheon will be held. Christine Maurice invited any of the Commissioners to attend. The luncheon will cost \$12/person and there will be entertainment following a delicious meal. Steve Murphy indicated he will be in attendance.

\* The Annual Easter Egg Hunt will be held on Saturday, April 4 at TSE. Dan shared all the prizes have been ordered, and all the candy has also been purchased. There will be one large field designated for children aged 3-5 to collect eggs, and the second field will have two sections, one for the older children 6-8, and also a smaller area for children under the age of 3. Dan has rented an audio system, so that will be helpful, and City of Hope will be doing face painting and games. There will be several "golden" eggs (concealed with another egg) and those "golden" eggs will be gifted the large stuffed animals that have been purchased. All volunteers (Steve, Jim, Valerie & possibly John) have been asked to be at TSE by 9:15AM.

\* Dan shared the decision to use only the town parks (Lions/Memorial/Westgate) this year for Summer Camp was made because other options were not available (schools not available due to construction, Hope Hall & Northstar both declined.) The impact of this is the enrollment might have to be limited due to facility size. Discussion followed concerning this. Dan shared the staff is working hard to come up with creative ideas to accommodate the number of children expected to be enrolled. Chris DiPonzio suggested that possibly some sports clubs or sports complexes might be an option, and Dan indicated he would investigate that. The camp registration form will be in the upcoming Cornerstone brochure, which should be mailed out by mid-March.

\* The memo from Kristian Sarkis pertaining to the new bathrooms at Memorial Park was discussed. Dan shared that plumbers would be out this coming week to assess the damage done by the pipes freezing, and make the appropriate repairs. Following the repairs, the bathrooms will be open for the upcoming season when the other parks are opened. A brief discussion followed about the bathrooms being closed for the winter months. Based on the information received from Kristian, this particular bathroom building doesn't meet the requirements of being open year round.

### **Holiday Around the Town Ride:**

\* This discussion was tabled as Brom Bianchi is not in attendance for today's meeting. It will be discussed at the April Commission meeting.

### **New Business:**

#### **Cornerstone brochure:**

\* The Cornerstone brochure will be mailed out to the community in mid-March. Christine Maurice questioned if it would be available at apartment complexes? Dan shared the brochure would be made available to as many places as possible. Dan also mentioned that credit card fees charged when reserving park pavilions/cabins for rental have been absorbed in the overall rental fees. The fees for rental are listed in the Cornerstone brochure. If the reservation has already been made, the fee will not increase.

**National Parks Day:**

\* Planning for this May 2 event is continuing. It will be a community park clean-up day done at Westgate Park, along with installing a new flag pole, cleaning up of the garden areas and nature trails, also with possibly doing a town time capsule. A brief discussion followed on these options.

**Buckets & Badges Event:**

\* This event will be a friendly game of basketball between members of the police force and community members. Dan shared that Walmart has agreed to donate basketballs (both large and small) that can be given away as prizes, and they also offered to donate food that can be served during the game. Dan will have updates on this event when they are available.

**Summer Celebration Update:**

\* Dan shared the updated advertisement for this event that will appear in the Cornerstone brochure, along with posters that will be distributed throughout the town as the date gets closer. Dan shared that a variety of food vendors have signed up to be part of this event, along with artisans vendors too. Dan will share more updates when they are available.

**Park(s) Maintenance Update:**

\* Dan shared the building and grounds crew are on track with all the projects they have been dealing with this winter, and the opening park maintenance projects will also be addressed, as soon as the weather breaks. Dan also shared that some projects are done by non-town workers, so scheduling those to be completed gets a bit more complicated.

Jim Battaglia inquired about the status of the grant monies for Memorial Park, and now that the cabin build is on hold, what will happen with those funds? Dan shared the grant monies will remain available for several years, but now, a designation of what they can be spent on needs to be addressed. Discussion followed on this process of re-designating these funds took place, with many opinions shared. Dan will share any updates on this situation to the Commission when they are available.

**Miscellaneous Items discussed:**

\* A brief discussion occurred pertaining to the Hinchey House and options that both the Town and the historical society have available to them for promoting this historical building/grounds.

A motion was made by Steve Murphy and seconded by Christine Maurice, the meeting be adjourned. The meeting was adjourned at 4:02PM. The next meeting will be Tuesday, April 14, 2026 - 3PM at the Dept. Conference Room

Respectfully Submitted,  
Valerie Young - Commission Secretary