



Gates Recreation and Parks Commission Meeting

April 16, 2026



Those in Attendance:

Commissioners:	Brom Bianchi	Christine Maurice	Steve Murphy
Director:	Dan Hoock		
Town Board Liaison:	Not in attendance		
Not in attendance:	Jim Battaglia	John Unson	

The meeting was called to order by Brom Bianchi at 3:00 PM.

The minutes from the March 10 meeting were reviewed. No changes were made. A motion was made by Steve Murphy, 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. Dan Hoock mentioned that under code # 7140-4070, there was an amount for repair for a shattered glass bus door replacement (probably due to sudden temperature drop. One day 70+ degrees, the next AM -20 degrees.) The replacement of the door has taken place. Dan also mentioned the town maintenance crew suggested attention be given to the replacing the cargo van (possibly in the next 2-years.) Discussion followed as to planning ahead to have functional transportation available to the department as they are used frequently. Chris Maurice and Dan mentioned what a positive attribute the transportation is to the Sr. Food program, and also for the bus trips, which fill up almost immediately when posted. Dan mentioned the budget process for 2027 starts in late July, 2026 and he would appreciate input from the Commission towards this process. All agreed this was a good idea.

Chris mentioned she had heard the possibility of the Sr. lunch programming increasing it's serving options by one day. Dan shared the process to do this is to go through the County (who underwrites this program) to start the process of evaluating whether or not this would be a viable addition, if funding would be made available to support it, and that it probably wouldn't happen until early 2027. Dan will contact the County for more information.

A motion was made by Chris Maurice, and seconded by Steve Murphy, the finance report be accepted as presented. The vote was unanimous to accept this document as presented.

Unfinished/Old Business:

Easter Egg Hunt:

- * Brom Bianchi suggested that prizes given to the various age brackets be made uniform as there were distribution concerns at his table. He had both the beach balls and squeeze bunnies available for distribution, and many of the children wanted the different choice(s) than we had made for their age. Discussion followed, and for next years event, this suggestion will be taken under consideration.
- * The third field for ages 3 years and under worked out well, and will be part of next years planning. Also, a separate prize table will be set aside for that age group with an age appropriate prizes. This age group is slower to distribute to, and it will help with traffic control.
- * The sound system was much better than what has been used in the past. It was rented through Applied Audio and cost \$65. The suggestion was made that consideration be given to purchase a sound system for the many events it could be used at, as to renting it on an individual basis. Dan will follow up and get a price related to how much this would cost.
- * Valerie Young mentioned a few people returned the plastic eggs to be recycled. Dan said that next year, they will set up two areas of collection for these eggs to be reused for other events.

Update on Current Programming:

- * Dan shared current programming is going very well.
 1. GAP program sign up is almost filled up with just a few openings left.
 2. Sr. Bingo planned for Friday, April 17, 35 people signed up already, and there is still room for walk-ins. Cost \$6.
 3. Summer Camp interviews are going well. Many applicants have worked for the Dept. before, so they are experienced.
- * Chris Maurice inquired about the recent County survey of the participants of the Sr. Lunch program. Last year, she was given access to these survey's, and asked if that could happen again? Dan will follow up on this. Basically, this survey pulls together the demographics of the participants in this program, and Chris felt it was very important for the Dept. to have this information.
- * Brom Bianchi inquired on the costs of repairing the bathrooms at Memorial Park. Dan shared that not only did the pipes need to be replaced, but also some of the fixtures. Dan didn't have the exact cost of repairs, but did share that these bathrooms would not be open during the winter. The Bldg. & Grounds Dept. takes care of winterizing the outside bathrooms, and usually do that in early November.

Holiday Around the Town Ride:

- * Brom Bianchi met with Cosmo Guita to discuss our concerns, and Cosmo shared that this was a town/police dept. event and that if our Dept. wanted to get more involved we were welcomed too. The suggestion was made that possibly better advertising about this event would be helpful, so more people are aware it is happening before the holiday caravan appears in their neighborhood.

Parks Opening/Repairs:

- * Dan shared all the parks would be open by late April/early May (weather dependent.) They will be open 8AM - 9PM. Bathrooms will be unlocked through those hours. First Responder's Park is open until dusk.
- * Brom Bianchi asked about the planters surrounding the park signs, and how they could be improved with plantings/flowers/low bushes? Dan said the Gates Garden Club maintain one park sign, but the rest are maintained by our grounds crew. Since this is not a priority in their work schedule, most of the time, they are ignored. Years ago, there was a dedicated position of a Town gardener, but that position was absorbed into the Grounds Dept. Discussion followed on how to remedy this situation. A suggestion was made that possibly posting this need to community on our Facebook page might encourage some community groups to step up and help. The Dept. would cover all the cost of supplies/plantings for this to happen. Dan will follow up on this suggestion.
- * The placement of the replacement playground in Memorial Park is scheduled for early May (weather dependent) and the bathrooms and replacement swing set at Lions Park is set for mid-May (weather dependent.) The cement pad for the Westgate shade has been poured, and the shade should be put up very soon.
- * Dan shared that all the park signs are now uniform in color and wording. All of them are blue/white.

New Business:**National Parks Day/Baskets & Badges Day:**

- * Dan shared that support for the National Parks Day has been going well. Hopefully, the weather will cooperate! A Girl Scout group has stepped up to help, as many other community organizations. Lots of activities are planned, and advertising about this will be happening soon.
- * Dan shared he has reached out to the GCHS/GCMS basketball coaches related to having support for the basketball event later on that day.
- * Dan shared that Walmart will be supplying food for this event, and also basketballs to be distributed as prizes.

Summer Celebration Update:

- * Dan shared they have rented six golf carts for use that day, and also bathroom trailers. He will be meeting with the HS grounds person soon related to placement of the trailers, as well as the overall set up for vendors, etc. Dan mentioned too that a bus will be available to shuttle people back and forth from the various parking areas also, as well as to parade viewing over at Tops Plaza and Westmar Plaza.
- * Steve Murphy inquired about floats and bands? Dan shared that bands have been arranged for, and community groups have been contact related to participation. Bill Gillette and Jim VanBederode are working on this.
- * Steve inquired about department staff taking part in this, but Dan explained that would be difficult as they would be working in the various areas for crowd control, parking, running golf carts, etc. Possibly other Town workers could get involved.

Miscellaneous Items discussed:

- * Steve Murphy inquired how the Ukulele Club Jamboree went? Dan shared although he was unable to attend, the overall event went very well. Other Ukulele clubs were invited to participate too, and approximately 40 people were in attendance.
- * Chris Maurice mentioned the Gates Historical Society will be holding it's annual fundraiser yard sale in August, but they are now accepting donations on every 3rd Saturday at the Hinchey House between the hours of 9:30AM-11:30AM. They welcome all donations, but do not accept clothing. Donations of furniture are asked to be held off until closer to the sale, as there is no place to store these items at the Hinchey House.
- * Dan mentioned again that the Rec. Center will be closed the entire summer as upgrades are being done in this area. The office area will remain open except for a short time, when it will be migrated to another area in the building when upgrades occur involving the office.
- * Dan also mentioned that Foodlink will be doing a "pop up" curb side sale between the hours of 11:45AM - 12:45AM. He will post the dates this is happening, and advertising will be done. Everyone is invited to take part in this event.

A motion was made by Steve Murphy and seconded by Christine Maurice, the meeting be adjourned. The meeting was adjourned at 4:03PM. The next meeting will be Tuesday, May 12, 2026 - 3PM at the Dept. Conference Room

Respectfully Submitted,
Valerie Young - Commission Secretary