



Gates Recreation and Parks Commission Meeting

September 8, 2026



Those in Attendance:

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

The meeting was called to order by Brom Bianchi at 3:01PM.

The minutes from the June 9 meeting were reviewed. No changes were made. A motion was made by Christine Maurice, and seconded by Steve Murphy, the minutes be accepted as written. The vote was unanimous to accept this document.

Dan Hoock shared the financial report ending on July 31. The following question(s) were raised:

- * Brom Bianchi questioned about the monies listed under the code #A00-7550-4850. The amount of \$4500 was listed under the original budget column, but the expenditure column lists that \$5906.49 was spent. Dan Hoock explained that some of the monies credited to that account were not meant to be listed there. He'll follow up and verify an update for the our next meeting.
- * The question was raised on the costs of the Summer Celebration 2026? Dan explained the costs of some items did go up, and others were less. The examples given were:
 - a. Fireworks - \$10,000
 - b. Bathrooms - cost more because there were more ordered than usual
 - c. Bands - the bands hired to perform actually came in under what was budgeted.

Dan explained that approximately \$46,000 was spent on this event.

After a brief discussion on other expenses, John Unson made a motion to accept the financial report as written. This motion was seconded by Steve Murphy. The vote was unanimous to accept this financial report. Dan shared that when the August expense report is ready to be distributed, he will pass the information on to the Commission.

Unfinished/Old Business:

A. Commission Meeting Date:

- * A brief discussion followed related to when the Commission meetings will be held. The decision is the Commission will continue to meet on the second Tuesdays of the month at 3PM. Most meetings will be held in the Dept. conference room unless otherwise notified.

B. Summer Celebration:

- The Summer Celebration this year was a huge success! The activities scheduled for this day were all well received, the food options, parking options, vendor options, bathroom availability all worked out well. The parade was a success, with a great deal of community involvement. The fireworks were spectacular and overall the entire day was successful.
- One area of concern mentioned was the HS fields (where the majority of the events took place,) were not conducive for people using wheelchairs or walkers (mainly grassy fields) and also, the need to have an ADA trailer bathroom option be considered too. Inside bathrooms were available this year. Another concern raised was offering shaded areas for people to rest. Dan mentioned the consideration of renting a large tent where chairs/tables could be set up for this option. All agreed this was a good idea. Jim Battaglia mentioned his concern of emergency exiting from Memorial Park is limited, where having this event at the HS fields offered many more emergency exit options. All agreed this was a good idea.
- Dan mentioned the 2027 Summer Celebration will be held on Sunday, June 27, and will be held at the GCHS site. A brief discussion occurred related to having it on a Sunday afternoon/evening. It was explained this was the best option related to other local towns having their special celebrations also.
- Steve Murphy asked about expanding food options to include seafood. Dan explained that many of the local restaurants that offer seafood options in-house do not offer those options on food trucks. Also, Dan shared he tries to be sensitive to the costs that are charged by the food trucks, so that this event is a family friendly one that keeps the costs reasonable.

C. Summer Camp:

- * Dan shared the following information about the Summer Camp program:
 - a. Overall the entire camp program went very well. Most camp sites operated close to, or at capacity.
 - b. The staff this year was exceptional, and everyone worked well with each other and also the children enrolled.
 - c. Injuries included one broken arm and routine cuts and bruises. Nothing serious.
 - d. A survey was given to the staff members to share their input related to how things went, and what improvement(s) could be made.
 - e. A survey is also being considered to be sent to the participants families to ask for their input/suggestions for

improvements for next year. Brom asked that the survey results be shared with the Commission when they are compiled.

- f. Chris Maurice shared the Gates Garden Club took part in the camp programming and it was successful.
- g. Various field trips were offered for the specialty camps. E.g. - the zoo, several parks and bowling
- h. The baseball, softball and soccer camps all went well.
- i. Both breakfast and lunch options were offered for the campers every day sponsored by GC food service.

D. Fall/Winter Brochure:

- * The brochure has been mailed to everyone in our community, and it has been well received.
- * Some scheduled classes have been readjusted in time offerings and room options.
- * Registration for classes have started and so far, has gone very well.
- * Family ID cards will soon be used for scanning. This is a new safety option for tracking children's safety.
- * As a side note, Dan mentioned both the fire and HVAC systems have been updated, and there is still construction going on.

E. Budget 2027:

- * Dan shared the 2027 budget process has started, and he appreciated the input from the Commission.
- * The process now is to submit what has been requested, and then a meeting will occur related to what will be approved or not.
- * Dan shared the carpet replacement that scheduled to be done out of the 2026 budget has been carried over to the 2027 budget.
- * The question of hiring someone specifically for park maintenance was suggested. This suggestion is not being considered at this time.

F. Farmers Market:

- * Dan mentioned he thought this activity has been doing more business since they have moved their event over to the Public Library parking lot. It offers more parking options, as well as more space for the vendors. This event is held on the first and third Sundays of the month. It is planned to remain at this site for next year.
- * Valerie Young mentioned a concern was shared with her related to the name of this market. It was mentioned that it was misleading as very few produce options were offered, it was more of an artisan's market with very few fresh produce options offered. A brief discussion followed.

New Business:

Status of Parks:

Dan shared an informational sheet with all the park(s) upgrades that are proposed. They are as follows:

Memorial Park:

- * Old playground area/new turf bocce pits; new grills; prep area for football shed between two field; sledding hill; speed bump - order for a heavy duty removable set; shelter renovation/change roadway/old restroom building (?)

Lions Park:

- * Remove rusted grill; add dirt next overhang; remove sandbox; cleanup around pond/dock; new volleyball courts; consider expanding the parking lot.

Westgate Park:

- * Baseball fields(?); new flagpole(?) old playground area next to canopy>grass; cut bush growing by park sign at entrance.

Wegman Road Park:

- * Sandbox area needs to be cleaned/new sand added; waiting for grant approval to update playground equipment.

First Responders Park:

- * Parking lot lighting/paving; disc golf course work (upgrade signs, hole flags, replace tee pads; fix scout bridge or make land bridge; remodel bathrooms and stain/waterproof benches by ponds.

Discussion followed related to all the proposed upgrades. This discussion also included what current upgrades have been completed. Brom raised a concern about the "pocket puddling" that is occurring on the pickleball courts at the Westgate Park. Extensive discussion took place related to this concern, including the fact that the company that surfaced the courts has been contacted. Ultimately it was decided to leave a squeeze type mop at the court site for the players to use to remove the puddling water. Hopefully, this will work as a solution.

Dan shared the information related to grants that are being applied for, or we have approval for, related to updated park improvement. They are as follows:

- a. Lion's Park - \$150,000 grant approved to new bathrooms and replacement of swing sets
- b. Lion's Park - NYS Municipal grant - \$377,000 - new basketball court; two new tennis courts; and four pickleball courts
- c. Memorial Park - Federal grant for \$500,000 - monies yet to be designated for use
- d. Annex - Monroe County COVID relief money - \$20,000 - new automatic ice machine w/water line; new chairs.
- e. Wegman Rd. Park - Grant applied for to upgrade the current outdated playground equipment, yet to hear approval or not.

Dan suggested that as a Commission, we focus on one park a month, and using the long range plan put together in 2024 as a reference, we come up with doable suggestions on improving our park system. All agreed this was a good idea. Memorial Park will be the park focused on for the October Commission meeting.

Dan shared a copy of the overview of the proposed Memorial Park road changes. Concerns have been raised as the current road, which runs directly through activity areas, and can be dangerous as people travel too fast on it. They may not be mindful of children playing in the fields. Discussion followed on options of this road re-direction that could be considered. They included:

- a. Speed bumps used on current road.
- b. Re-routing the road to run along side the tree line be considered. Drainage concerns were raised.
- c. Re-planning the use of the parking areas
- d. Re-surfacing where the road currently is to be grass, etc.
- e. Consider moving the existing bocce courts to be used elsewhere, resurface the court.
- f. Concern raised about the sledding hill (placement, maintenance, etc.) Question raised, who would do the work? The highway dept. would be doing this.

More discussion followed. No decision was reached. This will be discussed again at our October Commission meeting.

Hinchey House Update:

Christine shared the house has finally been painted. An anonymous donor made the generous donation of \$30,000 to have this task done. The house siding needed a great deal of prep work before it could be painted, but after that was completed, the painting truly brightened the house up. She also shared the fence needs to have some minor repairs done, but it has to be repaired so that the original integrity of the fence is kept in place. This adds to the costs of having this done. Chris also shared, the recent yard sale raised \$1500 profit.

Other:

* Dan shared a consideration of renaming some of our parks. It was mentioned to him, that some of the names we currently have on the parks, can be detrimental in getting grants. An example would be "Wegman Rd." park. The grant writer mentioned that sometimes, when grant monies are applied for, having a name like "Wegman" would be associated with the local successful business, and the assumption could be that monies are received from that local business. Even though in this case, it's not true, it could be a consideration. The Commission will discuss this option at an upcoming meeting.

A motion was made by Brom Bianchi and seconded by Steve Murphy, the meeting be adjourned. The meeting was adjourned at 4:10PM. The next meeting will be Tuesday, October 13, 2026 at 3PM at the Department conference room.

Respectfully Submitted,
Valerie Young - Commission Secretary