City of Concord, NH Recreation and Parks Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes from April 16, 2026 5:30pm

Committee Members: Althea Barton (Ward 1), Robert Kleiner (Ward 2), Zoey Murphy (Ward 5), Brian Sartorelli (Ward 7), Dhan Timsina, (8), Nick Kotkowski (Ward 6), Mary Miller, Chair (Ward 10), Jim Figueira (Ward 3), Kenny Edwards (Merrimack Valley School District), and City Councilor Michele Horne

Absent: Sarah Beauregard (Ward 4), Barb Higgins (Concord School District), City Councilor Nate Fennessy, Deodonne Bhattarai (Ward 9), and Matt Walsh Deputy City Manager

Staff Members: David Gill Parks & Recreation Director and Laura Bryant Assistant Parks & Recreation Director

Guests: Renee West and Mark Feigl

The meeting was called to order at 5:32 p.m. by Chair Mary Miller. The minutes from March 2026 were approved.

Mary informed RPAC that the previously recorded number of trees removed at Memorial Field was incorrect. The minutes had stated 60-65 trees, when in fact the number exceeded 200. She clarified that the committee's discussion and agreement specifically concerned the removal of the White Pines at Memorial Field. It was noted that the November and February minutes cannot be amended at this time.

Mary made a motion to amend tonight's agenda and add Mark Feigl from MRWC, seconded by Rob Kleiner and approved.

***New Business*:**

1. **City Council Referral; Dog Waste Station & Bulletin Board at Rollins Park:** David introduced Renee West who spoke about her hope to start a discussion about adding these amenities to Rollins Park. Renee has started a community group that would like to work collaboratively with the City either through fundraising, maintenance, etc. to make this happen. Another audience member, Bethany Clark spoke in support of the bulletin board saying she has no idea what is going on in Concord and would be willing to pay for and install a community message board and is just looking for permission to have ownership of the space in Rollins Park.

   David Gill addressed the dog waste issue first mentioning the City's continued effort to make all City parks carry in/carry out. Currently the only exceptions are White, Rollins and Rolfe. Naming the main concern being staff limitations for increase trash collection. RPAC had an in-depth conversation about the limitations and concerns, cost being a big one (buying units, small dog bags, restocking, removing the bags etc.). Althea asked if the community group had tried any education sessions to encourage park users to pick up after themselves. The audience rebutted saying a community message board would help, David Gill reminded everyone every park has signs telling users to pick up dog waste. One audience member then suggested using art in the park to guilt people into picking up after their pets. Mary Miller shared her experience with the dog waste station at the Forest Society where there is one and she still encounters dog waste along the trail, so she doesn't know that it will help with the issue in the park. David suggested that staff would reach out to Adam Clark the solid waste manager and get his input on the dog waste stations.

   The conversation then circled back to the bulletin board, Jim Figueira suggest they create a Facebook group just for their neighborhood. They said they had but many people don't use social media. David Gill shared with them the issue of not being able to control what is posted on the board if it is in the park. Brian Sartorelli suggested they reach out to the owner of Flannagan's in the South End and use his bulletin Board. David Gill said he would reach out to other NH Parks & Recreation Departments to see if any of them were managing analog community message/bulletin boards.

2. **Mark Feigl from the Merrimack River Watershed Council (MRWC)** David introduced Mark and referenced previous conversations regarding cleanup efforts at Healy Park. Mark Feigl thanked the committee for its support in improving the park, noting that he visits regularly and that it has become a wonderful riverfront location. Mark expressed continued interest in maintaining the park, including keeping it free of trash and removing invasive plant species. He shared that he has secured grant funding through his work to support these efforts, primarily covering his time. To maximize productivity, he will need expanded access to the park. His time will be will be used for ongoing trash removal, invasive species management, and coordinating volunteers. Mark requested the committee's support in full access to the park (key to locked gates) so he can continue the project. He will sign any city waivers as needed. Mary Miller made a motion to support Mark in receiving the necessary permission to have a key to gates and thanked him for working to keep the park clean. The motion was seconded by Brian Sartorelli and was approved. David Gill stated that he will prepare an informational report for City Council to inform them of the committee's support and Mark Feigl efforts to keep the park clean.

3. **Review RPAC manuals:** David handed out binders to all present RPAC members the binders contain, information about the department, national Parks & Recreation standards, helpful City information, member contact information, all things that will assist RPAC members in fulfilling their duties while serving on the committee. He asked committee members to review prior to next meeting and bring binders for conversation.

4. **Arbor Day/Earth Day Event at Rollins Park:** David Gill shared that we will be hosting an event at Rollins Park on Wednesday April 22nd at 10:00am in honor of Arbor Day. We will be planting 2 trees for Arbor Day. As part of Earth Day Celebration, we will be hosting a volunteer group from United Way whom will be helping to dig out and mulch the tree wells around the park and weed areas. The volunteers will be at the park 8:30 am to 12:30 am. David asked if any RPAC members attend the event to take time to walk around and look at the trees (look up), several diseased trees and allot of dead branches that need to be cut.

Old Business:

David Gill shared that the bleachers at Memorial Field will be removed, with City Council approving the funding at Monday night's meeting. GSD will be coordinating the project. He noted that he has reached out to Concord School District and Concord Youth Football to reconfirm their anticipated use of the field once the bleachers are removed. The City is currently planning to relocate all utilities, including power for field lighting and the PA system, to a small ground-level new shed that would function as a press box. However, if lighting and the PA system are no longer needed, the City will be able to reduce project costs. The next meeting of the joint City/School Committee on the Memorial Field Master Plan is scheduled for April 29, though it may be rescheduled due to a conflict with school vacation.

Mary Miller asked about an update in the bike park. David Gill said they are providing additional information to Councilor Schlosser prior to bringing to City Council to make a final decision on location and next steps.

Motion was made by Mary Miller to end the meeting at 6:42pm, seconded by Nick Kotkowski and approved.

Next RPAC meeting scheduled for Wednesday May 20, 2026 at 5:30pm. (Please note May meeting is on a Wednesday as the regular meeting day (May 21) is the Parks and Recreation Departments FY27 Budget review with City Council.

Submitted by Laura S. Bryant, Assistant Parks & Recreation Director