



TOWN OF HAMDEN, CONNECTICUT

Parks & Recreation Commission Minutes

Regular Meeting

7:00 PM, September 8, 2026

Hamden Government
Center
2750 Dixwell Avenue
Hamden, CT 06518
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1. CALL TO ORDER

- Chairman Francese called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

2. ATTENDANCE

- In attendance: Dominic Francese, Chair, Arnold Mann, Ryan Ott, Aryn Prestia and Richard Leonardo.
- Absent: Rick Melvin
- Also in attendance was Anna Montgomery, a member of the public and head coach of the Hamden Heronettes artistic swimming team, and Karen Bivens, the Director of Cultural Affairs & Human services.

3. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

1. Approval of August 11, 2026 Minutes

- Chairman Francese made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 11 meeting. Commissioners Mann and Rich Leonardo seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

- Anna Montgomery, resident and head coach of the Hamden Heronettes artistic swimming team made public comments concerning pool time availability, the potential for a tuition fee increase, and voiced her appreciation of ongoing support.

- Saturday use of the pool is 20% of pool time for the Hamden Artistic team.
- The Parks and Recs Commission addressed her concern on zoom (link included at the end of document)

5. CORRESPONDENCE

- (None).

6. EXECUTIVE SESSION

(if recommended by the town attorney)

- (Not needed).

7. REPORTS

1. Director of Cultural Affairs and Human Services, Karen Bivens to briefly report on activities of the Parks and Recreation department.
 - Karen Bivens, Director of Cultural Affairs & Human Services, gave a report on the conclusion of camps, the burdening cost of transportation and personnel for the camps, and the need to offer an additional field trip, as well as potential increases in cost for camps.
 - The cost of running 5 camps and a field trip is around \$30K in buses. This cost weighs heavily on the entire yearly budget of \$70K.
 - Commissioner Aryn to make a spreadsheet of the price difference and costs at comparable towns.
 - Sensory night taking place this Thursday.
 - The board discussed the \$200K cut by the BOE, its effect on Saturday open swim time, the \$50K allocated by council, and the need for a transparent and itemized list of costs.

8. OLD BUSINESS

1. Lou Astorino Ice Arena

- Hamden Ice Rink

- The Mayor's creation of a committee to study the ice rink. Introduction meeting to be held this Thursday.
- Expect a report back from this meeting in our next meeting.

2. State grant to the town funding - potential parks capital improvements

3. Hamden Middle School Fields

- Middle School Fields
 - The request to allocate funds to improve middle school fields (State Rep spoke to this issue).
 - Budget being put together, Karen will check in later this week, but good to know a delegation went to view the conditions of the fields.
 - Is there potential to use funds from the Pudicom Trust (currently restricted to plantings).

9. NEW BUSINESS

1. BOE Facility use fees for town-sponsored sports leagues

2. Rochford Field contract

- Rochford Field Contract
 - Commissioners discussed how much the fields are used and the cost to outside organizations.
 - The Mayor's ask to Albertus and whether we could include the free use of the pool to this discussion
 - Commissioner Ryan will draft something to address the ongoing discussion with Albertus.

3. League stipends

- Sport league stipends
 - There is a need to have proper financial documents on the issue of stipends.
 - The Chair will email leagues to get names, insurance, and seek answers to the three questions on: demographics, risk management and names of those participating.

4. HHS Tennis court repair

- Hamden Tennis courts
 - Getting closer to our funding stack goals, however this is a moving target because of inflation

10. ADJOURNMENT

- The Chair motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:02PM, it was seconded by Commissioner Mann. The vote to adjourn was unanimous.
- (https://hamden.zoom.us/rec/share/3k0OExX0GKMKXQe7R3D8hdCql8vODnyO7_mKoHA-ZVIMlrRKqvYlRwNXIDApCABQ.xbkp2J7aEnZ0t4b?startTime=1788907808000&pwd=DKwYvI3miNu7zLM0PgAAIAAAGu8Wv5yqdbCnuyQ1qqoZaJZRGV8M6BD25Z6BbwSuWfZzL_oTDuNt8LS-I9I0ilshzAwMDAwNA)