

CITY OF WORCESTER

VETERANS' MEMORIALS, PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

Tuesday, October 6, 2026
Esther Howland (South) Chamber
Convened: 5:00 P.M.
Adjourned: 5:53 P.M.

MAYOR

Joseph M. Petty

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairperson John P Fresolo

Vice Chairperson Robert A Bilotta

Councilor Jose A Rivera



CLERK OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Nikolin Vangjeli

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City Hall - 455 Main Street Worcester, Massachusetts

Present Were:

Chairperson Councilor John P. Fresolo

Councilor Robert A. Bilotta

Councilor Jose A. Rivera

Also:

Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Robert
C. Antonelli

Director of Veterans Services Bruce R. Mendelsohn

Commissioner of Public Works John Westerling

Director of Sewer Operations David Harris

Deputy City Clerk Stephen AJ Pottle, clerk

1. Virtual Attendee Call-In Information/Important Notice to Residents

- a. Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021 and in order to ensure active, public engagement, the City of Worcester currently allows for both in-person and remote participation at all City Council and Standing Committee meetings. To partake in the meeting, you may attend the meeting in-person within the meeting location, follow the below link to join via Zoom or dial the direct line as indicated. If you join a Zoom meeting by dialing in with a phone number, you can raise your hand by dialing *9.

Veterans' Memorials, Parks and Recreation Committee Zoom Link:
<https://worcesterma.zoomgov.com/j/1609351430>

Veterans' Memorials, Parks and Recreation Committee Zoom Phone Number: +1 646
828 7666

Veterans' Memorials, Parks and Recreation Committee Zoom Access Code: 160 935
1430

- b. Important Notice: Residents are advised of an ongoing scam involving the impersonation of city officials and departments. Scammers are fraudulently requesting payments be made for planning and zoning permits, as well as City Council petitions. All official emails regarding your petition will come exclusively from an @worcesterma.gov email address (such as clerk@worcesterma.gov), or via physical mail on the City of Worcester's official letterhead. Any legitimate hearing letter will always include your specific application details, along with the scheduled hearing date, time, and location. The City of Worcester will never request payments via wire transfer.

2. Approval of the Minutes

- a. Order - That the City Council Standing Committee on Veterans' Memorials, Parks and Recreation hereby approves the minutes of the Veterans' Memorials, Parks and Recreation Committee meeting on June 15, 2026.

**Chairperson Councilor Fresolo read the item and moved for a roll call vote to adopt the item.
Order adopted on a roll call vote of 3 Yeas and 0 Nays**

3. Communications of the City Manager - Veterans' Services

- a. Transmitting informational communication relative to the proposed Purple Heart and Gold Star Memorials at Worcester Common.

7c CC June 2, 2026

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo read the item and recognized the Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Cemetery, who discussed the selected design and location, as well as the cost, funding sources and timeline related to the installation of the Purple Heart and Gold Star Memorials.

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo recognized the Director of Veterans Services, who discussed the timeline related to the design and installation process of the memorials.

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo recognized Councilor Bilotta, who discussed whether the design of the granite podium will include the names of Gold Star Families, the materials of the star and heart casts and the location of the memorials with the Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Cemetery.

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo recognized the Deputy City Clerk, who discussed the procedural motion for the item.

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo moved for a roll call vote to recommend the item be filed.

Recommend File on a roll call vote of 3 Yeas and 0 Nays

4. Communication of the City Manager - Parks, Recreation and Cemetery

- a. Transmitting informational communication relative to the summer 2026 aquatic program.

8.10A CM June 16, 2026

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo read the item and recognized the Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Cemetery, who provided an overview of the item, including actions related to the city's aquatic program during the summer of 2026.

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo recognized the Deputy City Clerk, who discussed the procedural motion for the item.

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo moved for a roll call vote to recommend the item be filed.

Recommend File on a roll call vote of 3 Yeas and 0 Nays

5. Miscellaneous Items

- a. Petition of Gordon Ward et al. request the playground at Great Brook Valley be returned to its original name of "Arries Ann Ward Playground."

20a CC June 2, 2026

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo read the item and recognized the Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Cemetery, who discussed the Parks Commission hearing associated with the item, as well as challenges related to having multiple names apply for the naming of the playground in Great Brook Valley.

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo discussed ways in which the city could name different components within Great Brook Valley to honor and recognize both Arries Ann Ward and Roberto Clemente, who are both important figures to the neighborhood.

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo recognized Councilor Rivera, who discussed plans to name a park and a street after Arries Ann Ward.

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo recognized the Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Cemetery, who discussed the existing Roberto Clemente softball field at Great Brook Valley and discussions regarding naming the ballpark and two playgrounds located in Great Brook Valley after Roberto Clementine and Arries Ann Ward.

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo recognized Councilor Bilotta, who spoke concerning the item.

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo moved for a roll call vote to recommend the item be held.

Recommend Hold on a roll call vote of 3 Yeas and 0 Nays

- b. Petition of Patrick Grady request the court lights at Morgan Landing, located at 580 Grove St., be repaired.

10t CC August 18, 2026

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo read the item and recognized the Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Cemetery, who provided a recommendation to file the item, as through the City Park Master Planning process, the city plans to remove the tennis courts at the location and instead install a new tennis court at Indian Lake Beach, thus making the lighting repairs fiscally unfeasible in the long term.

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo recognized Councilor Bilotta, who discussed whether the Indian Lake Park Master Plan is available on the city's website, as well as whether there were any updates concerning the master plan with the Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Cemetery.

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo moved for a roll call vote to recommend the item be filed.

Recommend File on a roll call vote of 3 Yeas and 0 Nays

- c. Petition of Christina Foley request the city spray park hours of operation for the 2027 season be extended to provide earlier morning hours.

10s CC August 18, 2026

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo read the item and recognized the following Speaker:

1. Christina Foley, Worcester resident, spoke in favor of the item

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo recognized the Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Cemetery, who discussed operational cost and staffing challenges relative to extending hours for the spray parks.

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo recognized Councilor Rivera, who discussed the feasibility of shifting the operational hours to provide services earlier in the day and the challenges concerning operating the spray parks in a different timeframe to other aquatic facilities and programs with the Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Cemetery.

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo recognized Councilor Bilotta, who discussed staffing for the spray parks, how adjusting the hour of operations may affect staff scheduling, the feasibility of adjusting the hours of operations for one or two days a week and how the current hours of operation accommodate when the temperature is highest in a day with the Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Cemetery.

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo recognized the Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Cemetery, who discussed bringing forth a report on the impact of adjusting the spray parks hours of operations for one day a week at the end of the aquatic season.

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo moved to amend the item to read as follows, "Petition of Christina Foley request the city spray park hours of operation for the 2027 season be extended by one hour for one day a week."

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo brought forth the following Chairman's Order: Request City Manager request Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Cemetery provide City Council with a report related to the impact of adjusting the city's spray parks hours of operation by extending the operations by one hour for one day a week.

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo moved for a roll call vote to recommend the item be approved as amended.

Recommend Approval as Amended on a roll call vote of 3 Yeas and 0 Nays

Chairman's Orders

Request City Manager request Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Cemetery provide City Council with a report related to the impact of adjusting the city's spray parks hours of operation by extending the operations by one hour for one day a week.

- d. Petition of Ilanit Megidesh request efforts be made to reduce the city's population of the invasive bird species know as the European Starling.

12o CC September 8, 2026

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo read the item and recognized the Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Cemetery, who provided the recommendation for the item to be forwarded to the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife) for review.

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo recognized Councilor Rivera, who discussed concerns related to the invasive bird species with the Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Cemetery.

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo recognized Councilor Bilotta, who spoke concerning the item.

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo brought forth the following Chairman's Order: Request City Manager forward a copy of the September 8, 2026 Petition of Ilanit Megidesh related to reducing the population of the invasive bird species known as the European Starling to the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife).

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo moved for a roll call vote to recommend the item be filed.

Recommend File on a roll call vote of 3 Yeas and 0 Nays

Chairman's Orders

Request City Manager forward a copy of the September 8, 2026 Petition of Ilanit Megidesh related to reducing the population of the invasive bird species known as the European Starling to the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife).

- e. Petition of Maria V. Montano request Institute Pond (a.k.a. Salisbury Pond) be evaluated to implement humane and preventative measures to deter wildlife from going over Salisbury Pond Dam.

8t CC September 22, 2026

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo read the item and recognized the following Speakers:

1. Maria Montano, Worcester resident, spoke in favor of the item

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo recognized the Commissioner of Public Works, who discussed previous methods used by the department to prevent wildlife from entering the Salisbury Pond Dam, as well as challenges related to improving upon the current setup within the spillway at the location with the Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Cemetery and Speaker #1.

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo recognized Councilor Bilotta, who discussed the feasibility of installing a barrier around the top of the hydraulic lip with the Director of Sewer Operations.

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo recognized the Commissioner of Public Works, who discussed the installation of a camera at Salisbury Pond to watch and study the wildlife with Speaker #1.

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo recognized the Deputy City Clerk, who discussed the procedural motion for the item.

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo brought forth the following Chairman's Order: Request City Manager request Commissioner of Public Works provide City Council with an update in six (6) months concerning any efforts made to implement and/or improve upon humane and preventative measures to deter wildlife from going over the Salisbury Pond Dam.

Chairperson Councilor Fresolo moved for a roll call vote to recommend the item be held.

Recommend Hold on a roll call vote of 3 Yeas and 0 Nays

Chairman's Orders

Request City Manager request Commissioner of Public Works provide City Council with an update in six (6) months concerning any efforts made to implement and/or improve upon humane and preventative measures to deter wildlife from going over the Salisbury Pond Dam.