PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
EAST GRANBY, CONNECTICUT
MINUTES
September 3, 2026, 6:30pm

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
   A regular meeting of the East Granby Parks & Recreation Commission was held Thursday, September 3, 2026, in the town hall, large conference room. Chairperson Morgan Bengel called the meeting to order at 6:35pm. Members also present were Robert Ravens-Seger, Pat Arnott, Ken Kovaleski, Jim Lindberg, Kayla Lengyel, Leona Bevins and Nicole Sokolowski. Marc Dlugolenski, Jon Mazzaferro, and Amanda Mele were absent. Alicia Van Neil, Program Director; Jason Hayes, First Selectperson; and Wayne Hayes were also present.

2. **DISCUSSION WITH THE PUBLIC**
   None.

3. **APPROVE MINUTES**
   R Ravens-Seger made a motion to approve the minutes as presented for August 6, 2026, with a revision to include that the funds approved will come from the rec center rental account. J Lindberg seconded. 7 in favor, 1 abstained. Motion passed.

4. **CORRESPONDENCE**
   A Van Neil mentioned that there will be two grants from East Granby Women's Club. One for dance scholarships and one for items to upgrade the basketball court at Granbrook Park.

5. **DEPARTMENT REPORT**
   - A Van Neil reported that summer programs went well. Enrollment was higher than it had been in a couple of summers. If they had closed enrollment, 20 families would not have been able to attend. East Granby has the only pre-school camp in the area. Some ideas for improving camps – Have tiered payments where people who pay earlier pay less to encourage earlier registrations, and to review the staff/camper ratio.
   - A Van Neil reported on the following fall programs: yoga and reiki, adult basketball, ongoing adult art, flag football, basketball, ice skating, soccer shots, dance, pickleball for adults, after school art, after school hang-out, and adult art. Brian Kleinman will also be holding his birding and conservation club.

6. **TREASURERS REPORT**
   K Kovaleski reported everything is on track. The second of ten field maintenance payments has been made.

7. **MEMBER REPORTS (observations and reflections, highs and lows)**
   A. **Morgan Bengel-** High- Visited the Rail trail with her kids. It was nice for them to be able to ride their bikes. The trail was heavily used at the time of her visit. Low- Morgan mentioned there is a lot of overgrowth at Granbrook Park near the water.
   B. **Amanda Mele-** absent
   C. **Pat Arnott-** High- Happy to see parents excited for the fall season of flag football. He loves that the events held in East Granby have a community feel at them that a lot of other towns do not have. Pat noticed Granby tackle football

enrollment is low, and he loves to have flag football as an alternative in East Granby. No lows to report on.

D. **Kayla Lengyel-** High- Enjoyed helping at the concerts with the children. They were happy to see camp counselors and adult community members at these events. Low- It would have been nice to have music accompany the fireworks. A Van Neil mentioned that both Kayla and Jon were a big help at the concerts and stepping in to work during the last couple weeks of camp.
E. **Nicole Sokolowski-** High- Great turnout at each concert. Everyone meshed well. Low- no music with the fireworks and she wished the petting zoo was bigger.
F. **Marc Dlugolenski-** absent
G. **Ken Kovaleski-** High- Fireworks were amazing. The touch-a-truck was fun and brought in more people. There was a mix of families who stayed after for the concert and who did not stay.
H. **Jon Mazzaferro-** absent
I. **Jim Lindberg-** High- Fireworks were amazing, especially for a small town. Low- Communication could have been better to let people know where to go to watch the fireworks. High- The music was great. Low- The sound needs to be increased for the people who speak.
J. **Bob Ravens-Seger-** High- There is a large amount of people using the Rail Trail for walking, running, walking dogs, and biking. The poison ivy hasn't been bad. M Bengel confirmed that Jennifer Frank has been using her ecofriendly tactics to help keep it in check. Low- The area of pavement from Copper Hill to the end of the Great Swamp has poor conditions with frost heaves and cracks.
K. **Leona Bevins-** High- The petting zoo was awesome and would love to see it be bigger next year. The three concerts were well attended. There was a mixed review of how people liked the bands that were chosen. Everyone did an amazing job overall and the fireworks were amazing. Leona also mentioned that the pancake breakfast the next morning was not well attended- possibly because the concert was not on the town green this year.

8. **Upcoming Town Events**
   A. **Community Day/Duck Derby-** Sept. 13- Jason Hayes gave an update of improvements at Granbrook Park: The parking area will be paved by Tuesday, curbs will be put in place around the center island in the parking area, the playscape will be completed by tomorrow, and the area around the playscape will be mulched on Tuesday. The Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook Wild and Scenic kiosk was established last week. The kiosk gives information on the history of the park, including the flood of 1955. Other updates for the park include resurfacing the half basketball court and fixing the water system including the mister. The Lions Club will be at the event cooking and selling food. They will cut the ceremonial ribbon to dedicate the park. There will also be scouts present, vendors from the farmers market, pick your own flowers and vegetables, possibly a corn maze, Bries Fries, face painting, a DJ, and the Northern CT veterans will close the door on the 250th time capsule. The Lions Club duck drop will take place at 2:30. The camp is being secured by cameras that will be installed next week, and the entrance gate has been closed and locked at dusk and reopened at dawn all summer by the police. There will be a bus shuttling people from Seymour school for overflow parking during the event.

B. **Halloween-** Oct. 24, rain date Oct. 25- This event will take place at Newgate Prison. Middle School volunteers will run the games, Civil Air Patrol will be helping with parking, and Police will be present.

9. OLD BUSINESS-

A. **Previous Evaluation Review –** M Bengel noted that the final draft of the monthly discussions will be included with the next month's agenda.

10. NEW BUSINESS-

A. **Monthly Evaluation Discussion –** A discussion was held about the Last Blast of Summer (the three concert series) led by N Sokolowski.

B. **Next Month's Topics –** Granbrook Park led by J Lindberg.

C. **Other New Business –**

a. Updates from Jason Hayes:

- Two trees will be taken down near the snack shack at Granbrook Park.
- He applied for a grant back in March for $435,000 to build a Nature and Education Center at Granbrook Park. The application has made it through the review process. If the budget for the program is approved in Congress, East Granby will receive the funding. The area for the building is outside of the hundred-year flood plain. There will be space for children and seniors to use and will be the home base for summer camp to give the children and counselors a safe building to use. Parks and Rec will decide what programs will be held there. A discussion was held about other possible uses.

11. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by R Ravens-Seger and seconded by N Sokolowski to adjourn the meeting at 7:34pm. Votes in favor were unanimous. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Kovaleski
Commission Clerk