TOWN OF SIMSBURY – CULTURE, PARKS, AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Subject to Vote of Approval – Regular Meeting Minutes – **Thursday, October 22, 2026** – 4 pages

Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by David Bush, Chairman, in the main meeting room at Town Hall. Other commission members who were present included Kelly Kearney, Lori Coppinger, Erik Petersen, Chris Boswell, and Trevor Brittell. The C. P. & R. Director Tom Tyburski and Board of Selectmen Liaison, Curtis Looney were also in attendance. Caitrin Huysman, Recreation Program Coordinator and Jaimie Clout, Recreation Supervisor were also in attendance.

Culture, Parks and Recreation Commission Member Comments

Mr. Tyburski shared that Ms. Lipar was offered a position on the Simsbury Land Trust Board and has resigned from her position on the Culture, Parks and Recreation Commission. Mr. Tyburski shared that she thanked everyone and enjoyed her time on the Commission.

Agenda Items

Minutes – Approval of June 2026 meeting minutes- Mr. Bush declared the June 2026 minutes approved and requested that they be put on record.

Culture, Parks and Recreation Commission Goal Setting and Member Engagement Initiative Facilitated by Michael Luzietti- Mr. Tyburski shared he would like to know why the members want to be on the Commission and what is important to them, his hope is to find ways to keep members engaged and interested.

Mr. Luzietti asked the commission, "Why this Commission".

- Ms. Boswell shared that she is a "super user" with the rink, golf course, and pickleball, so she would like to have input with those items and provide feedback with how people are feeling.
- Mr. Petersen shared he grew up in Town, grew up with sports in Town and got involved with cross country and helped grow that program in Town.
- Mr. Brittell shard he grew up in Town, moved away and came back with his family to settle down, golfed and played hockey, he wants to give back, he is the Police Union President and he also thought it would be a great way to cross over and get the police out in the community more.
- Mr. Bush shared that it is important for him to get things done, he started public service down in the town of Berlin, seeing broken playground equipment as a parent of growing kids, he sees what needs to be done, he thinks volunteering is really important and he really cares about recreation.
- Ms. Coppinger shared that when she joined her kids were very little and involved in various parks and rec activities and she wants to be a part of keeping that going and what they got to enjoy future generations can enjoy.
- Mr. Kearney shared he has always been a facilities guy, his kids grew up in town and participated in sports, he enjoys being part of a group.
- Ms. Huysman shared she went to school for sports management, she loves being outside, running, riding her bike, etc. and enjoys the community aspect.
- Ms. Clout shared that growing up she was a "latch key" kid, went to camp every summer so she fell in love with Parks and Rec at that level, it segued into playing sports every season so being an athlete and being able to serve the community is a dream for her.
- Mr. Tyburski shared that when he originally left Simsbury C.P.R. he was in Ms. Huysman's role. He was growing in the profession, and he knew he wanted to take on more. He worked as a camp counselor

in Granby and did his internship there, but they couldn't afford to keep him on full time, which is how he wound up in Simsbury. Once the job in Granby opened up, Mr. Toner encouraged him to go and get the experience, it was a great time there. In 2018, he got the call that Mr. Toner was retiring and he applied for the Director position in Simsbury. Mr. Tyburski shared that he enjoys playing a part in improving the community, that the work changes all the time, he loves building things and leaving an imprint on the community. He shared that he thoroughly enjoys developing other professionals and giving them opportunities to succeed. His "why" has evolved over this career.

Mr. Luzietti asked the Commission members ,"What are your favorite places or event in town, what is the shiny thing in town for them and why is that successful and what does it achieve?". Mr. Luzietti shared that he loves the firetruck parade and he takes his girls every year.

- Ms. Boswell shared Simsbury Farms, there are so few towns where you can go to one place and do all those activities.
- Mr. Bush shared Simsbury Farms, what a good place to go and relax, to meet your neighbors and friends. He also shared Simsbury Celebrates, he enjoys the interaction you can get as a volunteer at that event and get to go around and see who he can run into.
- Mr. Petersen shared Simsbury Celebrates as well.
- Mr. Kearney shared the End of Summer Blast has become one of his favorites, brings the town together, it's fun, they have business partners there and it showcases the facility as well.

Mr. Luzietti asked for example, "How did the End of Summer Blast come to be, what role did the group play in it, 5 years down the road, how does the group play a role?"

- Mr. Kearney shared that his vision for the next five years is a collaborative legacy, town leadership has to be involved and it shouldn't matter from a political standpoint. Also, improvements at the Farms Golf Clubhouse, should happen sooner rather than later at the restaurant, whatever direction it may take. In addition, flowerpots hanging on the light posts around downtown, connecting Schultz Park to Memorial and connecting McLean to Simsbury Farms.
- Mr. Petersen shared that in the '80s-'90s, the place to be was Town Forest, he would love that to be improved and utilized more by the public.
- Mr. Bush shared that on the capital improvement plan in the future is a splash pad at Memorial Park, it is a situation where they need help and support from the BOS, although it's still money that needs to be spent, the facility is antiquated, difficult to generate revenue because it is in disrepair. He would also like to see some resolution to make the golf course more successful wherein there is a better restaurant facility.
- Ms. Coppinger shared that she would like to see the Town be more financially responsible and set an appropriate budget aside for C.P.R. instead of taking the fees out of the Farms.
- Mr. Brittell shared that he has spent a lot of time at Memorial Park the past few years between baseball and softball. He stated that parking at Memorial Park is horrendous, they need to figure out a way to actually park cars. He would also like to see concessions at the rink, he remembers being a kid and skating there and spending all his money in the vending machine.
- Ms. Boswell shared that a renovated restaurant facility at Simsbury Farms is a priority

Mr. Luzietti asked "What will be the role of this board from an advocacy lens, and what needs to happen to bring any of those things to life?" Mr. Looney shared that there is a balance to trying to keep the community's taxes low. He shared that the revaluation is in 2 years and they want to be able to keep people in town. They have done the dredging at Town Forest and are taking small steps for facility improvements where they can. He stated that the restaurant improvement project may be a candidate for grant opportunities, however some people in town may think this project is taking away from other businesses in Town. He shared that he is more of a fan of the splash pad as the pool is losing water constantly and they could possibly generate money from it. Mr. Tyburski shared some thoughts about the benefits of moving the Senior Center to the Apple Barn.

Mr. Luzietti asked "What are the next steps with all the good ideas that would benefit the community, what are the commitments the Commission is willing to take and what is this group's focus for the next 3 months, 6 months, 12 months?" Mr. Kearney shared that he would love to see the group articulate a vision. Ms. Coppinger shared that she thinks everyone is on the same page, they want to see the amenities approved, it's just financial constraints that are difficult. Ms. Boswell asked Mr. Looney what they can do better to advocate for these things. Mr. Looney shared that financially it is going to be a tough couple of years, however, maybe there are a few smaller things they could check off the list. He shared that it's great that C.P.R. thinks outside the box and is great with coming up with revenue generating things and coming up with events. He shared perhaps they could start by looking at the parking lot at Memorial Park and at concessions at the rink then they can think big and put it on the 5-year plan.

Mr. Luzietti stated to the point of a "vision", "What does C.P.R. look like in this town?" Mr. Bush shared that Mr. Tyburski and his staff have done a great job advocating with them for bigger and better things, while they have great visions, they don't necessarily come with the funding they need to get them accomplished. He feels they should be looking at the next 3-6 months to see what the smaller things are they can accomplish. Ms. Clout shared that they can't pursue funding (grants/capital improvement dollars) if there is no written tangible plan, i.e. a strategic or master plan. Mr. Kearney shared that he doesn't think a restaurant is going to be a realistic achievement in the next 5-10 years until Simsbury has recovered financially. Mr. Tyburski shared that they are looking at local private donors in addition to grants for the splash pad. He has spoken to the Town Manager about keeping Memorial Pool up and running for the next one to two years, however, if something breaks, they will not be putting money into fixing it. He shared that the next budget cycle is going to be tough, so it is not going to be a priority. C.P.R. programming and Department of Continuing Education programming was discussed, how DEC's mission has changed and revenue lost due to competing programming.

Mr. Bush shared that it sounds like they are looking at a 6-12 month plan, he asked if it should be the Commission developing and bringing it to Mr. Tyburski or vice versa. Ms. Coppinger stated that she believes it makes more sense for the staff to bring it to them. Ms. Clout shared that she thinks it is within their realm to take a crack at a strategic plan. Mr. Bush suggested that the Commission work on a vision statement while they work on their strategic plan.

Mr. Luzietti suggested that over the next 3-6 months the Commission do the strategic planning piece. He shared that they mostly talked about programs and what they have been involved in but what they want to accomplish was very project based. He challenged and encouraged them over the next six to twelve months to take a focused look at their programs, what they could plug in with the resources they already have.

Simsbury Celebrates – Saturday, Nov. 28, 2026- Mr. Tyburski shared that the fundraising is going exceptionally well and they have brought on some new sponsors. UCONN Health has chosen to be the presenting sponsor and will have a booth at the event. BPS Lawyers is joining as a new sponsor. Vincent Funeral Home has also taken on a huge sponsorship role along with the Goddard School. Goddard School will be doing an event at the library and manage the Santa pictures line, they are going to be putting up an inflatable movie screen and putting up holiday cartoons so kids in line have something to watch. Mr. Tyburski shared that there are usually about 20-30 gingerbread houses in the contest, they are down on entrants as they only have about 9 so far. November 16th is the deadline for that.

Simsbury Farms Ice Rink opens for 2026-27 Season- Ms. Clout shared they are due to make ice tomorrow. Everything is getting painted and there are a lot of activities planned, Simsbury On Ice is their tag line. They are also doing the BPS Free Skate this year and looking into doing a "Skate Jam" event a . They have some ice time to fill but they did make some changes to the schedule this year to make it more consistent. Public skate is everyday from 10am-12pm, they moved skating lessons to Sunday afternoons and there will be back-to-back

lessons that lead into a public skate session from 2:15-4:15pm. Mr. Britell asked about a potential Firefighter v. Police officer hockey game. Ms. Clout shared that this has been an event she is very interested in and would love to arrange that.

Adjourn

Ms. Boswell made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Petersen seconded the motion. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Simsbury Culture, Parks and Recreation Commission is scheduled for Thursday, December 3, 2026 at 6:00pm at the Town Hall Main Meeting Room.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather Taylor,
Commission Clerk