

MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF CHESHIRE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, September 2, 2026, AT 7:00 P.M. AT THE HARMON LEONARD YOUTH CENTER, SOUTH MAIN STREET - CHESHIRE CT 06410

Present

Dr. Patrick Duffy, MD, Chairman

Commissioners: Paul Fracasse, Erin Muttu, Michael O'Donnell, John Perosino, Ray Stewart,
Steve Trifone

Absent: Fiona Pearson, Council Liaison
Mark Cunningham, Highway Superintendent

Staff: Elizabeth Mayne, Program Supervisor
John Gawlak, Director of Parks and Recreation
Brendan Moran, Program Coordinator
Kiran Johnson

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chairman called the meeting to order.

2. ROLL CALL

The Clerk called the roll and a quorum was determined to be present

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The group pledged Allegiance to the Flag.

- The Chairman addressed **Old Business, Item A, Item E, i. and ii** and the Chairman Report.
The Chairman then left the meeting and Mr. O'Donnell directed the remainder of the agenda.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

John Climie, Director of Team CT Girls Lacrosse, addressed the Commission regarding the use of turf fields in town, as this would be a central location for all participants on Team CT Girls Lacrosse. This group includes 30-35 Cheshire families. Mr. Climie would need about 6 hours on Saturdays and 10 hours on Sundays. Members discussed this subject and the potential revenue. Mr. Gawlak will provide a fee schedule for the members for next season. This item will be on next month's agenda for further discussion and consideration.

5. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES – July 1, 2026

MOTION by Mr. O'Donnell, seconded by Mr. Trifone

MOVED to approve the minutes of the meeting of July 1, 2026

VOTED The motion passed unanimously by those present

5. PARKS UPDATE - PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. Cunningham was not in attendance.

7. TOWN COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT

Ms. Talbot was not in attendance.

8. COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Gawlak shared the following emails:

- a. Dianna Pele, dated August 14, regarding the screeching swings at Bartlem Park, The noise can affect persons with disabilities. Public Works has addressed the noise at the swings.
- b. Lila Devine, dated August 28, regarding the park & rec sign advertising the concerts. She feels that using AI for this purpose is detrimental to our planet. She would rather have a local artist to do these drawings instead.
- c. Chris Wetmore, dated August 17, regarding the pending closing of the pool for maintenance and whether the pool fees would be prorated or refunded. Aquatics Director, Sheila Adams, replied to this email and stated there would be no refunds.

9. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman spoke about the concerts this year; he acknowledged the sponsors, Park & Rec personnel and Public Works for their efforts. The bands were excellent. Most important is the amount of food collected at the concerts; so far, we have collected about 700 lbs. and hope for a good turnout at the next two concerts.

10. NEW BUSINESS

A. Andrew Borelli Memorial Bench at McNamara Legion Park

Mr. Borelli's father, requested a memorial bench for his son who recently passed. Mr. Gawlak advised Mr. Borelli that after the capital budget is approved, in the improvement funds there may be resources available for memorial benches.

MOTION by Mr. Trifone, seconded by Mr. Perosino

MOVED to accept this bench request and table this item until further discussion and for location of the bench

VOTED The motion passed unanimously by those present

B. Fall Festival Tent - Share with Environment Commission

Mr. Gawlak reported the festival will take place September 18 and 19. Park & Rec will share the tent on September 19. Volunteers are welcome to assist, each session would be two hours for volunteers, between 10 and 4.

C. Bartlem Park Native Plant Environment Project

Karen Schnitzer, 18 Courier Place, Chair, Environment Commission and Ron Walters, President of the Mill River Watershed Association presented this project. They are looking to improve the retention basins with native plants, and to benefit wildlife. Discussion ensued and the members asked questions and they were addressed by Mr. Walters.

It was noted that all the appropriate permits would need to be filed and approved.

MOTION by Ms. Muttu, seconded by Mr. Trifone

MOVED to accept the concept of this idea after all approvals have been granted

VOTED The motion passed unanimously by those present

D. Mixville Park Pre-Construction Meeting September 10- Boardwalk

Mr. Gawlak stated he was invited by Engineering to a pre-construction meeting scheduled for September 10. He will give an update at the October meeting.

11. OLD BUSINESS

A. 2025 Jim Nankin Recreation Persons of the Year - Natale DiNatale and Sam Kaplowitz

The Chairman stated that Mr. Nankin was involved in football, and Special Olympics. Mr. Nankin served as Chairman of the Cheshire Parks and Recreation Commission for 27 years. He was on the Republican Committee and the Election Committee; and was also a Constable.

Mrs. Nankin normally presents this award but was not able to be at the meeting to and she sends her congratulations.

This year the award will be presented to two recipients:

Natale DiNatale and Sam Kaplowitz for their accomplishments in the building of the Disc Golf Course.

The Chairman congratulated them and thanked them for their contribution to the town and also recognized the many volunteers involved in this project.

B. E-Bike Concerns at Bartlem Park (Specifically Walking Trails) - Potential Ordinance Creation

Mr. Gawlak reported that the Police Dept is working with the Ordinance Committee and Town Council on an ordinance specifically on street take overs. At the last department meeting there was little discussion about e-bikes.

Ms. Mayne reported back from the Youth and Human Services Dept that the Chairperson expressed thanks for the great work we do on maintaining the fields and how we handled the e-bikes situation in the park. Other members felt that the kids on e-bikes should be able to use the driveways.
The Commission discussed the dangers of the e-bikes.

C. Adaptive Field Project Cheshire Park 1

Mr. Gawlak reported that the application has been submitted to Planning & Zoning on September 1 for the September 14 meeting and the public hearing will be heard on September 28. If all is approved, the project will go out to bid, the bid will be awarded, and then we proceed from there.

D. Yankee Highlands Project – Update

Mr. Gawlak distributed three reports submitted by Francisco Perez, CT NEMBA, for project updates.

E. Eagle Scout Projects

i. Jehan Moody and Colin Dyer - HoneyPot Project

The Chairman asked Jehan Moody and Colin Dyer, Eagles Scouts, to talk about their contribution in the building of the 18-hole course tee pads at the Disc Golf Course. The Scouts stated the project took 3 work days and 4 tons of wood and lots of volunteers.

Mr. Gawlak reported that the Scouts also purchased 100 discs with the HoneyPot logo that were passed to the volunteers and the scouts that helped with the project.

ii. Kyle Shutts, Eagle Scout with Troup 198, reported on his project at the Boulder Knoll Trails. He stated it took 300 hours of planning and two work days. 23 markers were put on the trail, and he cleared a mile and half of trail. The trail is now open. He thanked the Recreation staff and Sein Henri of the Environment Commission for their assistance.

F. Park Audit Conducted August 18 - Acrisure Risk Specialist Mark Wantrob

Mr. Gawlak reported that the audit shows good results for the parks.

12. DIRECTOR'S DEPARTMENT REPORT

Mr. Gawlak's full report is attached to the minutes. Red line items are new submissions.

Eagle Scout Projects:

There are three more Eagle Scouts looking for projects

Two are completed. At the Pollinator garden they updated the Mixville sign. One Scout updated the sign at the entrance of Lock 12.

One proposed project is to provide a rain barrel to capture water off the Guard Shack to avoid carrying water cans.

Another one would like to do something to commemorate John McNamara at McNamara Park.

Another wants to do something with storage; that is on hold until we get funding from the Council.

Ms. Mayne reported that a teacher is asking about a Gaga-pit at the schools.

Mr. Gawlak distributed copies of his email regarding fall fields. A copy is attached to these minutes.

Quinnipiac Soccer Fields adult men's team poor decision to play in rain Sunday August 25 closed field 3 & 4 at Quinnipiac Park indefinitely.

MOTION by Mr. O'Donnell, seconded by Mr. Trifone

MOVED to suspend Cheshire United Over 40, John Beecher, from playing on Fields 3 & 4 for the rest of the season

VOTED The motion passed unanimously by those present

13. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Mr. Perosino

MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

VOTED the motion passed unanimously by those present.

Respectfully submitted,



Angela Izzo

John Gawlak

Add to record

From: John Gawlak
Sent: Wednesday, August 19, 2026 4:18 PM
To: Kristine Drust; Christopher Donlin; Chris Marini; Shaun Leska; Richard Uluski
Cc: Martelli, Andrew; Bombero, Daniel J.; prdmd@cox.net; Mike O'Donnell
Subject: Fall Fields
Importance: High

Good afternoon,

With Lacrosse, football, flag football, Cheer and soccer schedules complete, I continue the diamond portion of the fall field schedule. I want to address the challenges I am facing with field assignments and ask for everyone's cooperation. As you know, we have several organizations CYB, Reds, Aviators, CYS, Charge, Adult men's softball serving our youth/adult sports community all identified by the Parks & Recreation Commission as Priority groups 1/2 as of June 2024. Each organization has league and travel teams with legitimate field needs. At the same time, we have a limited number of preferred fields, and the fall season presents an additional challenge because of the reduced daylight and limited weekday scheduling opportunities. I understand that each organization is focused on providing the best possible experience for its players and teams. However, the reality is that we simply do not have enough preferred field space to accommodate every request exactly as each organization would prefer.

I am asking each organization to approach the fall requests with a willingness to cooperate, share resources, and consider the overall needs of the community rather than only the needs of individual programs. I would also encourage everyone to communicate directly and respectfully with one another when conflicts arise rather than allowing disagreements over field assignments to become larger issues. I want all of these programs to be successful, and we recognize the tremendous amount of time and effort that you as volunteers, coaches, and families put into providing these opportunities for our youth. The goal is making the best use of the limited facilities we have available. I appreciate everyone's understanding and cooperation as we work through the fall schedule. It's my hope we can develop a schedule that works reasonably well for everyone.

I have Reds, Aviators and Men's softball (Sundays 9/13 start 8a to 2p CP2, Highland /Doolittle if needed) requests. I received CYS and Charge this afternoon and still waiting on CYB (Chris Marini on vacation through the end of the week). I myself will be out of office tonight through Monday assisting my daughter back to school in South Carolina. I will do my best to put out a preliminary schedule upon my return. For perspective, the past two fall schedules have been released on August 22 and August 26, with final revisions occurring during the second week of September. I understand everyone's desire to get started as soon as possible and provide families with a firm fall schedule, and I will work to get this completed as quickly as possible while also ensuring that we have considered all of the requests.

I have requested through Town Managers Office to DPW for Chapman 1/2 to be turned over once the YMCA camp is completed

Thank you for your continued commitment to our community and our youth sports programs.

Regards

John Gawlak CPRP

Director Parks & Recreation

Town of Cheshire

203-272-2743

559 S. Main St.

Cheshire, CT 06410

https://www.cheshirect.org/government/departments_and_divisions/recreation

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C H E S H I R E

Parks & Recreation



John Gawlak

From: John Gawlak
Sent: Friday, August 28, 2026 4:02 PM
To: Joe Bowman; Jason Bartlett; Sean Brunnock; Michael Devine; Chris Donlin; Chris Marini; Kristine Drust; Richard Uluski; eric bailey; Clarissa Clarke; Jenn Beling; Matt Jermin; DJ; Andy Aldo; Zavosh Kohan; LUIS MENDONCA; John Beecher; Edmonde Bernier Jr; Kim; Debra Brickey; John Perosino
Cc: Martelli, Andrew; Bombero, Daniel J.; Cunningham, Mark; prdmd@cox.net; Mike O'Donnell; Mayne, Elizabeth; Moran1, Brendan; Dunn, Stephanie; Massey, Krista; Kimball, Sean
Subject: Fall Master Field Schedule -2026
Attachments: Fall Field Master Schedule 82726.pdf; Fall Field Master Schedule 82726.2.pdf; Fall Field Master Schedule 82726.3revised.pdf; Fall Field Master Schedule 82726.5.pdf
Importance: High
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Good afternoon

The master field schedule has been laid out. There is lots of information that has been exchanged/processed over the last month or so regarding each organizations needs. I attempted to do my best in capturing most of it. This schedule is a guide and most likely fluid as time passes. Please go into MYRec and request fields that have been approved for your organization this must be completed please. Also, add any field maintenance needs in the maintenance fields of the web page when entering information. This is important so that the calendar shows field location space reserved, DPW can recognize field use and maintain accordingly. If you require assistance or encounter problems with the web page and your account please call my office and speak with Stephanie or Krista they will more than happy to work with you.

Some important dates to remember:

Sept. 4 and 18 Bartlem Beats concerts at Bartlem NO FIELD USE

Sept. 18-20 Annual Fall Festival at Bartlem NO FIELD USE

October 10 CHS Music n Motion Bartlem is used for parking staging and band practice NO FIELD USE

Park restrooms typically close end of October depending on weather. Port o lets will be put into place for the reminder of the fall season.

Again thanks for your cooperation, working with others and patience I know some fall sports are full swing while others are gearing up.

John Gawlak CPRP

Director Parks & Recreation

Town of Cheshire

203-272-2743

559 S. Main St.

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Cheshire Parks Recreation Master Field Schedule Fall 2026

2026 FA	Bart D1	Bart D2	Bart Turf 2024	CP D1	CP D2 lights	CP D3	MP D1	MP D2	MP D3	MP D4	Dodd BD	Dodd SD
Monday	Open	Open		Aviators	CYS Maj games	CYS minors	Reds 10u	Reds 9u	CYB	Reds 12u	Open	Open
Tuesday	Reds 14u	Charge 10u		CYS inst	Charge games	CYS inst	CYB	CYB	CYB	Reds 11u	Open	Clark 13u
Wednesday	Reds 13u	Charge 9u		Aviators	CYS Maj games	CYS Minors	CYB	Reds 9u	CYB	Reds 12u	Open	Open
Thursday	Reds 14u	Charge 10u		CYS inst	Charge 16u	CYS inst	CYB	CYB	CYB	Aviators	Open	Clark 13u
Friday	Reds 13u	Open		Aviators	Open	Charge 9u	Reds 10u	CYB	CYB	Reds 11u	Open	Open
Saturday		PREC 9/25 only		CYS games	CYS games	CYS games	CYB 8u-1p	CYB 8u-1p	CYB 8u-1p	CYB 8u-1p	Open	Open
Sunday		Open		CYS games	9u-2p	9u-2p	E.Shore 2p-dusk	E.Shore 2p-dusk	E.Shore 2p-dusk	E.Shore 2p-dusk	Open	Open

NOTE: CIAC.org for Alerts High School Game Changes

Special Note
CHS FOS Tournament
Oct.

Cheshire Community Pool Swim Meet(s)

Men's Adult SB season: Sept. 13-Nov. 9 CP 2 & Doolittle 8am-2pm

CHS events no Bartlem use due to parking
Park Rec Programs: Bartlem Beats Fridays Sept 4 and Sept. 18,19,20 including FALL FESTIVAL BARTLEM PARK
Music n Motion Oct. 10 No use of Bartlem Fields after 3pm

Cheshire Parks Recreation Master Field Schedule Fall 2026

2026 FA	Darcy SD	High D1	Dool D1	Chap D1	Chap 2	CHS Var	CHS JV
Monday		?	CYB	Aviators	Aviators	Charge 11,12,14u	Charge 11,12,14u
Tuesday		?	CYB	Aviators	Aviators	Charge 16u	Charge 16u
Wednesday		?	CYB	Aviators	Aviators	Charge 11,12,14u	Charge 11,12,14u
Thursday		?	CYB	Aviators	Aviators	Charge 8u	Charge 8u
Friday		?	CYB	Aviators	Aviators	Charge	Charge
Saturday		?	CYB	Aviators	Aviators	Charge DBHDRS	Charge DBHDRS
Sunday		?	Mens SB	Aviators	Aviators	Charge DBHDRS	Charge DBHDRS
Note:			9a-2p				

Please note items below are typical events
CHS FOS Tournament

Oct.

Cheshire Community Pool Swim Meet



Cheshire Parks Recreation Master Field Schedule Fall 2026

2026 FA	Bart M1	Bart M2	Bart M3	Bart Turf 2024	Bart M5	Bart M6am	Bart M7am	QP M1	QP M2	QP M3	QP M4	QP M5
Monday	Baseball	CHS Athletics	CJF	CHS Athletics CY FHoc 5-6:30p CJF 6:30p-9p	CHS Athletics CYB Lacrosse	CHS Athletics CYB Lacrosse	CHS Athletics CYB Lacrosse	CSOC	CSOC	Closed	Closed	CSOC
Tuesday	Baseball	CHS Athletics	CJF	CHS Athletics CJF till 9p	Open flex space	Open for rain	Open CJF	CSOC	CSOC	Closed	Closed	CSOC
Wednesday	Baseball	CHS Athletics	CJF	CHS Athletics CJF till 9p	Open flex space	Open for rain	Open CJF	CSOC	CSOC	Closed	Closed	CSOC
Thursday	Baseball	CHS Athletics	CJF	CHS Athletics CJF till 9p	Open flex space	Open for rain	Open CJF	CSOC	CSOC	Closed	Closed	CSOC
Friday	Baseball	CHS Athletics	CJF	CHS Athletics CJF till 9p	CHS Athletics CYB Lacrosse	CHS Athletics CYB Lacrosse	CHS Athletics CYB Lacrosse	CSOC	CSOC	Closed	Closed	CSOC
Saturday			CJF Flag 8a-noon	CJF Flag till 2pm	FLG7	FLG7		CSOC	CSOC	Closed	Closed	CSOC
Sunday					Team 2023/NovE	Team 2023/NovE	Team 2023/NovE	CSOC	CSOC	Closed	Closed	CSOC

Special Note: Fall Festival No use Bartlem Sept.

CHS events no Bartlem use due to parking

1. Park Rec Programs: Bartlem Beats Fridays Sept 4 and Sept. 18,19,20 including FALL FESTIVAL BARTLEM PARK

2. Music n Motion Oct. 11 No use of Bartlem Fields after 3pm

Cheshire Youth Girls Lax Fridays Sept 11- Oct. 10

Cheshire Youth Boys Lax Clinic Sept. 14 Mondays until Oct. 31

Cheshire Youth Soccer Fields 1/2 with portable lights

In House August 18 -Oct. 28

Travel Premier August 18-November 17

Men's Adult Soccer Sunday mornings till Noon

CTSASL.com

SNEASL.com

Nonrester Lacrosse

Pract M5-7 Oct. 18 9a-12p

Cheshire Community Pool Swim Meet

Team 2023 Lacrosse event

Pract M5-7 9/27, 10/4 9a-2p

Pract M5-7 10/11 9a-12p

Pract M5-7 11/1 10a-12p

Pract M5-7 11/15 10a-12p

HOLD Nov. 14 9a-4p

