

**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**  
**Monday January 9, 2023**  
**Trumbull Council Chambers**  
**Meeting minutes**

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Kevin Bellows  
Ed Ritacco  
Ken Martin  
Brian LeClerc  
Cat Lamy  
Mike Travisano  
Nancy Walsh

**ABSENT**

John O'Brien

Also present: Mr. Matt D'Amico, Assistant Parks Superintendent

Meeting called to order by K. Bellows at 7:01 PM.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Matthew Sather of 328 Booth Hill Rd appeared before the commission to discuss ice skating at Unity Pond and the reasons for it being prohibited by the town. Mr. Sather drilled the ice to test for thickness and safety. A park ranger told them they needed to leave as skating is not permitted. Mr. Sather then went to Frog Pond and drilled to find the ice thickness unacceptable for skating. However, there were hockey players skating there and Mr. Sather was concerned for their safety. Mr. Sather then e-mailed Mr. Bellows and Mr. Paris and inquired as to the reasons for the no skating ordinance. He found the answer of "liability" unacceptable, as just about every activity carries some liability for the town. He requests that Unity Park be opened for skating, citing the shallowness of the ponds as being safe for skaters.

Mr. Martin questioned the response received by Mr. Sather and asked for the ordinance that prohibits skating. Mr. Bellows indicated that the ordinance is on the Parks website. The ordinance restricts skating on any frozen surface on town-owned property, with the exception of the pond at the upper end of Beach Rd. Mr. Martin questioned why town liability is limited to skating, when any activity on the trails or in the parks can result in injury and thus liability. Mr. Martin believes the ordinance to be poorly written.

Mr. D'Amico responded that conditions at the Unity Park ponds cannot be regulated due to organic material at the bottom of the pond which generates heat. The depth is variable, the ice freezes at different rates and unevenly. Mr. D'Amico mentioned the man-made rink that is planned for Twin Brooks Park once the construction is completed.

Mr. Martin suggested that the park rangers be required to monitor the water level and check the ice thickness daily and post signs accordingly.

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by B. LeClerc, seconded by E. Ritacco to approve the minutes as presented.

Vote: 6-0-1 (Martin)

#### CORRESPONDENCE

E-mail from Mr. Matt Sather regarding skating.

#### OLD BUSINESS

Ice Skating:

E. Ritacco: need to find a way to open Unity for ice skating.

M. D'Amico: Ice needs to be 5 inches thick for group skating.

K. Martin: Beach Pond is unsafe due to branches and debris in the pond.

M. D'Amico: Could be a manpower issue to monitor the ice throughout the day.

K. Martin: Temporary ice rink at Twin brooks Park. Can it be placed on the large field?

M. Travisano: The field is not flat. Parking lot is a better fit for a temporary rink. Ansonia's rink is in a parking lot. Can there be hours for "sticks and pucks" and hours for free skate?

Moved by K. Martin, seconded by E. Ritacco to ask the Superintendent of Parks and/or staff to be present at the next commission meeting to discuss a plan to implement ice skating at Unity Pond for the remainder of the current winter.

**VOTE:** Unanimous in favor

#### NEW BUSINESS

C Lamy reported that she had a phone call with Mary Isaac regarding the use of funds generated from the "nips" bottle return. M. Isaac recommended that C. Lamy discuss with G. Estrada and D. Paris.

Bridge at Old Mine Park: M. D'Amico reported that two trees have fallen onto the bridge since it was closed. One support is certainly in need of repair as well as railings and decking.

K. Martin reported that cyclists were still entering the area. He would like a report on the progress of bridge repair at the next meeting.

#### SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Manpower issues are resolved with people back from vacations and illnesses. They are working up in the orchard right now removing downed trees. Another tree fell at the former VFW property and needs removal. They are working on pruning trees around town. Full report is attached.

K. Martin inquired as to the help Parks may have provided to the highway department during leaf removal. No workers were diverted from their assigned Parks duties to help with leaf pickup.

**DIVISION REPORTS**

**Recreation:**

**Written report was included with the agenda.**

**Park Rangers:**

**Written report was included with the agenda.**

**E. Ritacco moved, seconded by K. Martin to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 PM.**

**VOTE: unanimous in favor**

## **Parks and Recreation Superintendent Report**

**January 9, 2023**

Parks and Recreation staff levels have been low recently due to planned days off during the holidays.

We are currently pruning the apple trees in the orchard at Woods Property and expect to complete this project mid-January should the weather cooperate.

Staff conduct regular seasonal pool mechanical maintenance.

Multiple tree failures on Park property during the storm on December 23. Staff response on December 24 to clear trees obstructing paths or presenting hazards and perform ice mitigation at Town buildings and associated parking lots.

Two trees failed, struck and further damaged wooden bridge in Pequonock Valley trail near Old Mine Park.



**Town of Trumbull  
Parks and Recreation  
Ranger Division**

**Parks and Recreation Commission  
Ranger Division December 2022 Report**

Commissioners,

This report is a summary of the Ranger Division activities for the December 2022. As Winter and the holiday season came upon us, activity slowed a bit as expected. There were some mild days which brought out more visitors in the parks.

In December, Rangers responded and took 27 written reports. During proactive patrol, rangers observed 6 cases of dogs being off leash at Twin Brooks, Unity and Indian Ledge. There was 1 case of littering at the Great Oak Park Parking Lot, and 2 cases of dumping, one at Rails 2 Trails Quarry Road and a Charcol Grill left at Old Mine park. There was 1 case of damage to Town Property at Twin Brooks as a result of operating a motor vehicle on the grass. Rangers responded to several reports of hazards of fallen trees, and assisted Trumbull Police with a person struck by a motor vehicle at the Franklin and Water Fall gates of Twin Brooks, reported ATV operation in Twin Brooks, and a brush fire at Unity. Rangers also assisted animal control with a wounded dog on the trails at Indian Ledge Park. There were also three observed cases of ice skating at Unity.

There were 29 parking violations issued, 6 written parking warnings.

Parking Violations by park	Written Parking Warnings
Twin Brooks 22	3
Old Mine 4	0
Indian Ledge 3	0
Island Brook 0	3
Unity 0	0

Respectfully Submitted  
Steven Chapman  
Chief Park Ranger

## RECREATION REPORT

January 2023

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With approximately 800 participants in the various basketball leagues, we are happy to be bringing back the adaptive basketball program starting mid-January. Games for grades 4-12 will start at the end of the month and the younger age groups have settled into a nice routine.

Roller skating (now at the Center at Priscilla Place), badminton, yoga, Pilates, karate, and volleyball have all resumed this winter along with the addition of indoor pickleball. Indoor tennis lessons and youth cooking classes also start mid-January with ukulele lessons returning this spring.

We're busy planning for the summer concert series, various camps, swim lessons, etc. We expect the majority of our 2022 seasonal staff to return, but within the next few months we will start the hiring process.

### **Other:**

- Office closed January 16 and February 20, 2023.