

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
FISCAL YEAR 2018/2019

Members of the Chester Park and Recreation Commission promote healthy lifestyles through recreation by providing parks and programs that meet the needs of all town residents, while maintaining a fiscally responsible operation. Most of the budget of net expenditures is for park maintenance, while programs are self-funded. In addition, contributions from groups and individuals in the community have helped finance various activities.

The Commission is responsible for the maintenance and renovation of 7 facilities in Chester. They are North Quarter Park, Chester Creek Overlook at the Town Dock, Pelletier Park on Cedar Lake, Lake View Park on Cedar Lake Road, Parkers Point Boat Launch on the Connecticut River, L'hommeideau Park on the Pattaconk Brook, and the baseball fields at Chester Elementary School. This year the Commission repurposed parts of the 1986 Big Toy unit and installed new playground equipment at North Quarter Park as part of a 4-year renovation project. Sandy Atkinson donated the use of the water at A Style Above Hair Salon to make this project possible. The Chester Public Works Department was instrumental in maintaining all parks, with extra attention to North Quarter Park and Lake View Park this spring. Volunteers from Divers' Cove helped prepare Pelletier Park for the summer season. Sand was also replaced due to the 2018 flood, in advance of a FEMA Disaster Relief Grant of \$27,482 received for park damage after the close of the fiscal year, with additional repairs to be completed in 2019/2020.

The department sold a record 203 non-resident park passes during the summer of 2018, with income to the Town's General Fund for fiscal year 2018/2019 of \$14,130. Fees collected for the Children's Summer Camp contributed \$32,125 to the General Fund. The balance of Camp fees collected was used to operate the program. Scholarship funds, determined by the Human Services Director and the Chester Elementary School Counselor, fund expenses for those who would not otherwise be able to participate in the Camp. The Camp program operates without money from the taxpayer funded budget. In addition to support from the Town's Human Services department, \$1,685 in contributions were received from Chester Rotary Club, Allison and Michael Abramson, Carolyn and Drew Blicharz, Jessica Dobratz and Nicholas Gorra, Candace and Justin Kronholm, and Kimberly Stack. Camp supplies were donated by David Clark. First Student provided program participants with school bus service from Chester Elementary School and John Winthrop Middle School to the Town Hall during the academic year.

Self-funded programs included 142 participants in the 2018 Children's Summer Camp Program, filling 325 spaces. Academic year self-funded program registrations included 7 sessions of Karate with 35 different participants and a field trip to Spare Time with 45 students in grades Kindergarten through grade 8. Flag Football had 12 children and there were 64 youth basketball players as well as 8 adult basketball members. Additional Adult programs included 27 Yoga participants at the Town Hall and 18 registrants for Ballroom Dancing at the Meeting House. American Red Cross courses included two classes each, with 31 participants, in Community CPR/AED and First Aid and 13 enrolled in Babysitter's Training. Our Counselor-in-Training program prepared 13 7th and 8th grade students to assist the Camp Counselors and Lifeguards for the 2019 season.

Chester Parks and Recreation ended the fiscal year in 2019 by registering children in 335 camp spaces. Camp and Lifeguarding positions provided summer employment to 20 local residents, with 9 new staff members hired for 2019. We are fortunate to have the resources of several beautiful park facilities and exceptional employees and volunteers. They help fulfill the purpose of the Chester Park and Recreation Commission by improving the quality of life for all citizens by "*Celebrating Community through People, Parks, and Programs*".