

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION FISCAL YEAR 2019/2020

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'hommedieu Park on the Pataconk Brook, and the baseball fields at Chester Elementary School.

This year the Commission continued renovations to North Quarter Park. The repurposing of parts from the 1986 Big Toy unit and installation of new playground equipment was completed. A 9-hole Disc Golf Course was created, with the assistance of summer staff members Katie Amara, Jackson Bisson, Sam Iselin, Randy Netsch, Egan Rothrock, Tyler Sanders, Zak Saunders, and Reece Whitney. Sandy Atkinson donated the use of the water at A Style Above Hair Salon to make these projects possible. The surfacing of the North Quarter Park Basketball Court was made possible by the donation of time and materials from Nancy and Chris Hamilton and CT Paving. The Chester Public Works Department was instrumental in the maintenance of all parks, with extra attention to North Quarter Park during the renovations. Stone was replaced at Pelletier Park, Parker's Point Boat Launch, and L'hommedieu Park, and Pelletier Park was reseeded, to repair damage done in the 2018 flood, with funds from a FEMA Disaster Relief Grant. Revenue from non-resident park passes during the summer of 2019 and June of 2020 provided income to the Town's General Fund for fiscal year 2019/2020 of \$11,454, despite the required COVID restrictions in 2020. The Town beach on Cedar Lake met the unprecedented challenges of operating a safe swimming area, thanks to our seasonal Parks and Recreation staff.

Fees collected for the Children's Summer Camp during the summer of 2019 contributed \$33,555 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, funded 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, \$1,855 in contributions were received from Chester Rotary Club, Allison and Michael Abramson, Tatiana Bobzin, Christine and Michael Conklin, Barbara and James Crotty, Jessica Dobratz and Nicholas Gorra, Stephanie Farrand, Lisa Hayward, Sara and Stephen Holmes, Rebecca and Charlie Iselin, Carol and Stuart Johnson, Jen Malaguti, Peg and Ed Meehan, Erin Neviasher, Lisa Pickman, Tracy and Bob Quale, and Claudia VanNes.

Self-funded programs included the 2019 Children's Summer Camp Program, filling 335 spaces. Academic year self-funded program registrations included 7 sessions of Karate with 35 different participants and field trips to Spare Time and the Mystic Seaport for 52 students in grades Kindergarten through grade 6. A Lacrosse clinic was offered to grades 2 through 6 with 26 participants. There were 53 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. An American Red Cross Community CPR/AED and First Aid course enrolled 9 participants.

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*".