

West Seneca Youth and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes
1300 Union Rd., West Seneca, NY 14224
April 17, 2024

I. Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 P.M.

In attendance: Tammy Sugrue
Michael Smolen
Matt Bauer
Lauren Masset
Meichle Latham

II. Approval of Minutes from March 20, 2024

Meeting Minutes were not able to be approved as a Quorum was not met.

III. Introduction of New Commission Member

IV. Continued Business

A. Playgrounds Initiative – Phase II

1. Sunshine Park Community Build

- Planned for April 27, 2024 8 A.M. – 1 P.M.
- Roughly a dozen people have signed up to help
- Holes will be drilled, equipment laid out and organized, posts set, and concrete will be poured the week of April 22, 2024

2. Fisher Court Park

- Demolition and sitework has started
- Drainage and stone base are set to be finished next week, weather dependent
- Community Build is planned for May 18, 2024
- Flyers and notices will be pushed out in the area
- Looking for suggestions to better reach the residents in the Fisher Court Park area

B. Playgrounds Initiative Phase III

1. Fireman's, Dorrance, and Harlem

- No design ideas for the next few builds as stated by Highway Superintendent Adams

C. Commission Led Events

1. Trivia Night

- Looking for an alternative place to hold event as the gym availability did not work with Ms. Sugrue's schedule
- Large conference room is a possibility as not a lot of space is needed

2. Scavenger Hunt

- Looking to use Burchfield this year

- Possible to use same location as last year and do a different type of scavenger hunt
- Open to public comments on different location ideas or opinions on using Burchfield
- Concern with using Burchfield are possible parking issues if the patio construction is not done in time

3. Field Days

- Mr. Smolen stated he got in touch with Stephanie Wright from the West Seneca Central School District regarding Field Days
- Ms. Wright would like to be in contact with the person in charge of the event from the Recreation Commission
- It was questioned if Ms. Masset has a facility use request account as not everyone on the commission can access the website
- It would be beneficial to have an account the whole commission can use - will reach out to AIS to remedy this situation
- It is suggested that a few committee members get together to investigate and try to arrange Field Days
- Trying to find a respective venue which may or may not be held at a West Seneca Central School District facility or property
- At this time it is unknown how big of an area is needed
- Would like to pair it with community days, but at this point it is difficult to do
- Not pairing it with community days opens up more location options
- A park location would make things much easier

4. Walk in the Park

- Ms. Clayson has needed to step down
- A meeting with Joe Kirchmeyer is set for April 24, 2024 to talk about ways to collaborate with the Chamber of Commerce
- Mr. Kirchmeyer is willing to sponsor the first Walk in the Park
- Looking at other parks and service organizations to take the lead to sponsor a Walk in the Park and theme for those days
- Still in motion but no plan is set in place
- Who is the contact for the Youth Volunteer Program – Ms. Masset will help determine who that is
- As part of the survey, people were requesting 5K's or walks – this is a way to bring people out, make them aware of some of the parks and the walking paths

D. Pool

- The recommended \$0 resident fee and \$5 non-resident fees were brought before the Town Board and are again being referred to the Recreation Commission
- Four of the Town Board members would like the \$5 non-resident fee increased to \$10
- Another Town Board member would like to see the \$0 fee increased to \$2 or \$3
- Confusion as it seems as though the Town Board members are going to push back and return the recommendations until the Board gets what it wants – recommended to speak with Councilmember Breidenstein

- Season passes would be a good idea
- Having a non-cash option would be a great idea – waiting to hear back from the Finance Director about an idea they have come up with
- Another round of appointments should be made at an upcoming Board meeting as applications are flowing in for both summer recreation and aquatics
- Working on bringing back swim lessons

Public Comment (3 min/person)

Courtney Fallon of Treehaven Road made the following comments and questions:

- See attached hand out regarding pool entry fees
- Questioned the issue with the \$0 and \$5 fees – the issue is having the needed amount of change on hand and only being able to have so much petty cash at a time
- Electronic payment needs to be accepted

Commission member made the following comments and questions:

- Is there a target date to have a decision made regarding the pool fees – would like it done soon so promotional materials can be completed and information can be made available for the townwide newsletter

Mitch Staunch of Flohr Avenue made the following comments and questions:

- Finds West Seneca largely inaccessible by bike
- Will any of the new playgrounds have bike racks – this is a great idea

Leah of Flohr Avenue made the following comments and questions:

- Concerned with the dog messes left in the park and not picked up – it is believed that most if not all the parks have waste bags for this purpose and would like residents to be considerate of others that use these properties
- A friendly reminder for people to pick up after their dogs and throw their trash away would be helpful – suggests that the Town Board and Police help spread the word

V. New Business

A. Recreation Director's Report

A Kick-Off to Summer event is being planned for June 28, 2024 12 P.M. – 3 P.M.

- Events will include a Glen Colton concert, Touch-a-Truck, color run as well as an inflatable slide and bounce house
- There will also be a half-hour quiet hour that will help to include kids with special needs
- Having something to do as a community is something the Residents want

B. CPL Update

- Transportation was something that is being looked into as part of the big comprehensive plan as a result of the survey
- Bike racks are something that are going to be a recommendation
- There has not been any other follow-up meeting since the survey was put out and no other information has been relayed at this time
- The results of the survey are to be available at the end of April and should know what they are in May if everything is still on track

VI. Commission Member Comments

None

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 P.M.

DRAFT

TOWN POOL ENTRY FEES

FEE FOR RESIDENTS: If we want the pool to be sustainable, we need to think long-term about costs. The ice rink has never been free. It still remains to be seen how the town will pay for the pool to be resurfaced.

It is worth noting that residents who swim will be required to pay a higher, non-resident rate for other town pools if our pool is closed because of mismanagement now.

COST FOR NON-RESIDENTS: There has been mention of going up to \$10 for non-residents. That is a 100% increase – it's too much and it's more than other towns or what we charge for the ice rink. Don't double the cost of pool admission for non-residents, simply charge each individual swimmer appropriately.

#1: **Raising the price to \$10 for non-residents without charging non-residents is out of compliance with the Land and Water Conservation Fund.** "Fees charged to nonresidents cannot exceed twice the amount charged to residents. Where there is no charge for residents, but a fee is charged to nonresidents, nonresident fees cannot exceed fees charged for residents at comparable State or local public facilities." **Non-resident fees should not exceed what is charged at the ice rink.**

#2: When determining the fee for non-residents, it's important to acknowledge that last year, non-resident swimmers were not charged for each individual swimmer – they were charged by group.

There were many reports of this on social media and I personally witnessed a group of 6 non-residents pay \$30 – \$5 for each person in their party – and then they received \$25 in change. They were confused and tried to give the full \$30 again.

This lack of charging individual non-resident swimmers was acknowledged at the November Recreation Commission meeting. Charge per swimmer for 2024 instead of doubling the price in 2024.

ATTENDANCE CONCERNS: It is important to recognize that there was low attendance at the pool prior to COVID because it was prohibitively difficult to get the required recreation ID for entry. That disastrous resident-only policy, which was out of compliance with federal law, is the reason why admission was low for several years – not because of the cost of admission. (The pool only became free in 2018 because of low attendance.)

SWIM PASSES: Please do not eliminate the option for swimmers to buy season passes for individuals.

At the November Recreation Commission meeting, the aquatics director stated that some swimmers were suspected of sharing their passes in 2023.

This could be prevented by adding a signature to the pass, which swimmers would have to verify at check-in. Swimmers are already required to sign in, so it's simply a matter of adding a signature to the swim pass.

As of right now, the Recreation Commission is planning on holding some junior high dances. Councilman Breidenstein has repeatedly stated that the rec department will hold several dances to give them an opportunity to work out any issues before determining whether the dances are a successful program or not. I beseech you to do the same for swim passes as an option for residents and non-residents.

A few suspected bad apples in summer 2023 shouldn't be enough reason to eliminate the swim passes altogether – especially if residents may be required to pay this year.

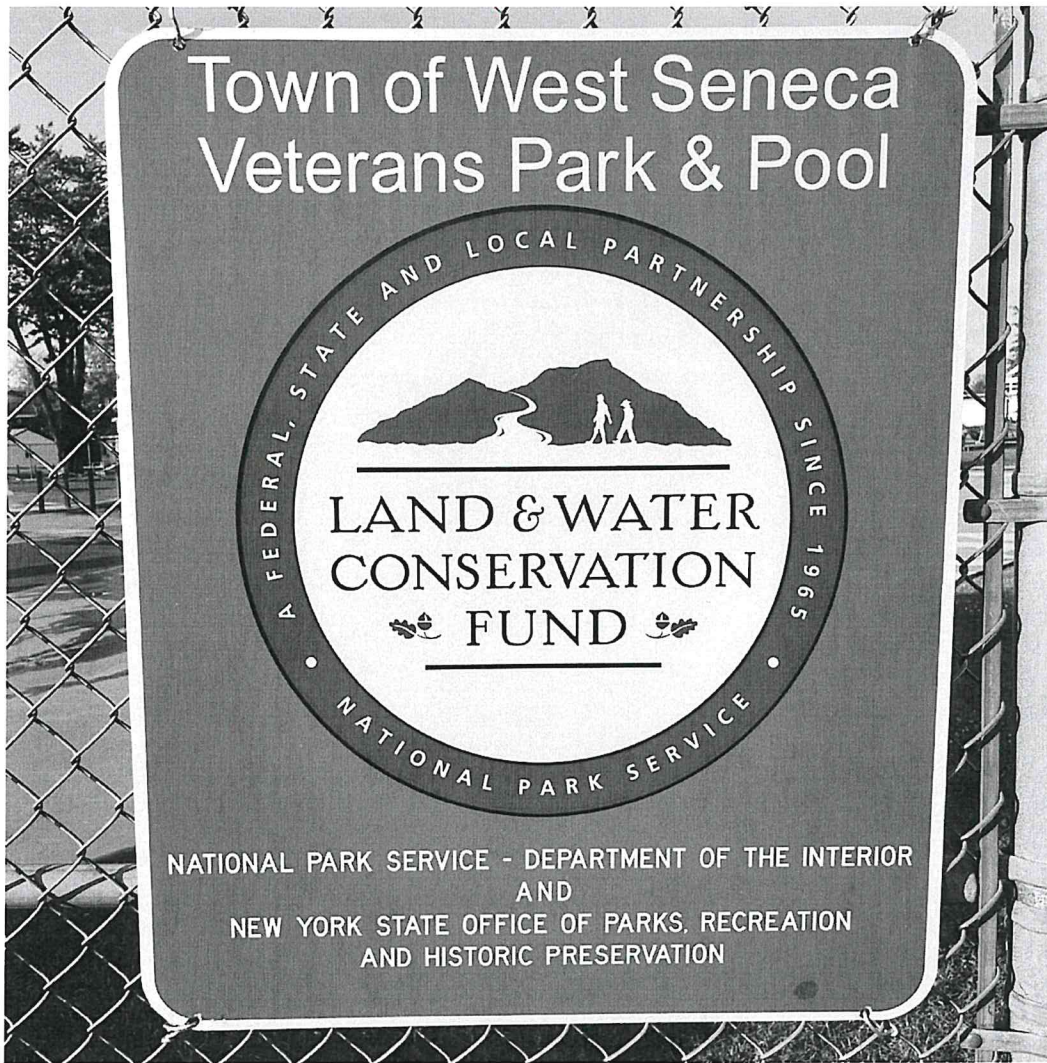
This is about fairness and fiscal good sense.

In summer 2023, 23 passes were sold at the price of \$50 per pass for a total of \$1150, which was almost 20% of the total revenue for summer 2023.

But pass holders were only 15% of the total visits.

That's extra income earned at the pool to offset operating costs.

Swim passes are an excellent choice for families who come to the pool every day and should be available for residents and non-residents.



West Seneca's Veteran's Park and Pool are a Land and Water Conservation Fund project. This means that **West Seneca MUST follow federal guidance on managing the pool, including admission fees.** Non-compliance will jeopardize West Seneca's eligibility for federal recreation funding, which is currently being sought to fund the new playground at Fireman's Park.

1. Non-residents have to be admitted to the pool and splash pad.
2. *"Fees charged to nonresidents cannot exceed twice the amount charged to residents. Where there is no charge for residents, but a fee is charged to nonresidents, nonresident fees cannot exceed fees charged for residents at comparable State or local public facilities."* Non-resident fees should not exceed what is charged at the ice rink.
3. *"The LWCF Act requires project sponsors maintain the entire area defined in the project agreement in some form of public outdoor recreation use. NPS approval must be obtained prior to any change from one eligible use to another [...] A change from a swimming pool with substantial recreational development to a less intense area of limited development such as a passive park, or vice versa, would, for example, require NPS review and approval."*
4. NON-COMPLIANCE WILL DISQUALIFY WEST SENECA FROM RECEIVING FEDERAL RECREATION FUNDING.

	Town of Aurora (a.k.a. East Aurora)		West Seneca Ice Rink		
Admission	Residents and "unaccompanied non-residents" can come for a single visit or become members.		Open to all members of the public. For decades, the prices for the ice rink and town pool were the same. There were 4 price categories - adult and kid, then divided into resident and non-residents. Non-resident rates were \$1-2 more.		
Daily Rates	Resident	Non-Resident	2023: Operated by Leisure/Holidays		
	\$4-5	\$5-6		Resident	Non-resident
Children 4 & under	Free	Free	4 and under	Free	Free
Children 5-18	\$4	\$5	Ages 5 to 59	\$6	\$8
Adults 19-59	\$5	\$6	60 and over	Free	Free
Seniors (60+)	\$4	\$5	2017-18: Operated by West Seneca Recreation		
Memberships	Resident	Non-Resident	4 and under	Free	Free
1 person (age 5-59)	\$50	\$66	Ages 5 to 59	\$4	\$6
Family of 2	\$88 (\$44/person)	\$116 (\$58/person)	Active Duty or Veteran Status	Free	\$4
Family of 3	\$123 (\$41/person)	\$162 (\$54/person)	60 and over	Free	\$5
Family of 4	\$152 (\$38/person)	\$200 (\$50/person)			
Family of 5	\$175 (\$35/person)	\$230 (\$46/person)			
Family of 6	(No rates listed for families with > 6 members.)				
Family of 7+ members					
Seniors (60+)	\$44	\$66 (no discount listed)			
Senior couples	\$78 (\$39/person)	N/A			
Where to Purchase Pool Passes	Membership passes available online and in the office! They'll also assist over the phone for anyone struggling with the MyRec system. Day passes available at pool gate.				
Health Insurance Accepted for Fees?	Yes - for membership and swimming lessons!				
Pool Rental	\$125/hour				
Dates (May vary slightly)	June 3 to August 18, 2023				