

Watertown Parks and Recreation Commission
Crestbrook Park Golf Course Sub-Committee
Regular Meeting
Minutes

DATE: Thursday, May 7, 2026
TIME: 6:00 PM
LOCATION: Town Hall - Parks & Recreation Conference Room
61 Echo Lake Road
Watertown CT 06795

I. Call Meeting to Order

Sub-committee Chairman Pat Rinaldi called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Members Present: Pat Rinaldi, Joseph, and Al Mickel (arrived at 6:03 p.m.)

Members Absent:

Others Present: Town Manager, Mark A. Raimo, William Donston, Chairman of Parks and Recreation, Michael Ganem, Director of Parks & Recreation, Joe Romano, Restaurant Representative

III. Public Participation – None

IV. Approval of Minutes

Thursday, April 2, 2026. Regular Meeting

Motion: Joseph McGrail seconded by Pat Rinaldi, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of Thursday, April 2, 2026. The motion passed.

V. Correspondence – the monthly revenue report was presented to the golf sub-committee. Letters and applications were reviewed.

VI. Reports:

A. Chairman – no report

B. Director – Provided an “impact statement” for the record.
There was discussion about the enterprise fund and, more specifically, the surcharge.

Mark A. Raimo, Town Manager, gave a brief overview of how the enterprise fund operates for water and sewer services. He also suggested marketing ideas to cross-promote other park amenities, such as the pool. Marty Byrnes sees “dynamic pricing” as another opportunity. There was a discussion about how and where employees' benefits are charged

C. Foreman – No Report

D. Golf Professional – play is up. Junior golf is trending in a positive direction. The local high schools have good programs.

E. Restaurant Representative – Mr. Romano. The team worked hard to open the restaurant for the 2026 season.

VII. Old Business: None

VIII. New Business –

A. Review and consideration of the Submitted Application and Tournaments for 2026

Nonnewaug Football, August 2, 2026

A motion was made by Al Mickel and seconded by Joe McGrail to recommend that the full commission approve this application.

Motion passed unanimously

X. Adjournment

A motion was made by Al Mickel and seconded by Joe McGrail to adjourn the regular meeting at 6:58 P.M.

Motion passed unanimously

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Rinaldi -Chairman
Crestbrook Park Golf Course Subcommittee

Director's Report, May 7, 2026

To: Golf Subcommittee, Watertown Parks and Recreation Commission

From: Michael Ganem, Director of Parks and Recreation

Subject: Crestbrook Park Golf Course

Community Impact

Crestbrook Park Golf Course makes Watertown a more desirable place to live and do business. We appreciate the opportunity to improve our return on investment, as we continue to attract golfers to the course and countless visitors to the park's features, including the restaurant, courts, pavilion, pond, and pool. I am grateful to the golfers, leagues, organizations, and park patrons for their continued support, and I am pleased with the trends shown at our golf course over the last number of years.

Understanding the Enterprise Account Model

An enterprise account is a specialized accounting mechanism used by government entities to manage services that operate like a private business. The costs of providing specific goods or services are recovered primarily through user fees rather than general tax revenue.

- **Self-Sustaining:** The primary goal is for the entity to generate enough revenue to cover its own operating expenses, debt service, and capital maintenance.
- **Separation of Funds:** Financial activities are kept separate from the government's "General Fund," ensuring revenue stays within the service.

Financial Objectives & Sustainability

Using historical costs and reasonable forecasted increases, along with contractual obligations, our goal is for revenue to offset the expenses within the Crestbrook budget.

Regarding the revenue line specifically identified as the "surcharge," we respectfully recommend that these funds remain isolated and be utilized as intended: for **non-recurring capital improvements** to the golf course. By dedicating this revenue to one-time enhancements rather than daily operational costs, we can better ensure the long-term quality and competitiveness of the facility.

Current trends in Watertown and other local municipalities indicate a shift in the fiscal landscape. For 2026 and beyond, projections suggest that a public subsidy of 20-30% of annual operating expenses is required to maintain operational standards. Under this scenario, the town currently projects an annual investment opportunity of approximately \$200,000 towards the long-term sustainability of the 234-acre park.

The Value of Our Community Assets

In closing, the continued investment in Crestbrook Park represents more than just a budgetary item; it is an investment in the foundational quality of life for all Watertown residents.

- **Preserving Open Space:** Maintaining our expansive green acreage ensures Watertown remains a scenic and environmentally healthy place to live.
- **A Hub for Leisure & Health:** Parks serve as essential social anchors, providing space for physical activity and community gathering.
- **Driving Economic Development:** A high-tier municipal park system is a powerful economic engine, stimulating local commerce and increasing the desirability of Watertown for residents and investors alike.

By balancing fiscal responsibility with a commitment to these vital resources, we ensure that Watertown continues to be a premier destination to live, work, and play for generations to come.