

**MINUTES**  
**Wilton Parks & Recreation Commission**  
**July 13, 2022 / 7:30 PM**  
**Virtual Meeting via Zoom**

**Attendees:**

- A) Commissioners; Bilella, Ring, Macken, Kendra, Guglielmo
- B) Director of P&R: Pierce
- C) Ex Officio: None
- D) Public: J.D. Freda, Nick Gemelli (guest speaker), Scott Lawrence (guest speaker)

- I. Call to Order – Bilella called the meeting to order at 7:34 pm.
- II. Approval of Minutes for June 8, 2022 – Bilella made a motion to approve, Macken seconded.  
**Approved 3-0-2** (Kendra and Guglielmo absent from June meeting).
- III. Correspondence – discussion and/or action
  - Pierce state none this month.
- IV. WARF & Youth Sports Coalition Update (Scott Lawrence & Nick Gemelli) – discussion and/or Action
  - WARF and the Youth Sports Coalition have come together under one umbrella, WARF, with an expanded mission, board and representatives.
  - Kevin Ring stated that he is the VP, Baseball within WARF’s expanded representation; He is in this role as a community member, not as a P&R Commission member.
  - WARF plans to transfer \$60K of revenue from banner sales over the past 4+ years to the Town with the intention to support additional turf field(s). Original WARF remit was to fund turf replacement and upkeep, thus the funds are intended for the Town to use for these purposes. The BOS agreed to use the funds for an analysis of the viability of turfing Allens Meadow Fields 5 & 6.
  - The organization is looking to grow/enhance fund raising, field utilization, new events, recreational asset support, and development. Launching efforts in September 2022 and plan to work in partnership and coordination with P&R Department as appropriate.
  - Chairman Bilella thanked WARF on behalf of the P&R Commission for:
    - The \$60K transfer of revenue to the Town in support of its recreational asset advancement.
    - For all the efforts made to monumentally grow the WARF organization and its mission as to continuously improve Wilton’s recreational assets to better serve our community.
- V. ARPA and Infrastructure Funding Update – discussion and/or action
  - Middlebrook drainage and irrigation request was \$705K – approved by BOS for \$500K.
  - Merwin Meadow playground request was \$250K – approved by BOS for \$175K.
    - P&R Commission was asked to review the options from the various playground vendors when the options’ designs are submitted to Pierce of P&R Dept in the coming month.

- Three playground options will be provided for consideration by Commissioners: \$210K, \$175K, and \$150K. Commissioners will review and discuss at September P&R Commission meeting.
- Timeframe targeted for installation/playground project completion is Q4 2022.
- New turf design and new turf contribution – asked for \$200K & \$500K, respectively – BOS stated this is to be bonded.

VI. Lightening Detection System Update – discussion and/or action

- System alarms will be active at all designated fields.
- Sign-up system to get notifications – email and/or text.

VII. P&R Preliminary Review of Fields – discussion and/or action

- Guglielmo and Pierce shared a summary document from their June review, which stemmed from a Q4 2021 agreement to analyze the drainage condition of fields and note any locations where fields can be expanded, improved, or repurposed.

VIII. Staff Reports – discussion and/or action

Pierce reported:

- Parks & Grounds Report:
  - Prepping/sodding begins for fall usage.
  - Working on some ideas to mitigate some water pooling at baseball field until larger plan complete.
  - Met with new WHS AD and provided facilities tour. Will work closely with AD.
  - Youth football has asked to remove goal posts from Middlebrook field to better use space for flag football. Under review.
  - Addressing abundance of geese at Merwin Meadows with responsible deterrent measures.
- Recreation Report:
  - Summer camp continues to go very well.
  - July 4<sup>th</sup> fireworks were a great success; Preliminary estimate - \$34K total revenue.
  - Fall brochure creation starts this month.
  - Awaiting supplies to renovate batting cages. Anticipate up within 2 weeks once supplies arrive.

IX. Member Comment – None.

X. Public Comment – None.

XI. Adjourn : Bilella made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:36 pm, Kendra seconded. **Approved 5-0-0.**



## **WILTON ATHLETIC & RECREATION FOUNDATION**

***JUNE 14th, 2022***

The Wilton Athletic and Recreation Foundation (WARF) is excited to share an update as it develops a new structure and board and expands its mission and capabilities for advancing youth athletics in Wilton. WARF was founded in 2018 as a 501(c)(3) Charitable Organization, with a mission to engage in public-private partnerships to raise funds for athletic and recreational field and facility improvements in town. Some of its successes include the well-established stadium banner program and NCAA lacrosse game programming at the stadium, which have helped fund youth sports equipment and programs in the last four years.

To help address the community's renewed focus on improving town athletic and recreational facilities, WARF has recently expanded its board, and will continue to do so, adding representatives from multiple youth athletic organizations comprising the Youth Sports Coalition, volunteer organizations and town boards (see below). The new WARF board will be redeveloping WARF's programs for community outreach, online and social media presence, private and corporate fundraising, donations, and capital improvements over the coming months, significantly increasing WARF's presence, capabilities, depth, and reach.

The core tenet of WARF's mission continues to be partnering with town leadership, youth and high school sports programs, regional sports and recreational clubs and businesses to identify and prioritize needs, and to raise funds to support and/or offset the town burden for these priorities. Programming will include annual corporate sponsorships and advertising drives, team promotions, and capital raising campaigns for long-term infrastructure and facility improvements, to be dubbed community investment programs (CIPs). WARF is currently developing a CIP capital raising campaign to assist making significant improvements to Wilton's athletic infrastructure and facilities in the next 2-3 years, including exploring new turf fields, amenities, lighting, parking, and related improvements.



EXECUTIVE & FUNCTIONAL	BOARD MEMBER
President	<b>JR Sherman</b> (jr.sherman@warfwarriors.com)
Treasurer	<b>Tom Viggiano</b> (tom.viggiano@warfwarriors.com)
Secretary	<b>Chandra Ring</b> (chandra.ring@warfwarriors.com)
VP, Government & Community Liaison	<b>Scott Lawrence</b> (scott.lawrence@warfwarriors.com)
VP, Fields & Facilities	<b>Nick Gemelli</b> (nick.gemelli@warfwarriors.com)
VP, MarComm & Social Coordination	<b>Justin Weigold</b> (justin.weigold@warfwarriors.com)
VP, Private Fundraising	<b>TBD</b>
VP, Corporate Sponsorship Program	<b>Dave Cote</b> (dave.cote@warfwarriors.com)

YOUTH SPORTS ORGS	DESIGNATED VP
VP, Baseball (WBSA)	<b>Kevin Ring</b>
VP, Lacrosse	<b>Lara Flanagan</b>
VP, Field Hockey	<b>Lindsay Sheehy</b>
VP, Softball	<b>Chris Rosado</b>
VP, Football	<b>Heather Jackson Salvatore</b>
VP, Soccer	<b>Jason Partenza</b>
VP, Little League (NON-VOTING)	<b>Dave Drew</b>

TOWN/SCHOOL OFFICES	KEY POINTS OF CONTACT
Wilton HS Athletic Director	<b>Bobby Rushton</b>
Superintendent of Schools	<b>Kevin Smith</b>
Parks & Recreation	<b>Annamarie Bilella / Steve Pierce</b>
Wilton BoS & BoF	<b>Lynne Vanderslice / Rich Santosky</b>
Wilton HS Booster Clubs	<b>Gridiron - Michael Waldon</b> <b>Others - TBD</b>

On June 9, 2022, Steve Pierce and I performed a visual inspection of the town's recreation fields for the purposes of analyzing the condition of such fields with the goal of identifying recreation fields that could be expanded or improved increasing recreation field space for the town.

Steve and I toured the recreation fields listed below and provide the following observations/recommendations/proposals to the Commission:

1. Varsity Baseball 90 ft: field retains water towards right field line and has the potential for flooding. Infield is above grade, could be regraded. Town in process of determining flood mitigation plan. No recommendation at this time.
2. JV Baseball 90ft/Football Practice: Infield floods during heavy rains. Town in process of determining flood mitigation plan. No recommendations at this time.
3. Allen's Baseball 90 ft: outfield pitches away from the infield. Infield floods and water pools in outfield. Could use regrading and improvements to drainage to reduce flooding of infield.
4. Varsity Softball: infield clay flows off field, could make certain improvements to prevent run off into parking lot.
5. JV Softball/Football Practice: infield could use improvements (removal of grass), regrading and drainage improvements. Outfield – no recommendation.
6. Lions Field 60ft skinned – due to periodic flooding of field, field is seldom used by organized sports teams. Not suitable for improvements. Field could be converted for other suitable use for recreation – i.e., dog park?
7. Middlebrook 1 60 ft skinned – Softball: field could be regraded and drainage improved to prevent flooding, run off.
8. Middlebrook 2 60 ft Skinned – Softball: field could be regraded and drainage improved to prevent flood. Outfield fence is falling into slope due to soil erosion, could need future retaining wall or work to prevent continued erosion.
9. Middlebrook 3 60 ft – Baseball: no recommendations
10. Driscoll 60 ft – Baseball: no recommendations
11. Miller 60 ft Skinned – T-ball: field is below grade, floods easily. Field could be completely regraded to pitch water towards outfield.
12. Comstock 60 ft Skinned – T-ball/Softball/Baseball: no recommendations

### **Rectangular Fields – Natural Grass**

1. Post School – Soccer: field is large and in relatively good condition. Field is connected to water line – could upgrade or expand field past tree line, pair back trees and irrigate field for increased use.
2. Merwin Meadows – Soccer: no recommendations.
3. Gilbert and Bennett 1&2 – Small Soccer. Could expand existing footprint by removing tree line adjacent to Rout 7 to create two full-sized fields. Additional expansion possibility on adjacent properties on New Street which are town owned and could allow for major expansion of field space to multiple additional fields on property. Drawback with New Street expansion is elevation changes and existence of ledge rock.
4. Comstock – Soccer: no recommendations
5. Nick Madaras – Soccer Full Size: no recommendations
6. Middlebrook Football – Football: previous proposal of turfing this field, or minimally improving irrigation, drainage, and grading of existing field.
7. Guy Whitten – Lacrosse/Football: field floods and pitches towards the pond such that cost/feasibility of turfing field could be cost prohibitive.
8. North Field – Lacrosse/Field Hockey: previous location for possible turf field. Field would be practice size, could not accommodate full size playing field with appropriate out of bounds areas.
9. Allen's 1-6 – Soccer/Lacrosse: Certain fields owned by town, others by State, leased by Town. Limitations of improvements given size and set back of fields. Could expand existing fields.

### **Synthetic Turf Fields – Coconut Husk/Sand Infill**

1. Tom Fujitani Field (Memorial Stadium): no recommendation
2. Kristine Lilly Field: no recommendation