



January, 2026 Parks and Recreation Meeting Minutes:

Town of Medfield Parks and Recreation Commission

Location: Chenery Hall

Time: 6:07 PM

Medfield Parks and Recreation Commission

Meeting Minutes

Date: January 28, 2026

Time: 6:07 PM

Location: In Person/Online

Commissioners Present

Rob Tatro

Lauren Beitelspacher

Nick Brown

Tim Walsh

Others Present

Katie Walper

Brian Knott

Erin LeBlanc

Kirsty Young

Kristine Treiweiler

1. Call to Order

Chair **Nick Brown** called the meeting to order at **6:07 PM**.

Nick opened the meeting with a remembrance of **Mel**, recognizing his commitment to community service, his family, and his professional contributions.

2. Approval of Minutes

Motion: Lauren Beitelspacher made a motion to approve the minutes from the previous meeting.

Second: Rob Tatro

Vote: Motion passed unanimously.

3. Fairy Garden / Fairy Walk Event Approval

The Commission discussed the proposed **Fairy Walk event scheduled for May 2 at Hinkley**. The event has been held in partnership with **Kathleen** in prior years, and staff expressed interest in continuing the partnership. It was noted that **Belforge** has a similar event scheduled on the same date, and there is interest in inviting Belforge to participate collaboratively.

Motion: Lauren Beitelspacher made a motion to approve Kathleen's use of Hinkley for the Fairy Walk event.

Second: Rob Tatro

Vote: Motion passed unanimously.

4. Parks and Recreation Building Update

Nick Brown provided an update on research related to potential partners for a modular Parks and Recreation building. He noted that some vendors offer only standard, "cookie-cutter" designs. A potential partner identified was **KBS Builders (South Paris, Maine)**.

Discussion included:

- Requesting design examples from KBS and providing examples of desired concepts
- Need for a site plan with defined borders for submission to the Conservation Commission
- Considerations around square footage
- Maximum ceiling height of 9 feet
- Storage needs (with no offices above)
- Building placement to allow for future additions
- Alignment with the budget timeline

Lauren Beitelspacher provided an update related to discussions with the **Warrant Committee** and the **Permanent Planning and Building Committee**.

Chris asked about the feasibility study funding. It was clarified that the funds were included in a special article and will carry over.

5. Survey Update

Lauren Beitelspacher provided an update on the community survey, noting that feedback is being gathered and results will be shared with the Commission soon. Survey will hopefully launch within the next week or two. The entire community will be invited to participate.

6. Summer Program Updates

Staff Updates: Brian Knott, Katie, and Erin LeBlanc

Katie discussed lifeguard staffing at Hinkley Pond. While no changes are planned for this summer, future consideration may be given to reducing lifeguard coverage, as Franklin has eliminated lifeguards. The department currently operates at a **\$65,000 deficit**, and this could be a cost-saving measure. Lifeguards would still be required during camp hours.

Additional discussion points:

- Hinkley Pond passes are declining; the pond is not currently a destination
- Interest in reinstating swimming lessons and certified lifeguards

- Lifeguards must be both pool- and waterfront-certified
- Proposed hours of operation: **11:00 AM – 6:00 PM**

Brian Knott provided an overview of summer camp programming:

- All programs will run for **8 weeks**
- Camp dates: **June 22 – August 14**
- Transition from age-based groupings to **grade-based groupings**, based on parent feedback:
 - Half Day: Rising Pre-K – Rising Grade 1
 - Discovery: Rising K – Rising Grade 2
 - Adventure: Rising Grade 3 – Rising Grade 6
 - Teen Extreme: Rising Grade 6 – Rising Grade 9
- Ongoing parent concerns related to camps; awaiting feedback from schools
- Vendor camps will operate when Parks & Recreation camps are not running
- Camp counselor applications open mid-February
- Additional hiring needed for lifeguards and grounds staff
- Follow-up with schools planned after budget meetings
- Consideration of merging Half Day and Full Day camps to reduce space needs

Chris asked about seasonal staffing levels; staff noted approximately **90 seasonal employees** are hired each summer.

Kirsty Young reviewed the refund policy:

- No refunds unless Parks & Recreation is able to fill the spot
- 80% refund available if withdrawn three weeks in advance
- Outstanding balances from prior summer camps remain

Staff recommended a **\$15 per week camp price increase** to cover transportation, wages, and ticket costs.

Motion: Lauren Beitelspacher made a motion to approve the camp price increase.

Second: Nick Brown

Vote: Motion passed unanimously.

There was discussion on requiring payment in full at the time of registration in early March. Lauren asked if there were alternatives to this as that puts a significant burden on families with multiple children who need numerous weeks. Katie said that it is a lot of work for the staff to track down payments. The commission asked for alternatives to this payment policy. Lauren was not comfortable putting forth a motion at the time of the meeting.

Katie noted that the budget will be presented to the **Warrant Committee on February 10**.

7. Next Meeting

The next Parks and Recreation Commission meeting is scheduled for **February 9**.

8. Adjournment

Nick Brown adjourned the meeting.