

DRAFT Meeting Minutes

July 20, 2026

Parks Commission

Commissioners present: Mary Jennings, Mark Presti, Anna Elliot, Jeff Oringer, Jack Petropoulos

Also present: Brian Callahan (DPW), Judy Anderson

Chairperson Jennings called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Minutes of June 8 were approved unanimously by Jennings, Presti, Elliot, Petropoulos (Oringer was not yet present) following a motion by Petropoulos and second from Elliot.

The Commission discussed member availability for upcoming meetings.

Petropoulos reported that he was unable to attend the July 13, 2026 Community Preservation Committee meeting as Parks' representative but that it is likely that the meeting was not held due to a lack of a quorum.

DPW Director reported that the Cutler field well is dry and that the shed has bees. He also reported trying to locate the bees that members of the community said were present at the Lawrence playground but that he could not find them. He asked for permission to call Groton Pest Control.

Montachusett Sprinklers repaired some sprinkler infrastructure (wiring) at Cow Pond and the invoice was approved and signed. An invoice for Prime Disposal was approved and signed.

Permits were granted to the Boy Scouts to use the H&V field September 6 through September 7, for their annual yard sale on a motion made by Presti and seconded by Elliot. The motion was approved unanimously.

GD High School Boys Soccer requested a permit to use Cow Pond 1 & 2 from August 10 through 16. Petropoulos moved to approve the permit and Elliot seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.

Discussion turned to the proposed CPA application.

- DPW Director Callahan confirmed that a gravel parking lot will require more maintenance than asphalt (estimated \$2,500 per yr) but that asphalt will need to be

resurfaced every 20 yrs with approximately \$1,000 per year in annual crack maintenance.

- The Commission discussed the walking path surface. The proposed reduced cost surface is stone dust / asphalt. Concern was that anything but asphalt would not last well. DPW Director confirmed that a stone dust / gravel walking track would turn to grass in a very few years and he is opposed to using this material rather than asphalt. The Working Group was asked to reconsider the surface for the walking paths given the concerns expressed.

Presti move “Parks to support the out of cycle application for the CPA project for Cow Pond”. Elliot seconded the motion. 4 in favor 1 abstained (Petropoulos).

Discussion turned to the Access Rd.

- Jennings provided a review of the July 14, 2026 Conservation Committee meeting regarding Baseball’s appeal to stay the order closing the road.
- DPW Director described the effort required to build a temporary connector road between the Soccer parking and baseball parking, eliminating the need for the public to use the current Access Rd. He indicated that the project was more difficult than he originally thought. Cost could be \$20,000 or more, and his availability to execute the project may not come in time to make a meaningful difference to this summer or fall baseball seasons. He was unable to specify a date that he could start but it is unlikely that it would be until sometime into September. He also referenced the need for fencing and other safety considerations that may impact the design of the road and corresponding cost. No conclusion was reached. Mark Presti will explore the outstanding questions raised in the discussion with the Town Manager prior to next week’s meeting.

Elliot moved to “Accept the proposed turtle monitor recruitment plan and also the social media post” Presti seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:57PM

Approved 7/27/26