



*City of Bristol
Board of Park Commissioners*

INFORMATION TO ACCESS MEETING

<https://bristolct-gov.zoom.us/j/81845250016?pwd=aARP7uHudJcajUHPSbXMdRbGr0C7qw.>

1

The regular Board of Park Commissioners meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 18, 2025, at 5:00 PM. in 111 N. Main Street Room 1-2, Bristol, CT 06010.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Minutes
 - a. Approval of Minutes - March 19, 2025, Special Meeting Minutes
3. Public Participation
4. New Business
 - a. National Association of Parks Foundation - Membership and Resource Access
 - <https://www.the-napf.org>
 - b. Community Engagement Coordinator report out on National Park Foundation Training
 - c. Review Updated Timeline
 - d. Review Foundation Research Spreadsheet
 - e. Review Commissioner Assignments and Guiding Questions
5. Adjournment

PER ORDER OF THE CHAIRPERSON
Sandy Bogdanski, Chair



City of Bristol
Board of Park Commissioners

INFORMATION TO ACCESS MEETING

<https://bristolct-gov.zoom.us/j/87561745971?pwd=pXZn6RPJEZ0DOsn0NXkNJsXAOba66B.1>

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Special Board of Park Commissioners Meeting was held on Wednesday, March 19, 2025, at 5:00 PM in Meeting Room 1-2 in City Hall, 111 North Main Street, Bristol, CT 06010.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order

Chair Sandy Bogdanski called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

a. Attendance

Members Present:

Sandra Bogdanski, Chair
Leonard Lamothe, Commissioner
Aaron Weber, Commissioner

Dr. Joshua Medeiros, Superintendent
Sarah Larson, Deputy Superintendent
Erica Benoit, Community Engagement
Coordinator
Cindy Donovan, Commissioner
Robert Fiorito, Commissioner

2. Approval of Minutes

a. Approval of Minutes - September 18, 2024, Special Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Made by Commissioner Lamothe to approve the September 18, 2024, Special Meeting Minutes.

Seconded by Chair Bogdanski, all in favor; motion carried.

3. Public Participation

None.

4. New Business

a. To Review a Timeline for Planning Work on the 501c3 Philanthropic Foundation and Discuss Next Steps

The Parks and Recreation, Youth and Community Services, Community Engagement Coordinator Erica Benoit presented a timeline for planning work on the 501c3 philanthropic foundation and discussed the next steps to getting started; discussion followed.

b. To Consider a Request to Withdrawal \$3000 from the Friends of Bristol Parks and Recreation Fund to send the Community Engagement Coordinator to NAPF establishing and advancing a Park Foundation and Fundraising Training

Community Engagement Coordinator Erica Benoit presented the National Association of Park Foundations' (NAPF) Establishing and Advancing a Park Foundation Training to the committee. Community Engagement Coordinator Erica Benoit requested she attend the training, in order to gain knowledge about starting a 501c3. Discussion followed.

MOTION: Made by Chair Bogdanski to refer the request to the Board of Park Commissioners to withdrawal \$2500.00 from the Friends of Bristol Parks and Recreation Fund to allow the Community Engagement Coordinator, Erica Benoit, to attend the NAPF Establishing and Advancing a Park Foundation Training and Membership.
Seconded by Commissioner Weber, all in favor; motion carried.

5. Adjournment

MOTION: Made by Commissioner Lamothe to adjourn at 5:52 p.m.
Seconded by Chair Bogdanski, all in favor; motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,
Amaris Estrada
Recording Secretary
Board of Park Commissioners

Starting a 501c3 Foundation
City of Bristol – Board of Parks Commissioners
Fund Development Committee | May 21, 2025

Updated Phasing –

Status	Phase 1 – Information Gathering
Underway	1. Attend trainings, consultations, and establish valuable connections
Underway	2. Engage in educational opportunities, webinars, presentations, and informational sessions surrounding 501c3 foundation formation, support, and best practices.
Underway	3. Explore relationships with organizations that may be doing similar work
Underway	4. Identify foundation and non-profit resources
Underway	5. Identify recently established and exemplary foundations for consultation
Done	6. Consider joining an alliance/association to guide foundation work
Underway	7. Begin outreach and consultations with comparable foundations, knowledgeable community members, and associations.

Status	Phase 2 – Defining the Foundation / Scope
	8. Establish Purpose
	9. Develop mission, vision, and establish underlying values
	10. Identify areas of expertise needed for Board of Directors
	11. Begin to outline Board member roles, profiles, responsibilities, and expectations
	12. Establish foundation name and fed./state entity
	13. Outline basic infrastructure for collecting and distributing funds (business plan/ action plan)
	14. Draft Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, and Required Policies

Status	Phase 3 – Recruitment of Founders
	15. Identify key community members for board member recruitment
	16. Make public announcement and engage the public to gauge reception and interest
	17. Begin outreach and engagements with perspective board members and interested community members. Foster a strong relationship that facilitates buy-in.
	18. Begin analysis of seed funding or signature project/campaign
	19. Appoint or recruit a statutory agent
	20. Begin Legal Formation

	Organization	Est.	501c3	Location	Brief Description - About / History / Establishment	Mission / Vision / Purpose	Staff?	Database Software	Notes	Sources of Funding & Support
Local to Bristol	Environmental Learning Centers of Connecticut <i>Lenny</i>	1969	✓	Bristol, CT	"The Environmental Learning Centers of Connecticut is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization, supported by admission and program fees, memberships, grants, and gifts. Your 100% tax deductible contribution directly impacts fieldtrips, maintenance of miles of natural trails, the Wallace Barnes Accessible Nature Trail, 750+ acres of habitat management, a working farm, and animal care for reptiles, amphibians, and birds of prey."	Core Values: Educate, Protect, Respect, and Collaborate Mission: To "inspire the appreciation and enjoyment of nature through education and conservation, fostering a healthy environment and an improved quality of life".	Yes		(14) - Board of Directors Properties ("Sanctuaries"): - Harry C. Barnes Memorial Nature Center - Indian Rock Nature Preserve - Pigeon Hill Preserve	- Program/Event Fees - Memberships - Grants - Gifts - Endowments - Volunteers - Corporate Partnership / Sponsors
	Bristol Farmers Market <i>Aaron</i>	2025	✓	Bristol, CT	A Board of Directors along with community volunteers manage the seasonal farmers market in Bristol, Connecticut.	Mission: The mission of the Bristol Farmers Market is to create a sustainable place to support and promote access to fresh local food and products for all by connecting the community to local farmers and producers.	No		(7) - Board of Directors Utilize WordPress for their Website (free hosting)	- Vendor Fees - Sponsorship - Volunteers
	Bristol Sports Hall of Fame <i>Aaron</i>	1997	✓	Bristol, CT	According to the BSHOF website, "Bristol has long enjoyed a rich history in sports. It's founding fathers ensured that sports would always be an integral part of Bristol's way of life by donating land for parks and foundations to support them." "Since the 1800's, Bristol's industries have supported athletic competition and have sponsored many sports teams. As a result, Bristol has been endowed with a rich sports history that has become part of the fabric of our everyday lives. These Industrial leagues, Bristol school leagues, little leagues, church leagues and private clubs are in some way part of our everyday lives. In 1997, John Fortunato and Bob Montgomery formed the Bristol Sports Hall of Fame (BSHOF) to honor Bristol's rich sports history. With John Smith as Executive Director, a Board of Directors was formed, and a vision statement was created. That vision statement affirmed its mission." "Since 1997, a number of people who represented the best in Bristol's sports history have been inducted into the BSHOF. The plaques honoring these individuals were on display at the Dennis N. Malone Aquatic Center on Mix Street in Bristol. Unfortunately, we ran out of space, and they are only on display on our website."	Mission: To permanently honor, document and preserve distinctive contributions and achievements to the sports heritage of Bristol.	No		(21) - Board of Directors Example Projects: "- Provide grant opportunities for community members and orgs. whose initiatives align with the BSHOF mission - Leadership Council - Motivational Speakers - Reunions - Induction Ceremonies	- Program/Event Fees - Gifts - Volunteers - Corporate Partnership / Sponsors
	Friends of Bristol Public Library <i>Sandy</i>	2015	✓	Bristol, CT	"The Friends of Bristol Library raise funds, through book sales and other activities, that sponsor and support programs, library materials, and furnishings not supplied by Library resources."	Goal: Support and promote our Bristol libraries as educational, cultural, and recreational assets to the city of Bristol	No		(9) - Board of Directors - Belong to "Friends of Connecticut Libraries" (statewide) & the American Library Association Projects: - Book Sale - Summer Reading Programs - Public & Community Programs (Ex. Author Luncheon) - Museum Passes - Donation Collections Website Integrated with Main Library Website	- Program/Event Fees - Grants - Gifts - Volunteers - Memorial Wall - Donations - Physical Donations - Corporate Partnership / Sponsors
	Elizabeth Park Conservancy <i>Sandy</i>	1977	✓	Hartford, CT	"The Elizabeth Park Conservancy was formed in 1977, as the Friends of Elizabeth Park, by a small group of dedicated neighbors, both urban and suburban, to save the historic rose garden from almost certain demolition. The Conservancy celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2017." After 35 years of preserving and maintaining, restoring and protecting the Park's gardens, grounds and buildings, the organization changed its name to the Elizabeth Park Conservancy. This name change reflects their mission and stewardship of this great Park. The Conservancy celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2017. Once the Rose Garden was on a path to success, the Conservancy began to restore and maintain other gardens, renovate buildings and the greenhouses, and take on more responsibility as leaders in the park. In addition to the Rose Garden, the Conservancy oversees the maintenance of the Annual and Tulip Garden, the Julian and Edith Eddy Rock Garden, the Perennial Garden, the Heritage Rose Garden, the Sunrise Overlook, and the Hosta Garden. The Conservancy also works with the City of Hartford to maintain, remove, and replant trees in the Park.	Mission: The mission of the Elizabeth Park Conservancy is to steward and sustain Elizabeth Park as a unique horticultural urban oasis for all, with America's oldest public rose garden as its centerpiece, for the enjoyment and wellbeing of current and future generations. Vision: Elizabeth Park Conservancy will sustain and elevate the Park's status as a significant national landmark with the oldest public rose garden. Elizabeth Park is more than a park. It is a unique urban oasis with an unparalleled blend of natural, horticultural, historical, educational, recreational, cultural, social, and economic assets. By connecting diverse communities, Elizabeth Park makes our individual lives healthier, our neighborhoods more vibrant, and our region more competitive. Elizabeth Park Conservancy is the steward of this legacy.	Yes		(17) - Board of Directors (+ Ambassadors, Consultants, and Staff) Elizabeth Park is owned by the City of Hartford. The City of Hartford and the Conservancy have a public-private partnership. Their relationship is governed by a formal written license agreement that also covers use of volunteers and contractors, fundraising by the Conservancy, programs for visitors, and management by the Conservancy of the Pond House Café. "The Conservancy recruits and manages volunteers to work in the gardens and grounds of the Park, and hires and manages key gardening personnel, contractors, and summer gardeners. The Conservancy collaborates with Connecticut Horticultural groups, garden clubs, corporate and community service organizations, and students from high schools and local colleges."	- Programs/ Event Fees - Memorials / Dedications - Physical Donations - Grants - Gifts - Volunteers

Public / Private Partnership Supporting a Municipality (Local to CT)	Friends of Keney Park <i>Erica</i>	1990	✓	Hartford, CT	"Since its incorporation in 1988 the volunteer grassroots organization known as the Friends of Keney Park (FOKP) has been promoting the responsible use of Keney Park. The organization was granted 501 (c) (3) tax exempt status in March of 1990, and since then the group has continued to promote activities that create a more inviting atmosphere for Park users. The role of the organization is one of stewardship and advocacy. It is a basic tenet of the Friends of Keney Park that responsible upkeep and use of the park strengthens the community." "In 1997, FOKP entered into a license agreement with the City of Hartford for the oversight and maintenance of the Keney Pond House; a banquet hall/meeting house facility which is capable of accommodating 120 people. The facility is equipped with a fully-licensed commercial kitchen and is available to the public on a rental basis for private events. The banquet facility has been the site of countless community meetings and family reunions."	Mission: Our mission is to preserve and improve Keney Park's natural features; to encourage passive and active uses of the Park; to work for greater public and private support and to encourage special community events and celebrations in the Park. Our Future Goals for Keney Park: To concentrate on issues which afflict the community, particularly those in the urban communities by focusing on culture, education, health and safety. To develop, maintain and enhance one of the nation's oldest Parks as an (Urban Nature Center) in the City of Hartford. It will also provide students and residents within urban communities with a safe and nurturing learning environment that will help achieve their full potential in the environmental education field			(11) - Board of Directors	
	Friends of Bethel Parks and Recreation <i>Erica</i>	2024	✓	Bethel, CT	The Friends of Bethel Parks and Recreation were started in May of 2024 by three residents of Bethel: Jan de Bakker, Kirche Zeile and Tom Borysiewicz. After the initial meeting and decision to incorporate as a non-profit, they sought the approval of the Bethel Parks and Recreation Commission and pursued 501c3 status. After approval of their Bylaws and application the Friends received their official Non Profit Status in November of 2024.	Mission: To teach vital life skills, build family unity, reduce stress, provide safe places to play, build self-esteem, create memories and to provide space to enjoy nature and increase community pride.	No	Cheddar Up for Donations	(3) - Board of Directors Copy of their Bylaws is posted to their website	- Memberships - Grants - Gifts - Volunteers
	Groton Parks Foundation <i>Erica</i>	2003	✓	Groton, CT	They work to improve access, equipment, and programs for community parks, playgrounds, and recreational facilities. Specifically, they support projects like the Central Bark Dog Park, Esker Point Beach, and Groton Skate Park, ensuring they remain safe and enjoyable. Additionally, they've supported local initiatives like the USS Groton Sail Monument and the Noank Community Garden, further enriching the area.	Mission: To increase public awareness and achieve broad community support for the unmet needs of Groton's Parks and Recreation system.			(9) - Board of Directors Groton Parks Foundation holds a regular space on the Agenda for the Board of Parks Commissioners in Groton	
	Friends of Ridgefield Parks & Recreation Commission, Inc. <i>Sandy</i>	1987	✓	Ridgefield, CT	"The Friends of Ridgefield Parks and Recreation is a private non-profit corporation established in 1986. Our projects serve all residents of Ridgefield and surrounding communities. Over the years, The Friends of Ridgefield Parks and Recreation has raised funds through community fundraising, grants, private donations and corporate match programs"	Purpose: To provide capital projects and program specific funding for Recreation and Parks in Ridgefield			(3) - Board of Directors Recent Projects: - Installation of AEDs at Outdoor Athletic Facilities - Stage Resurfacing at Ballard Park - Evergreen Pavilion at the Recreation Center - 9/11 Memorial - Sky's the Limit Playground	
	Friends of Ridgefield Community Programs, Inc.	2003	✓	Ridgefield, CT	The Friends of Ridgefield Community Programs Inc was established as a separate entity from the Town of Ridgefield to facilitate fundraising for non-profit organizations. This establishment allows private donors, who are often restricted to donating exclusively to 501c3s, to support their community. The Friends of Ridgefield hosts organizations such as CHIRP, Ridgefield's Emergency Fund, and the Holiday Trust Fund, operating under the rules and regulations adopted by its Board. Friends of Ridgefield Community Programs, Inc. (the "Agency") was created to support, assist, and improve those functions, programs and activities of the Town of Ridgefield, Connecticut, a government entity, that qualify as purposes described under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or the corresponding provisions of any future Internal Revenue law, and to engage in any lawful activities incidental to the foregoing purpose.				(4) - Board of Directors	

	Friends of Westport Parks & Recreation Inc. <i>Aaron</i>	2011	✓	Westport, CT	The Friends were established as a form of public-private partnership for the purpose of assisting private citizens in raising funds for projects and services for which taxpayer support might not be readily available. FRIENDS OF WESTPORT PARKS & RECREATION INC. was conceived by Janis Collins, then Chairman of the Parks & Recreation Commission, and then formed on November 19, 2010 as a non-stock corporation under the laws of the State of Connecticut. "The Friends serve as a financial sponsor, helping to marshall funds from individual contributors and private foundations for projects and services that benefit our Town. Funds contributed are deductible to the extent provided by law. As a public private partnership we help finance worthwhile projects and services for which taxpayer dollars may not be readily available. The Friends understand that there are many ways in which our citizens can contribute to these projects. We welcome contributions in cash or through in-kind contributions of goods and services. The Friends hope to lend assistance to other groups that wish to enhance our parks and recreational facilities. These projects might include planting trees in our parks, improvements to athletic fields, support for the efforts of the Westport Beautification Committee to plant trees or gardens, financing of public benches and shelters, enhancing programs for outdoor concerts sponsored at the Leavitt Pavilion, or otherwise providing support for projects and programs of the Westport Parks & Recreation Department that are facing budgetary pressures.	<u>Mission:</u> "to enhance, preserve, protect and promote the Town of Westport's Parks and Recreation facilities in partnership with the Town, for the enjoyment of present and future generations of Westport residents."			(3) - Board of Directors " Our Process: The Friends will accept funds for projects and services that meet the following requirements: - (1) If a resident believes a project is worthwhile, he or she should present their proposal to the Director of Parks & Recreation or the Parks & Recreation Commission. - (2) The Director and Commission will evaluate the proposal to make sure it will not interfere with the Department's current operations and that the budget takes into account future maintenance operations. - (3) If the Commission approves the Friends will enter into an agreement with the project managers that provides for disbursement of donations for related expenses. - (4) To protect all donors, funds will be disbursed only when it is certain the project will be completed.	
Public / Private Partnership Supporting a Municipality Not Local	Friends of the County Parks & Recreation Inc.	1988	✓	East Lake - Orient Park, Florida	The Friends of the County Parks, established in 1988, is a group of concerned citizens joining together to promote financial and community support to the Hillsborough County Parks, Recreation, and Conservation Department. They develop public awareness of recreation as an important part of day-to-day life.	<u>Mission:</u> To SUPPORT, PROMOTE, and PROVIDE revenue for specific public recreation programs, projects, facilities, services, and equipment administered by the Montgomery County Department of Recreation			Newsletter on site Calendar of events Donor listing	
	Montgomery County - Friends of Recreation	2003	✓	Montgomery County, Maryland	Friends of Recreation was formed in 2003 and is an affiliate of the tax-exempt Montgomery Parks Foundation. Friends of Recreation seeks to encourage and obtain private sector support and funding for Montgomery County Department of Recreation's outstanding public recreation programs, services and facilities. Friends of Recreation believes that recreation is critical for the health and well-being of Montgomery County residents and for the vitality of the communities in which they live. Public funding can not meet all of the County's needs, especially during tight fiscal times. Friends of Recreation hopes to help the Department of Recreation by communicating needs and facilitating contributions from private sector donors.	<u>Mission:</u> To SUPPORT, PROMOTE, and PROVIDE revenue for specific public recreation programs, projects, facilities, services, and equipment administered by the Montgomery County Department of Recreation.			(7) - Board of Directors	
	Friends of the Monmouth County Park System, Inc.	1991	✓	Monmouth County, New Jersey	"Friends of the Parks is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) registered charitable organization comprised of area citizens and businesses committed to the support of the Monmouth County Park System. In this day and age, when recreation funding must be stretched to meet the needs of a burgeoning population, membership dues, donations, and proceeds from special fundraisers furnish the financial assistance necessary to achieve a number of worthwhile goals." "The Friends of the Monmouth County Park System, Inc., is a membership-based 501 (c)(3) charitable organization that provides financial support exclusively for Monmouth County Park System enhancements."	<u>Mission:</u> The Friends of the Monmouth County Park System, Inc., is a member-based, 501(c)(3) charitable organization that provides financial support for the Monmouth County Park System. Your support improves park facilities and programs through: preserving historical and natural resources, providing recreational opportunities for urban youth, and providing activities for individuals with disabilities within the community.			- Bench Dedication Program - Planned Giving Links - Pickleball Tournaments - Dedicated Page for their Goals on their Website	
	Friends of Missoula Parks	2002	✓	Missoula, Montana	Friends of Missoula Parks is a Missoula-based 501(c)(3), formed in 2002 by residents to promote parks, recreation, conservation lands, and forestry in the community of Missoula and the surrounding area. We provide a variety of ways in which community members can contribute to Missoula Parks and Recreation.	<u>Mission:</u> FMP is dedicated to enhancing the well-being of our community through the promotion and support of recreational spaces. We champion the development, maintenance, and conservation of parks, trails, and forestry in Missoula, Montana, and the surrounding areas. By raising funds and awareness, we aim to emphasize the profound social, mental, and physical health advantages that stem from these invaluable resources.			(8) - Board of Directors	

Starting a 501c3 Foundation
City of Bristol – Board of Parks Commissioners
Fund Development Committee | May 21, 2025

Questions to Guide Your Conversations / Research –

- How long did preparing for **IRS approval** take?
- When did you submit and receive your formal acceptance as a 501c3?

- How many people are on your **Board of Directors**?
 - o How many Board members were there / what positions were held at the time of establishment?
 - o Do you have someone with legal expertise *on* the Board?
 - o How often does the Board of Directors meet?
 - o Was there a commitment or pledge required of Directors?
 - o What is the term length for your Board Members?

- Do you have a copy of your **Bylaws** you could share?
- Do you have a copy of your **Articles of Incorporation** you could share?

- Do you have any **Memorandum of Understandings (MOU) in place**?
 - o Do you have a copy of a Memorandum of Understandings (MOU) you could share?
- Do you use **Fundraising Agreements**?
 - o Do you have a copy of a Fundraising Agreement you could share?
- Do you utilize **Gift Acceptance Agreements**?
 - o Do you have a copy of a Gift acceptance Agreement you could share?

- What is **the relationship like between your foundation and the municipality**?
 - o How do the Foundation and municipality come to decisions?
 - o How do the Foundation and municipality communicate?

- Do you have a **Donor and Stakeholder Database**?
 - o What software do you use?
-
- What type of **Insurance** do you carry?
 - o Liability Insurance? Personal Benefit Insurance? Cyber Protection Insurance?

- What does **community engagement** look like for your organization?
- Do you have a **membership** program?
- Did you identify a **community investment or seed funding for a specific initiative/project** at the time of establishment?