

TOWN OF CANAAN (FALLS VILLAGE)
FALLS VILLAGE RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, February 14, 2026 – 6:30 PM
Town Hall, 108 Main Street, Falls Village, CT
In Person and Via Zoom

For audio of the meeting please go to the following link:
https://zoom.us/rec/share/cvajU79Cx3vwwkUHf29n0hHFG8gM31-zTWBS__-IVhvpjKQQ71QVkJ0IznmYioE3xf.eASnin5eFo4D49d5
Passcode: YQ8%S6YD

Present members: Dan Carr, Melissa Lopes, Catherine Wales and Lauren Killawee. Absent members: Matt Gallagher and Chris Wadsworth

I. Call to Order

Chair Melissa Lopes called the regular meeting of the Falls Village Recreation Commission to order at 6:59 PM.

II. Amendment to Agenda (if Any)

The Chair proposed, and the Commission accepted by consensus, the following amendments to the agenda:

- Under Reports – Hiring Subcommittee Report, revise to: Executive Session – Discussion of applicants for employment for the Recreation Director position, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §1-200(6).
- Under Commission Finances, add item regarding receipt of an invoice from The Lakeville Journal for publication of the job posting in the amount of \$115.

Later in the meeting, the Chair amended the order of business to move the Executive Session to the end of New Business.

III. Public Comment

- No public comment was offered.
- The Chair introduced Elizabeth (“Sis”) Rhoades, attending as a member of the public.

IV. Communications to the Commission (written and oral)

The Chair reviewed recent communications received, including:

- Resignation of Secretary: Letter from Lauren Killawee dated January 25, 2026, resigning from the position of Secretary due to workload constraints. The Commission accepted the resignation as Secretary and expressed appreciation; Lauren remains a Commission member.
- Budget Planning: Communication from the Town regarding budget planning meetings and process, including a notice of meetings and a letter regarding budget constraints and deadlines (including submission deadlines for departmental/commission budget requests).
- Ski Volunteer Support: Email from Rebecca offering support related to ski programming (information forwarded to Dan).

V. Reports

A. Secretary's Report

1. Approval of Minutes – Regular meeting of January 14, 2026, Motion made by Dan Carr and seconded by Catherine Wales. Vote: 3 in favor, 1 abstention (Lauren). Motion carried.

B. Town Treasurer's Profit/Loss Report – Motion made by Chair and seconded by Can Carr, to accept the Profit & Loss Report as received (July – December 2025). Unanimous. Motion carried.

C. STEAP Grant Sub-Committee Report

1) Pool House Windows (Update)

- Update received from Chris: one pool house window has been replaced; another replacement window is expected shortly.

2) Cupola (Town Farm Property / Pool Building)

- The Commission discussed the need to clarify the status and scope of the cupola plan and potential donor involvement.
- Action: Chair will invite Lou to the March meeting to discuss the cupola and his desired involvement.

3) Pavilion Project (STEAP/Implementation Coordination)

The subcommittee presented a preliminary pavilion request to provide to the STEAP implementation team, including:

- Design consistent with the Town Farm Master Plan pavilion concept, with preference for the larger footprint previously costed (approx. 60' x 30').
- Proposed features/materials: polished concrete floor; ceiling fans; frost-free hydrant; multiple GFCI outlets; adjustable wind shielding on one side; motion-activated floodlights; solar pathway lighting; asphalt roof (solar-ready); high-bay LEDs; possible fireplace; and a half-wall seating edge (conceptual/optional).

Motion: Lauren moved to approve the STEAP Grant Pavilion Request as presented by the subcommittee for submission to the STEAP implementation team.

Seconded by Chair

Vote: Unanimous. Motion carried.

VI. Ongoing / Old Business

A. Ski Club Update

Dan reported:

- Ski Club concluded with the final night held February 10 (make-up for a prior cold-weather cancellation).
- Participation: 12 youth this season; 5 community volunteers served as chaperones (including Dan).
- Program was successful; Dan will meet with the school principal for feedback and distribute a school-wide survey (participants and non-participants) to help increase future engagement.
- Budget: approximately \$3,000 was sufficient this year; the Commission discussed continuing to seek outside scholarship/grant support as needed (including past support from Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation and Salisbury Winter Sports Association, among others).
- Transportation: invoice/billing for bus transportation is expected (All-Star to send directly to the Town Treasurer; Dan to follow up as needed).
- Future consideration: expanding from 4 to 6 ski days (cost/benefit to be evaluated).

B. Membership

Application/Interest – Elizabeth (“Sis”) Rhoades

Sis Rhoades expressed interest in joining to contribute to community recreation programming and events.

Motion: Chair moved to recommend Elizabeth (“Sis”) Rhoades for appointment to the Falls Village Recreation Commission for a three-year term, beginning upon approval by the Board of Selectmen.

Seconded by Lauren

Vote: Unanimous. Motion carried.

The Commission also noted the ongoing need to identify an alternate member.

VII. Commission Finances

A. Monthly Financial Review

- The Chair confirmed the internal spreadsheet has been updated and access/ownership issues were resolved (Ted assisted; Chair now listed as owner; members have access).
- The Commission discussed anticipated seasonal expenses, including pool chemicals to be purchased prior to pool opening, as well as possible spring assessment of tiling repairs and fountain repair.
- The Commission discussed monitoring pool salary lines, lifeguard scheduling, and the distinction between the Recreation Director’s monthly compensation and the pool supervisor’s hourly/timecard submission process.
- Sustainability note: Commission discussed exploring more durable or less plastic-intensive options for pool and program supplies where feasible, while maintaining required safety items.

B. Lakeville Journal Invoice

Invoice received from The Lakeville Journal in the amount of \$115 for classified publication of the Recreation Director job posting (two weeks). The Chair requested confirmation from the Town Treasurer regarding the appropriate line item for payment.

Motion: Chair moved to submit the Lakeville Journal invoice for payment.

Seconded by Catherine

Vote: Unanimous. Motion carried.

VIII. Town Farm

A. Pool & Facilities

1. Pool House Cupolas – Update. Action: Chair will invite Lou to the March meeting to discuss the cupola and his desired involvement.

B. Commission Capital Plan

1. Maintenance Schedule / Responsibilities - Lauren reported she is developing an internal annual timeline/Gantt-style schedule compiling recurring tasks and responsibilities (SOP-style continuity tool for volunteer turnover).
Action: Lauren will complete and upload to the shared drive for Commission review.

X. New Business

A. Winter Activities (Discussion)

Topics included:

- Potential cross-country skiing/walking pathway concept on Town Farm property.
- Potential community sled day (noting prior concerns about insurance/liability, plowing access, route safety, and site obstacles).
The Commission agreed the Chair should first consult with Town Hall (Dave) and relevant insurance guidance, and that a winter site walk-through may be helpful before further planning.

B. Budget / Finance Subcommittee (Discussion)

The Commission discussed whether to form a budget/finance working group to better understand and support spending plan preparation, particularly during the Recreation Director transition.
Action: Discussion tabled to the March meeting for full-member participation.

C. Secretary Position (Discussion)

Following Lauren's resignation as Secretary, the Chair noted:

- Catherine will attempt to handle minutes/administrative workflow for the coming month while evaluating the process.
- The Commission discussed the option of a paid recording secretary (including prior town practices and a known resource, Patty Fife, who serves multiple commissions).
Action: Item to remain on the agenda for the March meeting.

D. Capital Projects Request Form (Town of Canaan)

The Commission reviewed the Town's Capital Projects Request Form and discussed potential project ideas (e.g., signage, marketing/promotion, pavilion enhancements such as windbreaks/screen, meadow/wildflower plantings, pathways).
Action: Chair to seek clarification from Town leadership regarding deadline and submission process and report back.

IX. Executive Session

Motion by Chair and seconded by Dan Carr to enter into executive session at 8:33 PM, the Commission for discussion of applicants for employment for the Recreation Director position pursuant to CGS §1-200(6). (Members of the public were excused prior to the Executive Session.) Unanimous. The following members were present: Dan Carr, Catherine wales, Lauren Kilawee and Melissa Lopes. Motion by Melissa Lopes to move out of Executive session at 8:55 PM; seconded by Dan Carr. Unanimous.

Plan of action was determined during meeting and;

Motion by Dan Carr to authorize the Chair to contact the preferred candidate for Rec Director to confirm interest and, upon confirmation, proceed with recommending hire to the Board of Selectmen.

Seconded by Melissa Lopes

Vote: Unanimous. Motion carried.

X. Events

A. Upcoming 2026 Events

- Maple Sugar House Visits / Sweet Goodbye Party (March/April; details to follow).
- Easter Egg Hunt: tentatively scheduled for April 5, 2026.
- Memorial Day: May 25, 2026.
- Earth Day Collaboration: discussed continuing collaboration with the Library (and other community groups) for an Earth Day event including community clean-up and related activities (timing typically around mid-to-late April).

XI. Any Other Business Properly Come Before the Commission – none

XII. Public comment - none

XII. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Catherine Wales

Seconded by Lauren Kilawee

Meeting adjourned at 9:04 PM.

Next Regular Meeting: March 11, 2026 at 6:30 PM.