

**CITY OF NORWALK
OAK HILLS PARK AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
JULY 17, 2025**

BY ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING

ATTENDANCE: Alan Dutton, Chair; Richard Dellinger, Vice Chair; Denise Brown, Treasurer; Jennifer McAllister, Geoff Sweitzer, Mary Verel, Jerry Crowley, Robert Stowers, Director of Recreation and Parks, Gary Leeds (7:05pm)

STAFF: Paul Alexander, Golf Professional; Mark Gartner, Controller; Jim Hollyday, General Manager

OTHERS: Jerry Crowley, Supporters of Oak Hills Park, John Lloyd

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Dutton called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Initial technical difficulties caused a brief delay and required a restart of the meeting.

II. ROLL CALL

Mr. Dutton called the roll. A quorum was present.

III. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting: June 26, 2025

Several corrections were discussed in detail, including name spellings, content attribution errors, executive session timing, and formatting around reports by staff. Significant concern was raised over duplicate and misplaced content in the Long-Term Planning section.

**** MR. LEEDS MOVED TO TABLE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 26, 2025 MEETING.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no one who wished to address the Authority at this time.

V. REPORTS

A. Chair: Mr. Dutton

Preliminary FY25 results: Revenue of \$2.716 million; expenses \$2 million, generating a \$705,000 surplus prior to capital/discretionary expenditures.

Mr. Dutton reported he Attended First Tee board luncheon at Odeon's. First Tee commissioned an architect to assess Oak Hills; report expected in early August for further collaboration discussions.

B. Restaurant: Mr. Lloyd

- Restaurant operations stable; attendance impacted mildly by heat.
- Music and event schedule ongoing; entertainment listings posted on website.
- Reinforced commitment to partnering with all golf-related events.
- Richard Dellinger noted strong winter event turnout; email event notices need improvement.

C. Nature Advisory: Ms. Verel

- First "Lunch & Learn" set for August 12 on alternative lawns with Odeon's support.
- Working collaboratively with city sustainability officer and regional outreach.
- Mulching ongoing; Jim Schell credited for support.
- Plans to engage landscaping support. \$8,000 budget confirmed.
- Registration options (SignUpGenius, city tools) under evaluation.
- Exploring cross-promotion with Rec & Parks; possible tree walk with city arborist.

D. Tennis: Ms. Brown

- Wimbledon Tournament (July 6) went well; 500 net earnings.
- Arthur Goldblatt Memorial Tournament (Sep 19–21) open for registration via USTA; looking for sponsors.
- Received an anonymous \$12,000 donation for tennis improvements.
- Court 8 erosion: Repair estimate \$3,200 from Davis Company.
 - Seeking OHPA funding (CapEx likely); Mark Gartner to review allocations; prior \$45k CapEx fund noted.
 - Discussion emphasized erosion caused by historic water flow and importance of surface stability inspections.

E. Supporters of Oak Hills: Mr. Crowley

Fiscal Year snapshot:

- Unrestricted funds: \$4,600
- Restricted (tennis): \$27,000 (updated by Ms. Brown to include recent donation)
- Main expenses were tennis-related: \$72,000

- Mr. Gartner clarified the negative FY showing due to the timing of cash outflows and reimbursements, common in cash-basis accounting.

F. Long Term Planning: Mr. Leeds

- Awaiting First Tee architect report before advancing direction on major projects (course, youth, nature).
- Coordinating future project scope in tandem with tennis, nature advisory inputs.

G. Golf Professional: Mr. Alexander

- Memberships sold YTD: 1,121
- Noted continued strength in non-member play.
- August 1: Pro-rated memberships begin.
- 9 outings held; 12 more scheduled (net gain despite minor losses).
- ForeUp POS platform is functioning well.
- 68 carts leased: Showing wear but operational.
- Added weekend ranger coverage + ball spotter on hole 7; improving pace of play.

H. Superintendent: Mr. Schell

- Challenging weather (hot July, poor spring root growth).
- Rough mower (tier 4 diesel) severely underperforming; attempting to void lease and return.
 - Warranty not honored by dealer; seeking refund on \$2,500+ parts.
 - Back-up Toro mower partially compensating.
- Discussed coordinating with legal/finance to escalate complaint.
- Preparing to reactivate on-site well to offset city water use.
- Routine staffing fluctuations due to temporary injuries and college timing.

I. Controller: Mr. Gartner

- June NOI: \$290K over budget; overall FY cash \$300K above projections.
- Audit preparation underway.
- CapEx budget review for tennis and equipment will be refreshed once year-end close is finalized.

J. General Manager: Mr. Hollyday

- HVAC maintenance ongoing; patio awnings to be replaced with heat-resistant pull-down screens (ETA late July).
- Electrician sourcing for roadside sign lighting continues.
- Working on city/social media engagement overhaul with marketing consultants.
- Reviewing policy on outings: Outings generate less net revenue than prime tee times; may warrant procedural changes.
- Monitoring clergy/veteran discount policies at competitor facilities for parity.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

There was no discussion.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Pace of Play

Mr. Sacco presented a comprehensive report on pace of play trends, metrics, and interventions:

- Conducted statistical review covering ranger logs and GPS cart tracking.
 - Rounds averaging 4:20–4:35; occasional outliers to 5 hours, especially on weekend afternoons.
 - Estimated 6 five-hour rounds per week.
 - Primary delays: Blind holes, Halfway House pauses, misplayed tee boxes, rough, and inexperience.
- Interventions:
 - Added Pace-of-Play signage at first hole, tee 7, and Hole 10.
 - Expanded use of well-trained rangers, including on-site spotter at Hole 7.
 - Developing policy reminders (e.g., “3-minute rule” for lost balls).
 - Investigating AI-enabled real-time cart analysis software to pinpoint slow groups.
- The Authority agreed improvements were visible and further tweaks to policy and education (member briefings, signage clarity) were encouraged.

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Authority entered executive session at 8:39 PM. Upon returning, the following action was taken.

- ** MR. DUTTON MOVED TO CHANGED TO CHANGE THE STATUS OF THE GENERAL MANAGER FROM INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR TO EMPLOYEE.**
- ** MR. DELLINGER SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

IX. ADJOURNMENT

- ** MS. BROWN MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.**
- ** MS. MCALLISTER SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Courtney Baldwin