



**Date:** September 12, 2024

**To:** Swanton Village Trustees

**From:** Swanton Recreation Department

**Subject:** Proposal to Establish a Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee

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## **Introduction**

The Swanton Recreation Department is committed to developing diverse, affordable, recreational programs and activities for the community, in a safe and welcoming environment. The well-being and quality of life of our community members through the provision of safe, accessible, and well-maintained public parks and recreational spaces is essential to supporting this mission. To support this mission and promote collaborative, transparent decision-making in the management and use of public parks and lands in Swanton, we propose the formation of a Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee.

## **Purpose of the Advisory Committee**

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee will serve as a vital advisory body to the Village Trustees and the Swanton Recreation Department, ensuring that public parks and green spaces are managed effectively and in alignment with community needs. The committee will act as a liaison between the public and the Trustees, providing guidance, feedback, and recommendations on policies, development, and the stewardship of these important community assets.

## **Objectives**

The primary objectives of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee are to:

- 1. Advise and Recommend:**
  - Provide input on the management, development, and maintenance of public parks, trails, and recreational spaces.
  - Offer recommendations on policies related to the use, safety, accessibility, and programming of public spaces.
- 2. Community Engagement:**
  - Actively engage with the community to gather feedback on park use, recreational needs, and long-term planning.
  - Foster a sense of community ownership and stewardship of public lands.
- 3. Enhance Recreational Opportunities:**
  - Assist in the identification of opportunities for new recreational programs, services, or facilities to meet the evolving needs of the community.
  - Recommend improvements or additions to existing parks and recreational facilities.



#### 4. **Promote Sustainability and Conservation:**

- Encourage environmentally responsible practices in the use and development of parks and public spaces.
- Advocate for green spaces that promote biodiversity, conservation, and outdoor education opportunities.

#### 5. **Support Funding and Grant Opportunities:**

- Identify potential funding sources, including grants, donations, and partnerships, to support park enhancements and recreational programming.

## **Committee Structure**

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee will consist of a minimum of five members appointed by the Village Trustees. The proposed structure includes:

- **Swanton Recreation Executive Director (Ex-Officio Member):** Provides insights and support from the Recreation Department, as recommended by the Swanton Recreation Board of Directors
- **Community Members:** A diverse group of residents from Swanton, representing different age groups, interests, and areas of expertise.
- **Village Trustee Liaison:** A Trustee who will serve as a liaison to ensure clear communication between the committee and the Village Trustees.
- **Local Stakeholders:** Representatives from Town of Swanton Selectboard, Swanton Recreation Board of Directors, local schools, local environmental groups, and other community organizations as deemed appropriate.

The committee will meet at a minimum of bi monthly, with special meetings as needed and provide regular updates and recommendations to the Village Trustees, and the community of Swanton.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### 1. **Swanton Recreation Department:**

- Provide logistical support, such as organizing meetings and disseminating information.
- Collaborate with the committee on specific projects or initiatives.

### 2. **Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee:**

- Gather community input through surveys, public meetings, and outreach initiatives.
- Develop recommendations for short- and long-term goals related to park development, maintenance, and recreational programming.
- Present a yearly report to the Village Trustees on the status of the parks and outdoor recreational services.

### 3. **Village Trustees:**

- Appoint committee members and ensure alignment of the committee's work with overall community goals.



- Review and approve recommendations as appropriate.

## **Conclusion**

The formation of a Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee will help ensure that Swanton's parks and recreational spaces are managed efficiently and in line with the community's values and needs, as well as Swanton's Municipal Plan. It will create a structured, transparent process for decision-making and promote active community involvement in preserving and enhancing our public spaces.

We respectfully request that the Swanton Village Trustees consider this proposal and approve the creation of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee to benefit our community for years to come.

## **Next Steps**

Should this proposal be accepted, we recommend scheduling a joint meeting to finalize the committee's structure, member recruitment process, and initial priorities.

We look forward to your feedback and the opportunity to discuss how this committee can contribute to the continued growth and vitality of Swanton.

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### **Submitted by:**

Nicole Draper

Executive Director  
Swanton Recreation Commission

[www.swantonrec.org](http://www.swantonrec.org)

[programs.swantonrec@gmail.com](mailto:programs.swantonrec@gmail.com)

802-868-2493