

TOWN OF LEBANON

ACTIVE-RECREATION NEEDS ANALYSIS



2018

Lebanon Recreation Commission

This report has been prepared by the Recreation Commission in conjunction with the Planning Office to help plan for adequate active-recreation facilities for Lebanon residents. Active, versus passive, recreation facilities are sites and programs where residents are provided a structured individual or team activity that requires the use of special facilities, fields, personnel, and equipment.

Lebanon Recreation Commission

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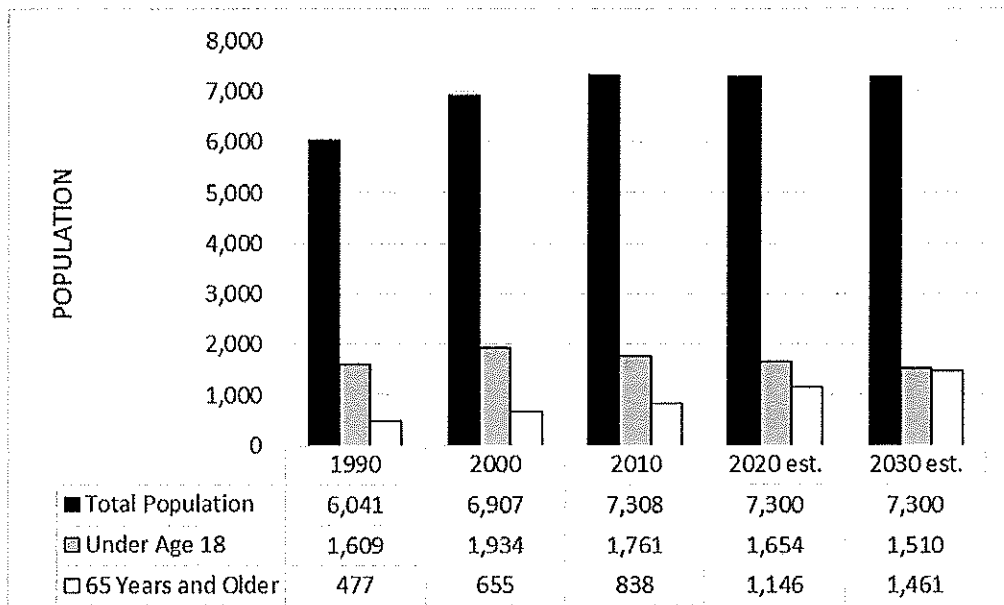
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A. POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

The Town of Lebanon contains approximately 7,300 year-round residents plus an additional 700+/- seasonal residents who occupy the 260+/- lake homes during the summer. While the town's overall population has remained flat over the past decade, and is expected to stay relatively flat in the coming decade, its number of children (age 0-17) decreased by over 100 children or 6%, from 1,761 in 2010 to an estimated 1,654 by 2020. The number of children is expected to continue to decrease by 2030. From a high of 1,934 children in 1990, UCONN estimates that this number will decrease by 24% by 2030 to 1,461 children.

**Town of Lebanon
Population 1990-2030**
(Sources: US Census data, UCONN State Data Center, and Lebanon Planning Office)



* While UCONN projects reductions in the overall population between 2010 and 2030, Lebanon's Planning Office projects the overall population to remain relatively flat given recent zone changes that allow seasonal homes to convert to year-round use.

It is difficult to predict population growth beyond 5 or 10 years, however, current state and local trends suggest that Lebanon's population peaked in 2010 for the foreseeable future. This is primarily due to a declining number of people having children; those who have children have fewer of them; an aging population where residents are staying in their homes longer; first-time homebuyers choosing to live in more urbanized areas; and, a reduction in new home construction.

According to UCONN's State Data Center, the greatest change in population over the past and future two (2) decades is represented in the number of residents age 65 years and older. This demographic saw a 76% increase in population between 1990 and 2010, and is expected to see a similar increase between 2010 and 2030. In 2000 there were three children to every one senior in town, whereas by 2030 it is estimated that there will be a comparable number of children to seniors.

B. TOWN RECREATION FACILITIES

Locations where public active-recreation facilities exist include the Aspinall Recreation Complex adjacent to Lebanon Elementary School; Tyler Field on Bascom Road; Town Pool/Community Center; Fire Safety Complex Function Hall; and Middle/High School Sports Complex. (In addition, Lebanon Soccer Club uses the Lions Club soccer field on Mack Road.)

1. Aspinall Recreation Complex – managed by Recreation Commission

Facilities: 3 Ballfields (2 little league and 1 adult/official size), 2 Basketball Courts

The Town acquired the 51-acre Aspinall property in 1977 and developed it for recreation in the early 1980s. The property is managed by the Recreation Commission. In addition to 3 ball fields and 2 basketball courts, the site contains the Ed Lazur Memorial Pavilion and an adjacent building that has bathrooms, concession, and storage space. In 2017 renovation of baseball field #1 was completed at a cost of approximately \$45,000.

2. Tyler Field - managed by Recreation Commission

Facilities: 3 Ballfields (1 baseball, 1 softball, 1 mixed use)

The 27-acre Tyler Field property was acquired by the Town in 1987 as part of the development of the Bascom Road Subdivision. The ballfields were developed in 2012 and are managed by the Recreation Commission. A walking trail, play-scape and restrooms need to be completed.

3. Town Pool – managed by Recreation Commission (and Community Center)

The Town Pool sits behind the adjoining Community Center. Funding for its construction and maintenance were a gift by Lebanon's benefactor Hugh Trumbull Adams. The pool is managed by the Recreation Commission which runs summer swim programs. Pool staffing includes 9 summertime personnel. The Recreation Commission also uses the Community Center for programming.

4. Fire Safety Complex Function Hall – managed by Town Hall

The Recreation Commission runs zumba and yoga classes, and lego camps from this facility.

5. School Gymnasiums and Sports Complex – managed by Board of Ed

Facilities: 3 Ballfields, 2 Soccer Fields, 4 Tennis Courts, Track

The Recreation Commission utilizes the elementary and middle school gymnasiums for volleyball and basketball youth league programming. School programs take precedent over field and gymnasium use leaving limited opportunity for Commission programming.

C. RECREATION COMMISSION PROGRAMS

Established by ordinance in 1961 and again in 1975 (see Appendix 1) the Recreation Commission is responsible for developing and administering public recreational programs and adopting rules and regulations for each. The Commission is made up of nine (9) members appointed by the Board of Selectmen and is governed by By-Laws (see Appendix 2). The adopted “mission” and “goal” of the Recreation Commission are as follows:

- MISSION:** Provide a comprehensive array of high quality athletic and recreational programs for residents of town on a year-round basis without bias to race, income, age, sex or ability.
- GOAL:** Seek to provide adequate land to meet active-recreation needs while ensuring that existing active recreation areas are properly managed for maximum use.

The Recreation Commission employs a part-time (19 hour per week) Recreation Coordinator who is responsible for implementing Commission goals and policies, as well as organizing programs and registration, maintaining athletic facilities, and managing the part-time staff and volunteers. The Recreation Department is located in a corner of the downstairs Town Hall conference and has limited office space.

The Commission ran 11 programs during FY 2017/18 with almost 1,500 attendees. It is estimated that 600+/- individual residents participated in these programs, with most being children ages 5 to 14.

RECREATION COMMISSION PROGRAMS FY 2017/18

Program	Location	2017/18 Participants
107 Swim Passes	Town Pool	368
Swimming Lessons	Town Pool	130
Lebanon Kids Swim	Town Pool	20
Tai Chi Balance Classes	Senior Center	25
Basketball	Elementary and Middle Schools	140
Volleyball (3 sessions)	Middle School	90
Halloween Event	Middle School	225
Zumba Classes	Fire Safety Complex	25
Lego Camp (3 sessions)	Fire Safety Complex/Middle & Elem. Schools	100
Yoga Classes	Fire Safety Complex	25
Art Classes (3 sessions)	Community Center/Middle & Elem. Schools	75
Summer Concerts (3)	Town Green	240
Total Participants:		1,473

In addition to the Lebanon Recreation Commission, other organizations that work to provide Lebanon residents with active-recreation opportunities include:

- Lebanon Board of Education. The Board of Education maintains school gymnasiums and the Middle/High School sports complex and runs a comprehensive sports program that includes cross-country track, tennis, baseball, soccer, softball, basketball, etc. According to the School Department, in FY 2017-18, 284 of the 977 or 29% of town residents enrolled in public schools participated in organized sports.

- Lebanon CT Little League (LCLL). Established in 2001, LCLL has held its own governing charter under Little League International whereby a constitution and adopted bylaws guide the programs. An eight (8) member Board of Directors is elected annually and oversees the little league program which serves approximately 200 young athletes ages 5 to 12. LCLL prepares an annual operational budget of \$17,000+/- and fee schedule, appoints auxiliary members and coaches, schedules games and practices, and provides scholarships for those in need of assistance.

LCLL games and practices are held at Aspinall and Tyler Fields, where LCLL provides in-kind field maintenance. Programmatic funding is provided by little league participants. The Recreation Coordinator works in conjunction with LCLL attending monthly meetings, disseminating information and scheduling field maintenance.

- Lebanon Soccer Club (LSC). Established in 1984, LSC serves 200+/- children ages 5 to 14. In the fall, practices and games are held at Aspinall Field, the Middle School, and the Lions Club property on Mack Road. LSC administers all registration, uniforms and equipment, with funding provided by participants.

D. ANALYSIS

An increase in childhood obesity is cited by the American Heart Association, American Diabetes Association, and State of Connecticut as a threat to today's and tomorrow's children. Because Lebanon's population is fragmented throughout town with few if any densely populated neighborhoods, parks or sidewalks, children have limited opportunities for exercise and socialization outside of school and an organized recreational setting.

Although the number of children in Lebanon appears to have reached its peak somewhere around the year 2000, there will continue to be children, parents, and grandparents looking for active recreation opportunities supported by the Town. This is especially true with new residents who tend to move to Lebanon from more densely populated communities where greater recreational services and facilities are offered.

Recreation programs related to the use of the town pool continue to remain popular as evidenced by the 107 pool passes purchased in 2018, permitting 368 residents to swim, and the 130 children ages 2-12 who took swimming lessons. These and other town recreation programs are utilized by Lebanon children (some of whom are home-schooled) and adults looking for active-recreation options. The Commission adjusts its programming based on community trends, attendance, and feedback.

The Commission is responsible for managing two sports complexes (with half a dozen baseball fields), basketball courts, press box, storage buildings, and pavilion with limited funds and staff to conduct maintenance work. The lack of field maintenance was identified by the Commission as its number one challenge. Field maintenance was traditionally done by volunteers; however, the limited number of volunteers and limits on their time and expertise, requires that the town hire dedicated staff to provide field maintenance in the form of field cutting, repairs, edging, dragging, and lining.

Another challenge identified by the Commission is the limited number of hours afforded its Recreation Coordinator. While it is recognized that the current Coordinator regularly volunteers additional hours beyond the 19 paid work hours to facilitate the workload, the Commission believes that some additional manpower is necessary.

The Commission has identified the need for a dedicated regulation-size soccer field at the Aspinall Complex to facilitate the 200+/- children that participate in Lebanon Soccer Club.

Lastly, the Commission identified that the Recreation Department, located in a cubicle in the corner of the Town Hall downstairs conference room, has inadequate area and storage space. In addition to being located in an open unsecure space, the office has no privacy for staff and residents who register for recreation programs, often with children in tow – sometimes paying with cash and needing to discuss sensitive subjects related to their children's recreation needs.

In August 2018 the Recreation Commission conducted a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) exercise to identify the challenges effecting active-recreation in Lebanon. (See Appendix 3.)

E. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Town of Lebanon's 2010 Plan of Conservation and Development recreation objective is to:

"Seek to provide adequate land to meet active recreation needs, while ensuring that existing active recreation areas are properly managed for maximum use." (POCD pg. 12)

Whereas, the Commission has sufficient land for future active-recreation activities, funding to properly maintain the existing fields and develop soccer fields at Aspinall has not yet been realized. The following recommendations are detailed in the Recreation Commission's 5-year Implementation Plan provided on the following page.

1. Increase Recreation Commission Operating Funds. Provide proper maintenance at all recreation sites through the use of dedicated qualified staff. In addition, funding for a full-time Recreation Coordinator, or a second part-time recreation position, to assist the Coordinator position, obtain grants, and attend recreation programs.
2. Aspinall Recreation Complex. Provide capital funds to repair two (2) ballfields, develop a soccer field, and replace the storage shed and fencing.
3. Town Pool. Provide funds to replace the pool cement deck and fence, replace the drainage drywell system, install showers, and provide ADA access from the Alden Tavern parking lot to the pool area.
4. Tyler Field. Provide capital funds to complete the Tyler Field project which includes constructing a walking trail, play-scape, and installation of well, irrigation and restrooms.
5. Recreation Department Office. Provide a private, secure office space for the Recreation Department.

F. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Recreation Commission has adopted the following 5-year Implementation Plan to help assure that the Town's active-recreation goal is achieved. The plan calls for an additional \$20,000-40,000+/- in the annual Recreation Commission operating budget (currently at \$58,636) to provide increased staffing and \$385,000+/- in capital spending by the end of five (5) years.

Implementation of the Commission's plan will result in an increase in use of Lebanon's active recreation facilities, including the addition of a soccer field, refurbishment of two (2) Aspinall ballfields, and completion of the Tyler Field project. In order to prove effective, the Implementation Plan will require the support of the Boards of Selectmen and Finance, and Town Meeting.

LEBANON RECREATION COMMISSION 5-YEAR IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2018 – 2023

<u>Item</u>	<u>FY</u>	<u>Estimated Town Cost</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
RECREATION COMMISSION FUNDING			
- Increase annual operating budget for fulltime Recreation Coordinator or part-time assistant.	2020	\$20K-40K	Boards of Selectmen and Finance
- Secure dedicated field maintenance personnel.	2020	tbd	Board of Selectmen
RECREATION DEPARTMENT OFFICES			
- Provide a secure private office with storage.	2020	tbd	Board of Selectmen
TYLER FIELD			
- Construct walking trails, play-scape, well, restrooms.	2020-23	\$60K	Rec. Commission
ASPINALL RECREATION COMPLEX			
- Repair ballfields and build soccer field.	2020-23	\$250K	Rec. Commission
TOWN POOL			
- Replace pool cement deck, fence, and drainage drywell system; install showers; and provide ADA access from Alden Tavern parking lot to pool area.	2020-23	\$75K	Board of Selectmen

tbd = to be determined

Appendix 1

Ordinance Creating a Recreation Commission for the Town of Lebanon

Section I.

1. The Town of Lebanon Recreation Ordinance effective November 2, 1961, is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof.

2. There is hereby created in the Town of Lebanon a Recreation Commission consisting of nine (9) persons who shall be appointed by the Board of Selectmen and who shall serve without any compensation. Members first appointed shall be so designated on January 6, 1975 and shall serve as follows:

- (a) Three (3) members for a term of one (1) year
- (b) Three (3) members for a term of two (2) years
- (c) Three (3) members for a term of three (3) years

Thereafter, members shall be appointed annually to serve for a term of three (3) years or until their successors are appointed and qualified. Vacancies in such Commission shall be filled for the unexpired term by the Board of Selectmen.

3. Within one (1) month of January 6, 1975, the First Selectman shall call and convene a meeting of the members of the Commission who shall select a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and such other officers as they deem necessary from their membership. If such officers are not chosen within one (1) month after the appointment of the Board, because of a tie vote of the members, the Board of Selectmen of such Town shall choose such officers from the membership of the Board.

4. The Commission shall be responsible for the administration, management, control and development of a public recreation program in the Town of Lebanon and may adopt by-laws, rules and regulations pertaining thereto; may accept contributions for the furtherance of its work; may levy fees or charges for services or for the use of facilities under its control; may work jointly with other towns Boards of Commissions in providing public recreation; and may provide, conduct and supervise public playgrounds, athletic fields, recreation centers and other recreation facilities and activities on any of the properties owned or controlled by the town or on any other property with the consent of the owners or the town authority having jurisdiction thereof.

5. The Commission shall have the power to appoint a superintendent or director and such other personnel as may be required.

6. The Commission shall make an annual report of its activities to the Town and shall submit annually a budget to the Town authorities for their approval.

Section II. Effective Date:

This Ordinance shall become effective fifteen (15) days after its publication in accordance with Section 7-157 of the General Statutes, Revision of 1958.

The effective date of this Ordinance is January 4, 1975.

Appendix 2

Recreation Commission By-Laws

*Town of Lebanon
Recreation Commission*

BY-LAWS

The mission of the Lebanon Recreation Commission is to provide a comprehensive array of high quality athletic and recreational programs for residents of the town on a year-round basis, without bias to race, income, age sex, or ability.

The Recreation Commission is charged by the Board of Selectman with the responsibility of developing recreational programs and enhancement of recreational facilities associated with sponsored programs on various Town owned land or buildings and to manage said properties.

Article I Commission Make Up

- Section 1 The Commission shall consist of nine members.
- Section 2 Said members shall be appointed by the Town Selectmen and will be of a term not to exceed three years per appointment.

Article II Commission Officers

- Section 1 The Commission shall, at its annual meeting (the fourth Monday in November), elect by majority vote of a quorum of its membership, a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, a Secretary and a Treasurer.
- Section 2 The officers will comprise the Executive Committee.
- Section 3 The Term of office will be for two years. Elections in even number years will be for Chairman and Treasurer. Elections in odd number years will for Vice-Chairman and Secretary.
- Section 4 A majority vote of the Commission Members would be necessary to remove a person from office during the terms of office.
- Section 5 The Chairman shall preside at all meetings of the Commission and of the executive committee. In the absence of the chairman the Vice-Chairman shall preside in his/her place.
- Section 6 The Secretary shall keep the minutes of all meetings and see that said minutes are filed with the Clerk of the Town of Lebanon within the time constraints of the freedom of information rulings of the State of Connecticut.
- Section 7 The Treasurer shall report to the Commission the budgeted balances as provided by the Town Treasurer, and make recommendations as necessary.

Town of Lebanon Recreation Commission

Article III. Executive committee & Special Meetings

- Section 1 The Executive Committee shall be entrusted with full power of the Commission when a special decision is necessary and a quorum of the Commission cannot be formed.
- Section 2 A special meeting will be called of the entire Commission to act upon a special decision when necessary.
- Section 3 Upon the lack of a quorum at a special meeting the Chairman can ask the Executive Committee to go into session A quorum of three officers will be necessary at an executive committee meeting to act upon issues.

Article IV. Committee Make Up

- Section 1 Committees will be appointed by the chairman and consist of at least one member of the Commission
- Section 2 The Recreation Director acting as ex-officio to all committees can be authorized to collect and expend moneys as necessary by the committee chairman.
- Section 3 Duties of the committees shall be defined by the members of the Commission at a regular meeting of the Recreation-Commission.
- Section 4 The Chairman shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.

Article V. Meeting & Notifications

- Section 1 Regular scheduled meeting will be the fourth Monday of every month
- Section 2 The annual meeting will be the fourth Monday of November
- Section 3 The Director will notify each member by mail of time and place along with an agenda of the coming meeting. With the exception of a Special Meeting which can be mustered by other means.
- Section 4 A quorum consisting of a majority of its members will be necessary to conduct a meeting.
- Section 5 Members who miss three consecutive meetings will be submitted to the Executive Committee for removal or stay with reason.

Article VI. Fund Accountability

- Section 1 All funds received by the Commission and held by committees will be deposited to the Finance Department and a record kept of said deposit
- Section 2 All funds will be accounted for by the committee chairman.

Town of Lebanon Recreation Commission

Article VII. Recreation Director

- Section 1 The Commission shall employ a director whose function will be to carry out the direction of the Recreation-Commission.
- Section 2 The director will report to the Commission at its regular meeting of the status of events and upcoming events.
- Section 3 The director will be an ex-officio member of all committees.

Article VII. Budget Allocation

- Section 1 Allocation of the expenses will be designated by a majority vote of the Commission in the form of a budget, at the July meeting.
- Section 2 Committee chairpeople will be allowed to spend the allocated amount of money designated to the function they chair.
- Section 3 The director may spend money as needed with approval of the Committee Chairperson to run a function not to exceed the amount allocated to that function.

Article IX. By-Law Amendment

- Section 1 The bylaws may be amended by a quorum of the Recreation-Commission at a regular scheduled meeting as long as the agenda of the warned meeting states that it is an agenda issue.

Town of Lebanon Recreation Commission

Business Policy and Practices

The following are the policy and practices of the Lebanon Recreation Commission, Lebanon, Connecticut. The following practices are to be accepted manner by which the Commission will conduct any financial agreements or arrangements. Primarily these agreements will be between town, as represented by the Commission and vendors or suppliers for supplying goods and services needed to conduct sponsored activities.

Article I.

- Section 1 All payments or authorizations to pay or expend funds under any recognized activity sponsored by the Recreation Commission must follow Article VIII of the Recreation Commission By-Laws.
- Section 2 The defined Policy & Practices shall be reviewed at the July meeting of the Recreation Commission.
- Section 3 Articles within the Business Policy & Practices may be amended at any warned meeting.
- Section 4 All bills/invoices/orders shall be sent to the business address of the Recreation Commission. The business address for the Recreation Commission shall be:
*Recreation Department Phone: (860) 642-4085
Town of Lebanon Fax: (860) 642-7716
579 Exeter Road
Lebanon, CT 06249*

Article II.

- Section 1 Each Sub-Committee will be responsible for keeping track of or staying within the defined apportionment allotted for that sub-committee. A listing of budgeted items or activities may be found on the Treasurer's Report.

Article III.

- Section 1 Payment of submitted invoices or bills shall require two signatures prior to being submitted for payment.
 - (a) One signature being a member of the Recreation Commission whom is also a member of the respective Sub-Committee overseeing that activity.
 - (b) The second signature being that of the Recreation Director for the Town of Lebanon. In the absence of, or in lieu of, the prior being superior, the Chairman of the Recreation shall be authorized to co-sign all invoices/bills.
- Section 2 In the case where the Recreation Director is the organizing body for an activity/event/trip, the cosigner will be the Recreation Commission Chairman.

Article IV.

- Section 1 Only the Recreation Coordinator, Subcommittee Chairman, and the Chairman of the Recreation Commission shall be authorized to purchase from businesses.
- Section 2 All purchases beyond that which is authorized by the Recreation Commission and made as an addendum to an activity/event/trip shall be brought to the Commission for approval. The commission shall not be responsible for any payment (in full, partial or interest) which approval has not been secured.
- Section 4 All pricing and /or discount policies must be stated on the registration form for any program or event. Any and all exceptions to this policy must be approved by a majority vote of the Recreation Commission.

Appendix 3

Perceived Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

The Recreation Commission identified the following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats related to their mission, goals, and recreation programs on August 27, 2018.

STRENGTHS

- Commitment of Recreation Commission to meet the recreation needs/desires of the community and change recreation programming based on these needs.
- Number and variety of recreation programs given limited funds and facilities.
- \$200K worth of recreation programming for \$58K due to volunteers.
- Recreation Coordinator who works more hours than paid.

WEAKNESSES

- Diminishing number of community volunteers.
- Lack of facility maintenance or funds for facility maintenance provided to Commission.
- Lack of Pre-K programs other than swimming.
- Limited number of soccer fields given need.
- Lack of availability of gymnasium space given need.
- Requirement of volunteers to provide field maintenance.
- Lack of fulltime recreation coordinator position.
- Lack of secure office and limited office space and storage.
- Condition of recreation facilities projects poorly on community.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Improve condition and expand recreation facilities for existing residents and to attract new residents.
- Repair two (2) Aspinall ballfields and construct soccer field.
- Better coordination between BOE and DPW for field maintenance.
- Secure a fulltime recreation coordinator or an additional part-time grant writer to increase programming and help manage facilities and programs.
- Increase recreation programming.
- Utilize Community Center for recreation office.

THREATS

- Lack of adequate funding for field maintenance.
- Overuse of fields available to Commission causes liability to town and recreation programs.
- Competition with school facilities, i.e., limited use of gymnasium space and field maintenance.