

Town of Unity Parks and Recreation Committee Bylaws

Article I: NAME

The name of the Committee shall be Unity Parks and Recreation Committee.

Article II: MISSION STATEMENT AND OBJECTIVES

Section 1 Mission Statement

The Town of Unity Parks and Recreation Committee provides affordable recreational opportunities for the Town of Unity's residents and where appropriate, residents of surrounding towns and visitors to the area. The Committee strives to build community, enrich lives, and care for the town and natural environments. The Committee uses a combination of fundraising activities and town-authorized funds to achieve its mission.

Section 2 Objectives

The Unity Parks and Recreation Committee will achieve its mission by utilizing the following objectives:

- Offering active and passive programs using town-owned and other available facilities to accommodate a variety of user groups and activities.
- Promoting regular physical activity for all Unity residents.
- Collaborating and partnering with groups, organizations, and businesses in Unity to promote and enhance the economic development of the community.
- Working to establish, maintain, beautify and improve the town's parks, open spaces and town-controlled elements of the downtown area.
- Advising the Selectboard of recreational areas needing repair or restoration to enhance safety or user satisfaction.
- Communicate to residents through the Town of Unity website, through email using unityparksandrec@gmail.com, and through the Unity Parks and Recreation Committee Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61560924084672>).
- Communicate between Committee members and store all documents through the use of the Google Drive associated with the unityparksandrec@gmail.com account as well as providing documents to Town Staff for posting to the Town of Unity website.

The town, by vote at town meeting, may also make funds available to the Committee.

BYLAWS

Article I: Membership

Section 1 Eligibility

Committee membership is limited to residents of the Town of Unity. Candidates should not be members of the Selectboard or serve on any other town committee.

Section 2 Committee Makeup

Ideally the members of the Committee will represent a diversity of recreational interests. Number of members on the committee not to exceed seven.

Section 3 Membership

A. Appointments to the Committee

1. Prospective members will be recommended by existing members of the committee to the Selectboard for approval prior to taking the oath of office before the town clerk.
2. For the year 2024-2025 only, all members are appointed for one year. In 2025, in order to stagger terms, approximately half of the committee will serve two-year terms, with the remainder being approved for two-year terms starting in 2026.
3. In the event of a vacancy within the committee, any new member recommended by the committee and approved by the selectboard will complete the original term of the individual who created said vacancy.

B. No Term Limits

At this time there will be no limit to the number of consecutive terms a member may serve. However, recommendations for reappointment will be contingent on regular participation in meetings, with regular participation defined as having no more than three unexcused absences from monthly meetings. As noted elsewhere, committee members may participate in meetings if out of town by various electronic means such as video teleconferencing or by telephone.

C. Termination of Committee Appointments

The Committee Chair can recommend to the Selectboard to terminate an appointment based on attendance and participation.

Section 4 Officers

1. The Board of the Committee shall consist of the Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer.
2. Board members will be elected annually by all committee members present at the first meeting of the year following the town's annual town meeting.

Article II: Meetings and Voting

All regular and special meetings of the Committee as a whole are open to the public. The Committee secretary or chair shall inform the Town Clerk via email of any meetings so they may be posted on the town website and on the Committee's Facebook page and public Google calendar.

Section 1 Monthly Meetings

Meetings shall be held on the second Wednesday of each month at 6:30pm at the Unity Town Office. Written (email) notice and/or a calendar reminder of each meeting shall be

sent by the Secretary at least ten (10) days prior to the date of the meeting. The quorum for such meetings shall be at least 50% of committee members (four members out of seven).

Section 2 Special Committee Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the Chair, or by a majority vote of the members of the Board who are present and voting at any regular or special meeting of the Board, and shall be called by the Secretary upon receipt of a petition signed by four or more committee members who state a specific reason for doing so. Any such special meeting shall be held at a place, date, and hour as may be designated by the Chair or other elected Board member.

Special meetings may also be held using available electronic means such as (but not confined to) Zoom, Microsoft Teams, or tele-conferencing, and minutes from such meetings will be filed along with the minutes from regularly scheduled meetings. In the absence of the Committee Secretary, those present may elect another committee member to record the minutes. If a meeting is to be held by electronic means, instructions for public attendance must be included in the meeting notice and the committee should make arrangements for any member of the public who cannot access the electronic meeting from their home to do so via a connection at the town hall or other public place.

Written (email) notice of special meetings shall be sent by the Secretary at least five (5) days and not more than fifteen (15) days prior to the date of the meeting. Such notice shall state the purpose of the meeting, and no other business shall be transacted.

All minutes will be posted to the Committee's Google Drive, and a link will be posted on social media to provide public access to the approved minutes. The minutes will be distributed to the Town staff for uploading to the Town of Unity's website under the Unity Parks and Recreation Committee's Meeting Minutes page.

Section 4 Officer Meetings

The Committee Officers may meet as necessary through any means to develop the agenda for committee meetings or otherwise facilitate Committee-approved activities as needed between meetings. Meetings of the Committee Officers need not be public so long as a quorum of the Committee is not in attendance. Meetings of the Committee Officers or any other subset of Committee members may not be used to avoid or replace the need for public Committee action on substantive matters.

Article III: Directors and Officers

Section 1 Officers

The Committee's Officers, consisting of the Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer shall serve in their respective capacities both with regard to the Committee and its meetings and the Officers' meetings.

Section 2 Duties of the Officers

The Chair shall prepare the agenda and preside at all meetings of the Committee and of the Board. S/he shall act as liaison between the Selectboard and the Committee and between various groups and organizations in the town or delegate such interaction to another member of the Committee if appropriate. The results of any such interactions will be reported to the Committee.

In the event of the Chair's absence or incapacity, the remaining Board members shall appoint an interim Acting Chair.

The Secretary shall keep a record of all meetings of the committee and of the Officers, shall keep a roll of members, and shall notify members of meetings.

The Treasurer shall reconcile all funds and receipts due or belonging to the Committee. His/her books shall be at all times open to inspection by the Committee, the Board of Selectmen and the Town Treasurer, and he/she shall report to the Committee at every meeting the condition of the Committee's finances and every item of receipt or payment not previously reported.

Any vacancies occurring among the Board during the year shall be filled until the next annual election by a majority vote of all the present members of the Committee at the first regular meeting following the creation of such vacancy, or at a Special Meeting called for that purpose.

Article IV Calendar Year, Annual Meeting, Elections

Section 1 Committee Year

The Committee's fiscal year shall begin on the first day of February and end on the thirty-first day of January, being the same as the fiscal year for the Town of Unity.

The committee's official operating year shall begin immediately at the conclusion of election of officers at the committee's first meeting in April.

Section 2 Organizational Meeting

The Committee's operational year ends on March 30, and the organizational meeting shall be held in April at which time officers for the ensuing year shall be elected. In the event that weather or other cause results in the postponement of the meeting the Committee shall, at its discretion and by majority vote of the board, determine how the election will be conducted, whether by open vote or secret ballot at the rescheduled meeting or by mail or electronic means prior to the rescheduled date. Current Officers will remain active until such time that the election can be held to elect new Officers. The nominated candidate receiving the greatest number of votes for each position shall be declared elected. Those elected shall take office immediately upon the conclusion of the election, and each retiring officer shall turn over to his/her successor in office all properties and records relating to that office within thirty days after the election.

Section 3 Nominations

- No person may be a candidate in a Committee election who has not been nominated.
- No person may be a candidate for more than one position, and the additional nominations provided for herein may be made only from among those members who have not accepted a nomination from the nominating Committee member.

Section 4 Proposal of Amendments

Amendments to the Bylaws may be proposed by the Committee or by written petition addressed to the Secretary signed by 20 percent of the Committee members.

Amendments proposed by such a petition shall be promptly considered by the Officers and must be submitted to the full Committee by the Secretary for a vote within three months of the date when the petition was received by the Secretary. If there is an approval vote, the Committee shall make a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen regarding any such amendment proposed by petition.

Section 5 Enactment

The Bylaws' changes may be amended by an affirmative vote of 50% of the Committee members (four of seven members) present and voting at any regular or special meeting called for the purpose, provided the prior wording and the proposed amendments have been included in the notice of the meeting and provided to each member at least 7 days prior to the date of the meeting. The re-drafted and endorsed Bylaws' changes will then be forwarded to the Board of Selectmen for review and approval.

Article V Order of Business

Section 1 Order of Business for Committee Meetings

At meetings of the Committee, the order of business, so far as the character and nature of the meeting may permit, shall be as follows:

Meeting called to order and time recorded.

1. Secretary will record names of all committee members and guests who are attending, whether in person or by remote means
2. Minutes of the previous Committee meeting should be approved with any proposed changes.
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Reports from any Sub-Committees
5. Election of Officers (annual meeting)
6. Election of new members
7. Old (unfinished) Business
8. New Business
9. Adjournment and time recorded.

Article VI Parliamentary Authority

Section 1 Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, newly revised, shall govern the Committee in all cases to which they are applicable, and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws and any other special rules of order, the Committee may adopt. At any meeting the members may choose to act less formally as long as the rules regarding quorum and voting are observed.

Article VII Budget

Section 1 Sources of Funding

The Committee receives funding for its activities from the town as approved by warrant at the annual or special town meetings. Additional revenue may be accrued from fundraising and donations. These monies shall be maintained in a special checking account maintained by the Town Treasurer on behalf of the Committee.

Funds provided by the town through taxation will be tracked with other Committee funds stemming from donations and fundraising. However, the Committee must designate the expenditures that were made utilizing the Town's allocated funding as part of the annual budgeting process. Additionally:

- a) Expenditures of revenues received from other (fundraising and donations) sources in amounts not to exceed \$499.99 do not require advance approval from the Selectboard; however, the Committee shall, at the earliest convenience, advise the Town Treasurer and the Selectboard when such expenditures are made. Receipts (paper or digital) for all purchases using committee funds shall be submitted to the Town Treasurer. Where expenditures for a single purchase, whether one item or several, exceeds \$499.99 Selectboard approval is required prior to said purchase being made.
- b) Between the end of the fiscal year, January 31, and the annual Town Meeting, Town allocated funds cannot be spent. Once Town allocated funds are approved at the Annual Town Meeting, the Committee can then begin spending those funds, and should expend those funds completely prior to January 31.

Section 2 Oversight of Fundraising Income

At any recreational event or activity which is sponsored or overseen by the Committee, at least two Committee members shall be responsible for collecting fees or donations on behalf of the committee. Immediately at the conclusion of the event these two members shall count and agree to the amount collected and, at the earliest opportunity, deliver the funds and accounting to the Town Treasurer who will confirm the total, give the individuals a receipt, and deposit the funds to the committee's bank account.

An exception to the two-person rule is applicable to small or on-going events where a donations jar is made available for voluntary contributions. In this latter situation one committee member shall be responsible for delivering such funds at their earliest convenience to the Town Treasurer for deposit to the committee's account, and for obtaining a receipt from the Town Treasurer for the Committee's treasurer.

Article VIII Contracts and Written Agreements

All contracts and written agreements in which the Committee wishes to engage in fulfillment of its mission statement and goals must be authorized and signed by the Selectboard prior to implementation, with the exception of user or participant agreements which have been preapproved by the selectboard.

Article IX Assets (Financial)

The programs offered by the Committee will not be operated for profit. The Committee may authorize user fees to be charged for participation in all or some programs, which should be set in an amount intended to balance defraying the costs of the program with ensuring strong public participation. All revenue received through user fees, fundraising, grants, donations, or any other sources shall be deposited with the Town Treasurer into a dedicated fund. The Committee may request disbursements from the revenue fund to cover the cost of its activities; however, disbursements of more than \$500 shall be approved by the Select Board in advance.

All income and expenditures will be noted in an itemized spreadsheet which will be available to any resident of the town upon request.

The committee receives funding from three sources:

- a) The Town of Unity as voted on at town meeting
- b) Donations
- c) Fundraising

Regardless of source, all funds are to be turned into the town office for deposit by the Town Treasurer in a checking account which is overseen by the Town Treasurer, and a record of all transactions shall be maintained by both parties.

At the conclusion of the fiscal year on January 31, any and all unspent funds derived from town appropriation shall be returned to the town; all other funds shall be carried over to the next year for use by the Committee to further its stated mission.

Expenditures from town-appropriated funds shall be designated within the Committee's expense tracking, and the tracking of those expenditures will be reported separately from other expenses from fundraising or donations.

Article X Assets (Equipment and Supplies)


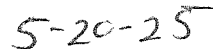
All equipment and supplies, whether purchased or donated, are the property of the Town of Unity.

All equipment and supplies are to be stored on town-owned property. It is the responsibility of the Selectboard to provide the committee with appropriate space for storage of supplies and equipment which is secure, safe to access, and which is accessible to all committee members. Storage should be clean, dry, and in good condition so that equipment and supplies are protected from weather, mold, vermin, etc.


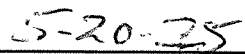
Use requests from non-Committee members or residents of the Town for use of Parks and Recreation equipment requires approval by the Committee and equipment may only be used for activities which further the mission and goals of the committee.

Disposal of any equipment and supplies managed by the Parks and Recreation Committee requires approval by the Selectboard.

Approved by the Selectmen of the Town of Unity on April 29, 2025

	
_____ Name	_____ Date Signed

	
_____ Name	_____ Date Signed

	
_____ Name	_____ Date Signed