



GORDON OLIVER
CHAIRMAN

STATE OF CONNECTICUT – COUNTY OF TOLLAND
INCORPORATED

TOWN OF ELLINGTON

Parks and Recreation Commission

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THOMAS BOSCARINO
CYNTHIA COSTANZO
KEVIN HAYES
SHERRY KRAUS
SHAY DRAKE
CHRISTOPHER WEITZ
CHERI MURPHY
TARA KOZIK

Parks and Recreation Commission
Special Meeting Minutes September 15, 2026
7:00PM, at 31 Arbor Way

MEMBERS PRESENT: Gordon Oliver, Tom Boscarino, Shay Drake, Cheri Murphy, Sherry Kraus, Cynthia Costanzo, Christopher Weitz

OTHERS PRESENT: Mary M. Bartley, Director of Recreation, Kevin Barrett Assistant Director of Recreation, Jaimie Boucher, Board of Selectman Liaison.

RESIDENTS PRESENT: Ben Luginbuhl, Jessica Luginbuhl, Lakely Luginbuhl, Laura Gottier, Annalise Gottier

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:**
Commission Chairman Gordon Oliver called the meeting to order at 7:07PM.
- II. **CORRESPONDENCE:** email responses for September 9, 2026 meeting
- III. **PUBLIC FORUM:**
Commission Chairman Gordon Oliver opened the meeting to public forum.

Jessica Luginbuhl- 32 Ellsworth Lane: Ms. Luginbuhl addressed the Commission regarding her inability to speak at the previous meeting due to audio issues. She expressed concern about the unintentional gap between age groups created by the new placement requirements. She stated that her daughter had previously played with an older grade-level team, where she developed skills, built strong relationships with teammates, and played with her peers. Ms. Luginbuhl expressed concern that the current placement will prevent the girls from continuing to develop with their classmates and may leave them unprepared for the transition to sixth-grade soccer and the larger field. She requested that the Commission reconsider the current requirements and allow the girls to return to the team they played with last season. MS. Luginbuhl then invited her daughter, who was present, to address the Commission. Her daughter expressed that she would prefer to remain with her previous team because she is no longer playing with her former teammates and peers.

Resident Minor -101 Webster Road: soccer player, loves playing soccer but she is disappointed that she is playing a grade level down from what she has previously played the seasons before with her friends and classmates.

Laura Gottier- 101 Webster Road: Parent mentioned to the recreation commission that her daughter is willing to play for both teams so she can help the team she is currently assigned to if needed.

- VI. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**
 - A. **Fall soccer 2026 team placement.**
Commission Vice Chairman- T. Boscarino thanked the parents for focusing their comments on the age-group gap and acknowledged that the issue warranted consideration. Mr. Boscarino stated that the Recreation Department and Commission have been working since the spring to address the concerns while maintaining established policies. Further he explained that a motion had been made at the previous meeting to allow players born between August 1 and December 31 to be added to rosters; however, the motion received a 4–3 vote and the required condition was not met. As a result, no roster changes would have been made.

He further explained that, following additional discussion, an alternative proposal was developed for consideration that evening. Mr. Boscarino emphasized that the Department and Commission value the community, listen to concerns, and make decisions with the interests of the children and programs in mind. The Commission's role is to support and advise the Department by providing guidance and recommendations when requested.

MOTION MADE TO AUTHORIZE THE RECREATION DIRECTOR, FOR PURPOSES OF ADMINISTERING CURRENT ELLINGTON PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT SOCCER TRAVEL TEAM POLICIES, TO UTILIZE AS THE "AGE APPROPRIATE" AGE GROUP PLAYER FORMATION CYCLE THE THIRTEEN (13) MONTH PERIOD FROM AUGUST 1 THROUGH AUGUST 31 OF THE FOLLOWING YEAR (I.E. FOR A U-10 PLAYER USE AUGUST 1, 2016 TO AUGUST 31, 2017), AS DETAILED IN THE ATTACHMENT. MOVED (T. BOSCARINO) SECONDED (C. WEITZ) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ACCEPT THE ATTACHED MOTION.

Ms. Costanzo, commission member, noted that the recent public participation was valuable and encouraged residents with concerns or suggestions to attend Commission meetings and provide input.

V. ADJOURN:

MOVED (BOSCARINO), SECONDED (MURPHY), AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN AT 7:48PM.

Submitted by:


Mary M. Bartley

Attachment:1

Motion is made to authorize the Recreation Director, for purposes of administering current Ellington Parks and Recreation Department soccer travel team policies, to utilize as the "age appropriate" age group player formation cycle the thirteen (13) month period from August 1 through August 31 of the following year (i.e., for a U-10 player use August 1, 2016 to August 31, 2017).

The following stipulations, considerations, conditions and limitations constitute essential component requirements of this Motion and should be considered instructive to the implementation of this Motion and the intended granting of the very limited exception/extension of the current age appropriate soccer travel team policy/policies of the Ellington Parks and Recreation Department (hereinafter referred to as "EP&RD"):

- . The purpose of this Motion is to attempt, in part, to reconcile the current USSF and CJSA age group player formation cycle for the season year placement that runs from August 1 to July 31 (see attached CJSA chart), the current EP&RD policies regarding "age appropriate" soccer placement criteria, and the State of Connecticut law regarding how old a child must be to start kindergarten (i.e., the September 1st mandate).
- . This limited exception to the current EP&RD soccer travel team policy/policies is for the purpose of better aligning the age group player formation cycle with the Connecticut mandated September 1st date for determination of kindergarten enrollment.
- . This Motion and the limited exception/extension authorized thereby applies only to youth born from August 1 through August 31.
- . This Motion and the limited exception/extension authorized thereby is only authorized in those specific instances where utilization of the exception/extension allows for the player to align with their school grade peers.
- . The option to accept the limited exception/extension is strictly a parental decision. The parent(s) of the affected youth may elect to have his his/her/their child play age appropriate per the designated USSF and CJSA age group player formation cycle (i.e., currently set at August 1 through July 31).
- . Those parents whose children are offered this limited exception/extension must voluntarily and timely provide the EP&RD with satisfactory proof of birthdate and grade level as of September 1 of the applicable season year.
- . The EP&RD has identified from the current Fall 2026 soccer team placements/rosters the following specific situations which may qualify for consideration of the limited exception/extension provided for in the Motion:
 - a. A U-9 (per current USSF/CJSA age group criteria) girls player with a birthdate of August, 2017, who is in the 4th grade would be offered placement on the girls U-10 team.
 - b. Two U-10 (per current USSF/CJSA age group criteria) girls players both with birthdates of August 2016, who are both in 5th grade would be offered placement on the girls U-11 team (but not on the girls U-12 team, shown as a U-11/12 team).
 - c. Two U-9 (per current USSF/CJSA age group criteria) boys players both with birthdates of August 2017, who are both in 4th grade would be offered placement on a boys U-10 team.
 - d. A U-10 (per current USSF/CJSA age group criteria) boys player with a birthdate of August 2016, who is a 5th grader would be offered placement on the boys U-11 team