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Playing Field and Facility Permit Policy

(Approved by the Joint Hamilton Wenham Recreation Commission 11/14/11)

The Towns of Hamilton and Wenham, through authority granted to its Recreation Department, have adopted the following policy concerning the use of the Town's playing fields and related facilities. Fields in Hamilton and Wenham are public and do not necessarily need a permit for use. However, a legally issued permit does take preference over any drop-in groups at any of the playing fields or facilities. Regular meetings of a group of individuals are considered organized and a permit must be issued.

Fields and Facilities Covered By This Policy

- Hamilton Wenham Recreation Center Gymnasium
- Pingree Park Baseball Diamond(s)
- Pingree Park Athletic Field
- Fairhaven Athletic Field
- West Wenham Athletic Field
- Patton Park Baseball Diamond(s)
- Patton Park Athletic Field
- Donovan Field
- Buker Elementary School Baseball Diamond and Playing Field
- Cutler Elementary School Baseball Field and Playing Field
- Winthrop Elementary School And Playing Field
- Patton Park Tennis Courts
- Pingree Park Tennis Courts

Permitted Uses of Fields

- Organized or regular use of the Town's playing fields and facilities by groups shall require a permit.
- All efforts will be made to make the permitting process as fair as possible.
- When two or more applicants on equal footing apply for the same space, priority will be given to the traditional in season sport, as defined by the High School sports seasons, outlined as follows:
 - Fall Season – Soccer, Football
 - Spring – Baseball, Lacrosse
 - Winter - Basketball
 - Summer – per request

- Permits will be based on availability, scheduled renovations, or any other factor implemented by the Recreation Department and/or the Department of Public Works.
- In addition to the tier to which a permit holder belongs, consideration will be given to a Hamilton-Wenham Youth Sports League that has been a permit holder in the past. As a general rule, a permit will be renewed provided the permit holders have conducted themselves in accordance with the conditions described in this policy. Items that will weigh in the final decisions will be the past history an organization has developed with the Recreation Department, length of time an organization has been part of the community, condition the field is left after users finish for the day (i.e. trash), and the ability of the group to conform to the rules and regulations of the Recreation Department.
- Other than Tier 1 or 1a, applicants that wish to use a second field during a season will only be considered based on the availability of playing fields.
- The field/facility permit applicant or the responsible adults (league representative, coach, parent, proper adult supervision) shall be present at all times a field allocated to them is in use.
- Payment is expected prior to receiving the permit (with exception being Hamilton-Wenham youth organizations that pay the per participant rate). **Only Payment by check is accepted.** No future permits will be issued to a group or organization until all outstanding fees are paid.
- Reallocation or subletting of fields or facilities is strictly prohibited. If permitted fields are going unused, the unused dates may not be assigned to non-permitted users and are to be turned back to the Recreation Department for allocation to other users.
- Unless specifically requested and approved by all applicable Town Departments and Boards, it is understood that the function/activity to be held is not a fundraiser, that no admission is to be charged, that no tickets will be sold or collections taken, and that no items will be sold.
- Any violation of the permit's terms, conditions, and /or limitations shall be grounds for immediate revocation of the permit. No refund of the permit fee will be granted and future applications for permits may be denied.
- The Recreation Department requires a certificate of insurance naming both The Towns of Hamilton and Wenham as additionally insured
- By submitting an application, all applicants agree to conform to all Town policies for playing fields and facilities use.

Checklist for permit application: **Consideration will not be given until the following conditions are met:**

1. Completed application with signed acknowledgement of policy statement.
 2. Associated rosters signed by organization or league authenticating residency requirements for tier 2 and 3 users.
 3. A copy of the organization's insurance certificate.
 4. Any organization or entity that accepts volunteers and provides activities or programs to children 18 or years of age or under must provide the Recreation Department with written documentation that the entity or organization performs a CORI check on all volunteers, as required by Massachusetts General Law. This must be on your organization's letterhead and signed by your president.
- Once a field permit/facility has been processed, no refunds will be given. A credit may be issued due to inclement weather contingent upon timely notification of a cancellation and at the discretion of the Recreation Department.

- All revenue generated by users fees are for field/facility supplies, and Recreation Department administrative fees.

Permits will be issued in the following priority:

Tier 1 Priority Use:

- Recreation Department sponsored programs.
- Hamilton-Wenham Regional High School (Where Applicable), any Hamilton-Wenham School Event or Activity

Tier 1a Priority Use: (Must have 95% Hamilton-Wenham Residents)

- Hamilton-Wenham Youth Sports Organization (i.e. Little League, Babe Ruth baseball, Youth Soccer, Youth Lacrosse, Youth Football) who pay a per participant/per season fee.

Tier 2 Priority Use: (Must have a minimum of 60% Hamilton-Wenham Residents)

- Hamilton-Wenham Based Youth Sports Organizations (teams that participate in regional leagues, not in-town organizations)
- Hamilton-Wenham based Adult Sports Leagues – League membership must have 60% residency.

Tier 3 Priority Use:

- Any team or league that does not meet 60% residency.

Tier 4 Priority Use:

- Private clinics, camps, tournaments or other special uses of the town’s fields or related facilities.

If requested by the Recreation Department, organizations or leagues must submit rosters which shall include the following:

- Name of participant
- Home address of participant

Application Process:

- Permit applications for fields/facilities for the calendar year will be accepted by the Recreation Department beginning the first Monday in January. Starting and ending dates are approximate and depend upon weather/field conditions. The Recreation Department and the DPW Public Grounds Department will set the start dates.
- Sessions:
 1. Spring – approximately April 1 – June 30
 2. Summer – approximately July 1 – August 14
 3. Fall – approximately August 15 – November 21
 4. Winter – approximately November 22 – March 31
- A schedule of permit fees is listed at the end of this document. The Recreation Department will issue a permit/invoice based upon the Tier Category the organization falls under.

- All completed permit applications should be received by the Recreation Department in a timely manner. Following is an approximate timetable for submission of playing field and related facility applications.
- Any Tier 1A organization that gives scholarships to any of its participants will be eligible for up to five (5) scholarships from the Hamilton Wenham Recreation Department permit fee of \$10 per player per season. Organizations must provide the Recreation Department with written documentation that their league has provided scholarships to players during that particular season.

	Spring Season	Summer Season	Fall Season	Winter Season
Application Period Opens	January	January	January	July
Application Due By	February 15	April 30	July 31	September 30
Permits Issued By	March 15	June 1	August 15	November 15

It is the responsibility of each permit holder to submit the requests in writing to the Recreation Department.

- Once a permit is issued, use of the playing fields and facilities covered by such permit is strictly limited to the terms and conditions, and limitations contained in the permit.
- Field and Facility Permits may be revoked for
 - Use of alcohol, tobacco, and other controlled substances at field sites
 - Use of wet and/or unplayable fields
 - Excessive litter
 - Use of foul and/or abusive language
 - Damage to fields or facilities
- Field Permit Holders are not allowed to practice or play games on any fields under the following conditions:
 1. When there is standing water on the field
 2. When the ground is water-logged and “squishy”
 3. When the footing is unsure and slippery
 4. During any thunderstorm, lightning event, or heavy rain
- For information about playing fields and related facility conditions when a field is closed due to wet or unfavorable conditions you can contact the Recreation Department 978-468-2178. After regular recreation office hours (Monday 8:00 AM – 7:00 PM, Tuesday – Thursday 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM, Friday 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM) it shall be the responsibility of the permit holder to determine if an activity can be held due to wet or unfavorable conditions.

Field Permit holders will be held responsible for the repair of any field on which they play in wet or unfavorable conditions and caused damage to the field, regardless of whether or not the field was closed by the Recreation Department or DPW. If field damage occurs, the DPW will

determine what and how the field needs to be repaired and the permit holder will be responsible for paying all field damage.

If there is any pre-existing damage to a field or facility upon arrival by a permitted group, please contact the Recreation Department office immediately to report the damage.

- There is no guarantee that the field permitted will be lined. Field lining is not included in the administrative fee.
- Field permit Holders are not allowed to practice or play games on any snow-covered field and are not allowed to remove snow from any field.

- In submitting an application for a permit under this policy, the applicant:
 - i. Agrees that he/she will abide by the rules of the City, the Recreation Department and their representatives and designees;
 - ii. Recognizes the possibility of physical injury associated with use of playing fields and related facilities, and in consideration for the Town and Recreation Department accepting his/her/its application for a playing field and related facility use permit, shall indemnify, defend, and hold the Town, its departments, employees and officials, harmless from and against any and all claims, demands, liabilities, actions, causes of actions, costs and expenses, including attorney's fees, arising out of the use of the playing fields and facilities by the applicant, its members and players.

- The Recreation Department reserves the right:
 - i. To require a police detail, where deemed necessary by the Recreation Department as a condition to any permit issued. The cost of such a police detail shall be borne by the permit holder.
 - ii. To revoke permits issued for violation of Policy, Town Ordinance or Recreation Department Rules and Regulations.

