

Stowe Recreation Commission Meeting

Stowe Arena – Community Room

August 5, 2026 – 5:00 PM

1. Call to Order – 5:00 PM

Meeting called to order by Chair at 5:04 PM.

Members Present: Ryan Thibeault (Chair), Lyn Goldsmith, Marie Kingsbury, Charles Roscioli-Barran (student representative), Deb Drinkwater, Brett Loomis (by telephone) **Members Absent:** Bill Scudder, Jennifer Gryckiewicz

Staff Present: Matt Frazee

2. Approve the Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion: Ryan Thibeault **Second:** Lyn Goldsmith **Vote:** Approved unanimously.

3. Consent Items

A. 7.1 Minutes

Members reviewed minutes from July 1, 2026. Suspected error raised and confirmed correct as written; no corrections offered.

Brett Loomis joined by telephone during this item and participated in the vote.

Motion to approve minutes:

Motion: Ryan Thibeault **Second:** Brett Loomis **Vote:** Approved unanimously.

4. Mayo Farm Easement – Recreation Stakeholders – 5:15 PM

Matt Frazee proposed reaching out directly to the Stowe Athletics organizations. People at the last Mayo Farm meeting asked to hear from the clubs themselves and to see program data.

The Situation: The town has 11 acres of dedicated athletic space, at Memorial Park and the Polo Field. The easement allowed up to 36 acres of fields at J, K, and L. Those were never built. Environmental constraints and state and federal permitting have blocked the work. School and youth teams use Mayo Fields A, B, and C instead. Those are event fields. Teams are bumped when an event is booked and have nowhere else to play, so they cancel.

This Fall: Events are booked on Fields A, B, and C for six of nine consecutive weekends. Middle school soccer loses those dates.

Field Condition: Teams play Monday through Wednesday. About 500 cars park and drive on that same grass over an event weekend. Teams are back on it Monday.

Data Gap: The Department runs flag football and basketball. Every other program belongs to a club or to the school, and they hold their own schedules and rosters. The Department cannot produce the usage data people asked for.

Property (Attachment A): About 235 acres, town-owned. About 125 acres leased for farming. Stowe Land Trust holds the conservation easement.

Letter Campaign

- Co-authored cover letter for signature by the user organizations. States that Stowe team athletics lacks the field infrastructure its programs require. Names field relocation as the remedy.

- Content: where things stand now; the easement written 25 years ago allowing up to 36 acres at J, K, and L; the 11 acres the town actually has; how a Stowe field compares to fields in other Vermont towns; who uses Polo Field, Memorial Park, Moscow Field, and Fields A, B, and C.
- Facts to include: Polo Field is 97% wetland. Memorial Park has flooded five times. Moscow Field surfacing lasted four years.
- Goes to the Conservation Commission chair, copy Recreation Commission, before the August 24, 2026 meeting.

Permitting: The easement reserved the right to add drainage and raise grades at J, K, and L. State and federal wetland rules have blocked that work. Any wetland permit starts with an alternatives analysis, which looks at every piece of land the town owns and any land it could buy. Matt Frazee expects Fields D and E to come up first. They have the driest soil and the fewest environmental problems.

Consequences if Events Remain on A, B, C

- Permitting at Memorial Park will likely force wetland restoration at Polo Field, which takes Polo out of athletic use.
- An updated Memorial Park master plan likely costs the town the large baseball field and the pickleball courts.
- If the town gains only Field D, events would have to fit inside a set summer window and the rest of the season would go to sports.
- Trading D and E for J, K, and L would give the town enough room for everything.

Fields D and E, Open Questions: Deed restrictions survive whatever happens to the easement. The Percy family references an additional easement. Terms and location unidentified. The town applied sludge until approx. 10 to 15 years ago. End date and effect on Field D unknown. Field D acreage estimated at 15 to 18 acres, unconfirmed.

Easement Path: Matt Frazee said amending the easement is harder than ending it. The sequence discussed: terminate, run a town-wide needs assessment, decide what the town wants on the land, then write a new easement over whatever the town will not develop. Polo Field is unlikely to be developed either way. It is wetland.

Message: The easement was well intended. Later regulation superseded it. Portions are now irrelevant or unnecessary. Uses it was written to permit are barred by constraints outside it. The town had no town manager when it was written. Tax implications were tied to the sale.

No motion taken.

Action Items

- Draft the co-authored cover letter for signature by the user organizations. To the Conservation Commission chair, copy Recreation Commission, in advance of the August 24, 2026 meeting.
- Keep a copy of every letter the clubs submit, including the ones sent straight to the Conservation Commission. Status at the next meeting.
- Ask Stowe Land Trust for a meeting. Report back at the next meeting.
- The Commission would like to better understand what happens if the easement is terminated.

Next Step: Letters to the Conservation Commission chair in advance of the August 24, 2026 meeting. User organizations encouraged to attend that meeting.

5. Rec Path Picnic Tables and Benches – 5:35 PM

Matt Frazee updated the Commission on the bench and picnic table dedication program. About 140 tables and benches out there, all different ages and types. Replacing them is a real cost the town has not budgeted. The program started as a way to fund the Recreation Path when it was built. The Path pays for itself now.

Product and Cost: A wood unit ran \$250 to \$500 and needed constant upkeep. Recycled plastic and composite

need no paint and do not rot. Tables carry a 50-year warranty. A table now runs roughly \$1,500 to \$2,000.

Turnkey Quote: One high-end vendor quoted roughly \$380,000 to replace all units including assembly and installation. Staff put the contracted range at \$250,000 to \$400,000.

Current Status: Six benches ordered for this year, with six donors committed. About 25 people still on the waiting list. No takers on tables. The sample table arrived without its legs; they are due next week. **Installation:** Everything sets on concrete footings, so donors cannot install their own. Staff can build 20 tables in house over the winter for spring installation. Outside help is not an option, since they would need town facilities and equipment.

Budget Thresholds: Requests of \$10,000 or more proceed through the capital process; below that, the operating budget. Ten tables run roughly \$15,000 to \$20,000, so an operating request covers about five tables per year.

Capital Approach: Multiyear capital fund request for 20 tables per year over three years, with in-house assembly. Order of magnitude \$30,000 to \$40,000 per year, subject to the final unit price. Fundraising to return the money to the town.

Fundraising: The town can already take donations earmarked for the Recreation Path, but there has never been an actual campaign.

Plaques: Sell plaques instead of whole units. Three donation levels, with the top level choosing the plaque location. Donors would not pick where a table goes. The current donation policy has to be amended before any of this starts.

Inventory: Somebody needs to work out how many units the town actually needs before a replacement number gets set. Thompson and Chase have held more than they need. The event field has one table and a shady spot with nowhere to sit.

Action Items

- Matt Frazee:
 - Obtain additional vendor estimates. Prepare a three-year capital request for 20 tables per year with in-house assembly. Reconcile the annual figure against the unit price. Returns to Commission for a vote before budget submission.
 - Find out how the town would run a donation campaign for Recreation Path furnishings. Report back at the next meeting.
 - Work out how many units are needed at each location. This comes with or ahead of the capital request
- Lyn Goldsmith
 - Prepare an amended bench and picnic table donation policy with three plaque donation levels.

6. Other Business – 5:55 PM

None.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 6:00PM

Meeting record

- Adjournment time.
- Whether the student representative seat votes. If not, the Item 3 tally must reflect it. •

Whether Brett Loomis departed after Item 4 or remained on the line.

Names

- Chair's surname. Town filings use "Thibeault" in the November 5, 2025 minutes and the July 2025 Manager's Report. The July 1, 2026 minutes used "Thibault."
- Lyn or Lynn Goldsmith. The November 5, 2025 minutes use both spellings.
- Confirm Charles Roscioli-Barran as the member contacting Tim Albertson.
- Owners for the four unassigned action items under Item 4: draft cover letter; collect submitted letters; request Stowe Land Trust meeting; prepare easement termination case.
- Stowe Land Trust contact surname. Lintilhac Foundation fund manager surname. Porter Thorndike relation.

Figures

- Polo Field wetland percentage against the delineation.
- Memorial Park flood count and period. Notes give five floods; recording gives three years. • Moscow Field surfacing lifespan. Field D acreage. Sludge application end date.
- The \$380,000 vendor quote against the written quote.
- Unit count and waiting list. November 5, 2025 minutes recorded 35 on the list and a target of ten installations by spring 2026, five benches and five tables. State whether the target was met. • Per-table price. Staff cited both \$1,500 and \$2,000 during the discussion. The annual capital figure moves with it, so settle the unit price before the request is drafted.

Documents

- Email and telephone pairings on the Stowe Athletics contact sheet. Columns are offset on the printed page. • Confirm the August 24, 2026 Conservation Commission meeting date.