



City Council AGENDA

Tuesday, April 22, 2025 - 6:15 PM

Regular Meeting
Agawam Senior Center
954 Main Street
Agawam, MA 01001

- A. Approval of Minutes
 - 1) Minutes dated October 7, 2024.
- B. Agenda Items
 - 1) **TR-2025-27** - A Resolution appropriating from the Community Preservation Fund and authorizing the expenditure of Community Preservation funds (\$700,000.00) for park amenities at Still Brook Park (CPA)
 - 2) **TR-2025-28** - A Resolution in support of the Fairness to Farmworkers Act (Sponsored by Councilor Thomas Hendrickson) – **Sponsor has requested the item be tabled until May 5, 2025 meeting**
- C. Any other business that may legally come before the Committee
- D. Adjournment

COMMUNITY RELATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES

October 7, 2024

Present: George Bitzas, Chair
Gerald Smith – Chair
Robert Rossi
Thomas Hendrickson
Maria Valego

Also Present: Councilors Borgatti, Mercadante, Russo, Sandlin, Smus, and Suffriti, Mayor Johnson, Chris Sparks, Jennifer Bonfiglio

Called to Order: Meeting was called to order by Chair Bitzas at 6:31pm in the Agawam Senior Center

AGENDA

1. Approval of the minutes dated September 16, 2024.

Motion to approve made by Council Vice President Russo and seconded by Councilor Hendrickson.

The vote was 5 Yes, 0 No approving the minutes.

2. TR-2024-54 - A Resolution appropriating Eighty Five Thousand (\$85,000.00) Dollars from the Community Preservation Fund and Authorizing the expenditure of Community Preservation Funds for the rehabilitation of the pool at Perry Lane Park (CPA)

There was a brief discussion and everyone spoke in favor to approve.

Motion to send a positive recommendation to the Full Council made by Council Vice President Russo and seconded by Councilor Hendrickson. The vote was 5 Yes, 0 No.

3. Any other business that may legally come before the Committee.

None.

4. Adjournment.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:35pm

Respectfully submitted,

George Bitzas, Chair
Community Relations Sub-Committee

**A RESOLUTION APPROPRIATING FROM THE COMMUNITY
PRESERVATION FUND AND AUTHORIZING THE EXPENDITURE OF
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION FUNDS FOR PARK AMENITIES
AT STILL BROOK PARK**

(Sponsored by the Community Preservation Act Committee)

WHEREAS, voters of Agawam accepted the provisions of the Community Preservation Act and chose to form a Community Preservation Committee (CPA); and

WHEREAS, Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44B, Section 5(b)(2) allows the Community Preservation Committee to make recommendations to the City Council which is the legislative body for Agawam; and

WHEREAS, Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44B, Section 5(d) states that the City Council as legislative body shall then take such action and approve such appropriations as recommended by the Community Preservation Committee; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44B, the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) shall “study the needs, possibilities and resources of the city regarding community preservation”; and

WHEREAS, the construction of Still Brook Park was completed in October of 2024; and

WHEREAS, the implementation of additional park amenities will enhance the overall visitor experience and promote environmental education; and

WHEREAS, the Community Preservation Committee has recommended appropriation and expenditure in the amount of Seven Hundred Thousand (\$700,000.00) Dollars from the unreserved fund balance for additional park amenities at Still Brook Park; and

WHEREAS, it is the best interest of the public and the Town of Agawam to appropriate from the community preservation fund and authorize the expenditure of community preservation funds for the implementation of park amenities at Still Brook Park which is a town owned facility; and

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Agawam City Council hereby appropriates and authorizes the expenditure of Community Preservation Funds in the amount of Seven Hundred Thousand (\$700,000.00) Dollars from the unreserved fund balance for the implementation of park amenities at Still Brook Park in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44B, Section 6.

The Agawam City Council hereby further resolves that the Mayor is authorized to expend said funds, as permitted by law, and to do all things necessary for the purposes so stated.

Dated this _____ day of _____, 2025.

PER ORDER OF THE AGAWAM CITY COUNCIL

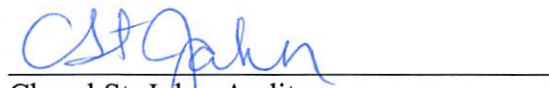
Rosemary Sandlin, President

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY



Christopher S. Cappucci, Solicitor

CERTIFIED AS TO FUNDS AVAILABILITY



Cheryl St. John, Auditor



Town of Agawam

Christopher C. Johnson, Mayor
36 Main Street
Agawam, MA 01001
Telephone: 413-786-0400 | 413-786-4520

Memorandum

To: Agawam City Council
From: Christopher C. Johnson, Mayor
Re: TR-2025-27 (CPA Funding for Still Brook Park Amenities)
Date: April 3, 2025

The Town submitted an application for CPA funding to add amenities at Still Brook Park. The original application amount was \$613,183.20. At their meeting, the CPA Committee voted to increase the recommended award amount to \$700,000.00 based on two factors. Those factors were:

- (1) the CPA Committee would prefer that poured in place rubber surfacing be added in fall zones around the proposed fitness stations at the park; and
- (2) the CPA Committee wanted to increase the project contingency from 5% to 10% given the complexity of the proposal.

The CPA Committee acknowledged at their meeting that any unused funds for the project would be returned to the CPA fund.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Very truly yours,

Christopher C. Johnson
Mayor

A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE FAIRNESS TO FARMWORKERS ACT

(Sponsored by Councilor Thomas D. Hendrickson)

WHEREAS, farming in the Commonwealth is a vibrant part of our state economy, providing consumers with healthy local food options, preserving open land, supporting our local economy and reducing our carbon footprint; and

WHEREAS, according to the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, Hampden County has 491 farms on 29,618 acres; 101 of these farms hire farmworkers, with a total of 891 farmworkers employed in the County; and

WHEREAS, farmworkers in Massachusetts are at present denied wage and hour protections provided to other workers, miring farmworkers and their families in unjust work and living conditions, and twice as many farmworker families now live in severe poverty as compared to other families; and

WHEREAS, farmworkers additionally face unique workplace hazards and health concerns resulting from long work hours, exposure to pesticides and a physically demanding, fast-paced work environment, and agricultural workers, alongside those in the fishing industry, experience the highest rate of occupational fatalities in Massachusetts; and

WHEREAS, despite the elevated health and safety risks farmworkers face, many farmworkers in the Commonwealth lack benefits and resources to help address health issues (for example: 88% of Massachusetts farmworkers surveyed by the Pioneer Valley Workers Center reported that their employers did not offer paid sick days and approximately 80% of the Connecticut River Valley Farmworker Health Program's Massachusetts farmworker patients did not have health insurance in 2019); and

WHEREAS, the longstanding exclusion of farmworkers from our state's minimum wage and overtime protections – afforded to virtually all other employees, including other essential workers– is part of a national legacy of structural inequality, based in the exclusion of farm work from the national landmark workplace legislation of the 1930's to allow for the continued economic exploitation of farmworkers; and

WHEREAS, Massachusetts law should not permit farmworkers to earn a poverty-inducing wage that is more than 40% lower than the current state minimum wage, essentially relegating farmworkers to a second-class employee status under the wage and hour law of Massachusetts; and

WHEREAS, H.D. 3799/S.B. 2012 and H.D. 3795/S.B. 2011, collectively referred to as "The Fairness for Farmworkers Act" will:

1. set the wage for farmworkers at the state minimum wage;
2. allow farmworkers to earn overtime pay after 55 hours when engaged in primary or both primary and secondary agriculture, and those engaged in solely secondary agriculture are entitled to overtime after 40 hours;
3. create a refundable tax credit to help offset a portion of the overtime expenses for farmers;

4. entitle farmworkers to two paid 15-minute breaks, one before and one after lunch, when they work eight or more hours in a day; and
5. allow farmworkers to earn up to 55 hours of paid time off.

WHEREAS, the elimination of the substandard farmworker wage is sound economic policy that will benefit the entire state; and

WHEREAS, a report published by the University of Massachusetts Political Economy Research Institute, (PERI), indicates that changes proposed by the Fairness for Farmworkers Act could result in a significant impact on the incomes of farmworkers for a nominal increase for most farms' annual production costs; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of Agawam hereby supports the passage of H.D. 3799/S.B. 2012 and H.D. 3795/S.B. 2011 (collectively referred to as "The Fairness for Farmworkers Act"), and further asks the State Legislature to move to its passage with all deliberate speed.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council shall send a copy of this Resolution to the Governor of the Commonwealth, our State Senator and our State Representatives.

DATED THIS ____ DAY OF _____, 2025.

PER ORDER OF THE AGAWAM CITY COUNCIL

Rosemary Sandlin, President

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY



Christopher S. Cappucci, Solicitor