

Policy Governing Issuance of Special Events Permits for Town of Colchester Public Facilities

DEFINITION:

A special event is a public function that is open to the community at large.

Examples of special events would include:

Parades	Other outdoor cultural events and community festivals
Marathons and fun-runs	Street fairs
Motorized vehicle races or contests	Public Speaker events
Circuses, fairs and rodeos	Large Town/BOE events
Outdoor music concerts, shows and exhibitions	Sports Tournaments

PURPOSE:

Special events present an opportunity to invigorate civic pride, to celebrate the social and cultural fabric of a community, and to encourage economic development. Because of their very nature as common grounds for recreation and enjoyment, public parks and recreation open spaces often provide the right atmosphere for the hosting of these celebrations. The purpose of this Administrative Order is to establish a standard procedure of application, evaluation and permitting of special events in town-owned and operated park and recreation facilities, in an effort to:

- Ensure events remain for public park purposes only;
- Provide broad public benefit;
- Respect park capacity, infrastructure and adopted general plan;
- Ensure compatibility and sympathy with surrounding land uses as well as natural, cultural and historic park resources;
- Meet the conditions of the Codes of the Town of Colchester, and,
- Minimizes negative impacts to the health, welfare and safety of the public.

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A special event permit shall be required for the following activities:

- a) An organized formation, parade, procession or assembly of more than one hundred (100) participants (may include people, animals, vehicles or any combination thereof); that assemble or travel in unison on any public street, highway, alley, sidewalk or other public way.
- b) Any organization formation, parade, procession or assembly which either (1) may impede, obstruct, impair or interfere with free use of a public street, highway, alley, sidewalk, or public way owned, controlled, or maintained by the Town or (2) does not comply with normal or usual traffic regulations or controls.
- c) Any outdoor activity of a group of more than one hundred (100) persons on Town-owned, controlled or maintained property such as town parks and open space, where a standard reservation or facilities use permit has not been granted.
- d) Any activity on public property that could reasonably be expected to require provision of public safety services.
- e) Any activity on public property that involves the placement of a tent, canopy, or other temporary structure (e.g. stage, bleachers), if that placement requires a permit from the Town's Fire Department or Building Division.

Exceptions to special event permit applications:

* Regular facility rental application and fees still apply to any permit that has been exempt from the special event status.

- a) Special events, as defined by this Administrative Order, do not include picnics, weddings, funerals or elections.
- b) Activities conducted by governmental agencies acting within the scope of its authority.
- c) Groups using picnic shelters at town parks where a shelter reservation and facilities use permit has been requested and granted. The group must not exceed/violate any other noise, facilities use or public safety regulations.
- d) Events conducted by local elementary schools, middle schools, high school that are conducted on their own grounds and property, which will not significantly impact traffic flow on surrounding public streets or pose a risk to public safety.

e) Lawful picketing and free speech activities that do not involve the use of vehicles, animals, fireworks, pyrotechnics or equipment (other than sound equipment).

SECTION I - SPECIAL EVENTS CLASSIFICATIONS:

Special events shall be classified according to their size by both the required staging area and number of people attending; their duration; and, their infrastructure support requirements (tents, parking, roads, restrooms). The achievement of any one of the higher criteria shall qualify an event for the higher classification. For instance, if an event lasts for only two days but 7,000 people are expected to attend each day, the event shall be classified as a Class "D" event.

Class A - 1 Day or up to 250 total attendance, with minimal parking and infrastructure requirements, and compatible with public use of park sites.

Class B – 2-3 Days, or up to 500 total attendance, with moderate parking and infrastructure requirements and compatible with public use of parks and sites.

Class C – 4-6 Days, or up to 1,000 total attendance per day, with moderate parking and infrastructure requirements or limits on public use of park site.

Class D - 7 or more days, or 3,000+ total attendance per day, with heavy parking and infrastructure requirements or restrictions on public use of park site.

The Town of Colchester reserves the right to adjust or waive the limits of classification and/or duration as deemed in best interest of the town.

SECTION II - PARK RESTRICTIONS:

Mechanical Amusement Rides

Mechanical Amusement Rides will only be permitted at the Town Green and Recreation Complex. Mechanical amusement rides shall be allowed only in parks, with restrictions placed on location, and their impact on the welfare and safety of both the public and the park site.

Noise

The Town of Colchester prohibits unreasonable and disruptive noise that is clearly incompatible with the normal activities of certain locations at certain times. Please refer to Town of Colchester Zoning Regulation 3.7.6.G.

No music or entertainment shall be allowed between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., in such a manner as to be plainly audible at the park boundary. If either of these restrictions is breached, it will be considered a violation of the Code.

Failure to comply with requests to decrease noise to an acceptable level will result in notification to the Police Department. The Police Department has the authority to make an arrest. Failure to comply may also result in the revocation of a special events permit, and may prohibit the issuance of a permit for future events by the event organizer.

Fireworks

Events featuring fireworks must obtain a fireworks permit from the State Fire Marshal's office and local Fire Marshal, as well as any other appropriate municipal permitting jurisdiction.

Signage

Promotional signs are limited to the Community Events Board. Sponsorship banners and signage are allowed only within the designated event site and may be displayed **no more than two weeks prior to the event**. All signs and banners are hung by the Parks Maintenance crew and must be dropped off to the Parks and Recreation office two weeks prior to the event and will be moved immediately from the site following the event. Fees to hang the banner are included in the facility rental fee. All wording of signs and designated locations must be pre-approved by the Parks & Recreation Department.

Sandwich Board signs are limited to cultural arts performance promotion only; they must be less than 32 square feet in size (total of both sides) and must be set 15' back from the travel portion of the road. Signs and banners may require a zoning permit.

Alcohol is prohibited on a town property. Smoking is not permitted in any town park or on any school grounds. Dogs must be on leash on all town property (except for service dogs or with special permission from the town.)

SECTION III - APPLICATION PROCESS, REQUIREMENTS AND FEE SCHEDULE:

When an organization seeks to host a special event in a town parks and recreation facility, the event organizer must contact the Colchester Parks and Recreation Department for an Application Package. The Application Package shall include the following information:

- This policy
- Application for Use of Recreational Facilities Form

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- Special Event Information Form
- Town Indemnification & Release Form
- Insurance F.A.Q.

Applicants will be required to resubmit the special events application annually by the end of January. In addition to the application, a description and definition of the event with proposed dates will be required. Applications will be valid for one year.

The Town of Colchester reserves the right to adjust or waive the limits of any special event in best interest of the town.

Special Event Permit Fee:

Town Green:

Fri. – Sun.: \$50/day non-refundable fee for event day, setup, breakdown and rain dates.

Mon. - Thu.: \$50/day non-refundable fee for event day, setup, and breakdown .Rain Dates will be scheduled without a fee. If a rain date is selected by another organization for use, the initial organization will be required to pay the \$50/day fee to secure the date. If a rain date is used at any time, a \$50 fee will be assessed.

Ruby Cohen Park:

\$50/day/event (incl. setup/breakdown/rain dates)

Recreation Complex: \$50/day per field for event day, setup, breakdown and rain dates.

\$25 per field for each of the following time blocks:

7a.m. – 12 p.m.	12p.m. – 5p.m.	5 p.m. – Closing
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The following types of special events are **EXEMPT** from the application fee:

Events produced or sponsored by the Town of Colchester, the Board of Education, or their agents.

Additional Fees:

The event organizer is responsible for full reimbursement to the town of any and Board of Selectmen Approval, May 2013

all costs borne by the town. If any town staff and/or equipment are required to assist to operate or provide maintenance for an event, the town shall be compensated for the full cost of providing the support. The Town will make no capital investment in infrastructure to support the event.

14 days following the closing of the event, the department will invoice the event organizer for all applicable costs and charges. The event organizer will have 30 days to remit payment.

The event organizer will be required to provide the following information in addition to the permit fee:

- Application for Use of Recreational Facilities Form
- Special Event Information Form
- Town Indemnification & Release Form
- Insurance Certificate
- Event Description (Purpose, History, etc)
- Proposed Site Selection/Site Plan

SECTION IV - EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL:

Priority will be given to pre-established, annual events. Not-for-profit organizations will be given priority over events or festivals which generate profit for the private sector. If the conditions have been satisfied to allow an event sponsored by a for-profit enterprise, the event organizer must provide evidence that:

- The event constitutes a community service;
- It is in the best interests of the general health, safety and welfare of both the participants and citizens of Colchester;
- There is little to no impact on and/or cost for town support services; and,
- The frequency and uniqueness of the event does not conflict with or replicate an already-existing festival or event.

If an event proposed by a for-profit corporation does not meet the established criteria, the application will be denied.

The event organizer will be notified within 14 days of receipt of its application whether the application has been approved for a Special Events Permit.

- The Parks & Recreation Facilities Subcommittee will forward its recommendation through the appropriate personnel to the Department Director for final approval.
- Once an application to host a special event is submitted to the Department, the Parks & Recreation Director, or designee, will provide the initial review for fulfillment of base criteria and guidelines, as well as any conflict with existing events.

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All applications will be subject to the following evaluative criteria, as reviewed by the Facilities Subcommittee of the Parks & Recreation Commission:

- Classification of the event and its compatibility to the proposed park site's classification
- Appropriateness of event to public park purpose
- Performance History of event and event organizer (if applicable)
- Impact on park property and surrounding natural and cultural resources
- Impact on traffic conditions
- Ability to comply with all local permitting requirements
- Availability of town support services, such as parks grounds maintenance crews
- Impact on adjacent land uses and neighborhoods
- Duplication of existing town-permitted event
- Enhancement to tourism, economic development and quality of life
- Ability to generate positive local, regional or national media exposure
- Ability to generate revenues for the Department

The next step will be review and approval by all applicable Town departments, including:

- Board of Selectmen
- Police Department
- Building Official
- Fire Marshal
- Public Works
- Health Department
- Parks & Recreation

Once all departmental approvals are received, the Parks & Recreation Department will issue the official permit.

The Town is under no obligation to issue special events permits for use of its parks and recreation facilities. If an event is found to be incompatible with a proposed site's classification, a more appropriate park site may be suggested to the event organizer. An application will be denied if an event is found to:

- Be inappropriate to public park purpose.
- Exert adverse impact on a park and/or its surrounding infrastructure, natural or cultural resources.
- Exert significantly adverse impacts on the traffic conditions and/or adjacent land uses and neighborhoods.
- Have a history of poor performance in town parks.

At the Department's discretion, an application can be denied if a special event is found to replicate other events or to diminish the uniqueness of already established community celebrations.

SECTION V - REGULATORY AND PUBLIC SAFETY REQUIREMENTS:

Outside of the Parks and Recreation Department, many other agencies, including regulatory and public safety, require permits for the execution of a special event. These agencies set their own requirements and fees. It is the responsibility of the event organizer to obtain these permits:

At a minimum, the following must be obtained prior to the event:

Insurance

General Public Liability of \$1 million coverage, depending upon event activities
Automobile Liability Insurance of at least \$300,000. "Town of Colchester" must be listed as Certificate Holder and Additional Insured

Flow/Vehicle Parking

Event organizer will provide appropriate staffing to address parking needs.

Grounds and Public Works Maintenance

Public Works Director will review with event organizer the need for Public Works support staff.

All necessary Building and Zoning Permits

Approval of structural components, such as tents, electrical and handicapped accessibility, may be required.

Sanitation/Health

All food service concessions and restroom facilities must meet Public Health Code requirements. Temporary permits for food service concessions must be obtained prior to the event.

The following cases will require permits from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP):

- Waste water disposal
- Recreation Vehicle (RV) waste water disposal

Portable Restrooms

The Town of Colchester will provide 2 water closets (1 regular/1 handicap) on the town green during the summer months. Any additional water closets required per General Statute are the responsibility of the event applicant.

Garbage Removal

Any special event that takes place on a town owned property must provide their own solid waste removal.

This may include dumpsters and/or roll-off trash receptacles, contracted by the event, as appropriate, as determined by the Public Works Director. The Public Works Director, or designee, will determine placement of all waste disposal containers and trash receptacles.

Fire Safety

Fire Marshal will conduct any and all necessary inspections, and determine staff requirements for each event.