



Dear Camp Wangumbaug families,

It is with profound sadness that we write to inform you that in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Parks and Recreation Commission has reluctantly decided to **suspend our camp sessions for the summer of 2020**.

This was not a decision that anyone wanted to make, and one that the Commission did so only after careful thought and full consideration of our present circumstances, the landscape we will likely face in the next three months, and the feasibility of operating camp under the continued threat of coronavirus and within the guidelines set forth by the State of CT. It is also a decision that was made with full recognition of the impact that this news will have on our campers—your children and grandchildren—who have been eagerly anticipating their summer at “Camp W” and the chance to return their lives to some semblance of normalcy during these unprecedented and uncertain times. However, they concluded that we could not both take reasonable and necessary precautions to maximally ensure the safety of the Camp population as a whole—campers and staff, plus their families—and continue to provide the kind of experience that those familiar with Coventry Parks and Recreation and Camp Wangumbaug have come to expect.

For the past several weeks, we have weighed our options, participated in discussions with other camp professionals, Town Officials & our own Health Department, and received and processed the regulations from the State of CT Office of Early Childhood. We also reviewed guidance from other trusted sources such as the American Camping Association, the Association of Camp Nursing and the CDC. Staff have been working diligently to work through these guidelines & regulations, and determine their feasibility as it relates to our particular facility and Camp program. Based on restrictions and guidelines regarding group size, program size, staffing, health screenings, intensified cleaning measures, social distancing measures and more, this year’s Camp program would not look or feel like the Camp program we are all used to. While some of these measures would not be too difficult to implement, others were significantly more challenging. The limitation on group size and the need to maintain physical distance in particular would reduce our total capacity by more than two-thirds and prevent all participants in a session from fully interacting with one another, fundamentally changing the camp experience for everyone.

We also considered delaying the start of our camp season, but we have no reason to believe that the CDC, State of CT and/or ACA recommendations would be relaxed or that the pandemic and the associated risks will have reduced significantly by then.

We can only imagine how devastating this news will be to your campers, as we do know how devastating it has been for us and our Camp staff to receive this news. We offer our sincerest apologies to each of them for taking away what for many is the highlight of their year, particularly following a spring during which so many other aspects of their lives have been put on hold or turned upside down.

While we are not planning a “virtual camp” at this time, we are exploring ways to reach out and remain connected to our community of campers this summer. We hope to provide opportunities to continue to engage with and teach and learn from each other, and to maintain the traditions that sustain camp. In the weeks ahead, our phenomenal staff are planning to develop content that we will share with each of you. While we recognize that Camp Wangumbaug in the virtual realm will not substitute for the in-person experience, we hope that your campers will consider joining us. We look forward to sharing more information about these opportunities with you soon.

We will get through this crisis and Camp Wangumbaug will be back! We are poised to withstand this challenge and **anticipate that we will be able to offer a full schedule of sessions in 2021**. We look forward to the day when we can welcome you back (or welcome you for the first time) to our beautiful home on Coventry Lake at Patriots Park, for more unforgettable memories.

Lastly, we must extend a massive THANK YOU to our Camp Director, Megan Yanez and Head Counselor, Hayley Jacobs, for their tireless efforts in helping us process these regulations & guidelines, to help determine the overall feasibility of those guidelines & our Camp program. Their dedication to Camp Wangumbaug, our campers and staff is truly inspiring and we thank them for the work they put in year-round, to make our Camp so special.

Should you have any questions, please let us know. Town Hall offices remain closed to the public and we are still working remotely, however **staff will be in the office on Wednesday, May 27<sup>th</sup> during our regular office hours**. Feel free to call us at 860-742-4068.

We appreciate your understanding and continued patience these past several weeks. We look forward to seeing and working with you all again soon.



Wendy L. Rubin, CPRP  
Director of Parks & Recreation



Caterina Merriam,  
Recreation Supervisor