

Parks & Environment Meeting Agenda



Committee Chair: David Tubiolo

800 Michaelian Office Bldg.
148 Martine Avenue, 8th Floor
White Plains, NY 10601
www.westchesterlegislators.com

Monday, January 27, 2025

2:00 PM

Committee Room

CALL TO ORDER

Please note: Meetings of the Board of Legislators and its committees are held at the Michaelian Office Building, 148 Martine Avenue, White Plains, New York, 10601, and remotely via the WebEx video conferencing system. Legislators may participate in person or via Webex. Members of the public may attend meetings in person at any of its locations, or view it online on the Westchester County Legislature's website: <https://westchestercountyny.legistar.com/> This website also provides links to materials for all matters to be discussed at a given meeting.

MINUTES APPROVAL

Tuesday, October 15, 2024 at 1:00 PM Minutes

Monday, January 6, 2025 at 10:00 AM Minutes

Tuesday, January 7, 2025 at 1:00 PM Minutes

I. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

1. [2025-40](#) **LEGISLATORS PIERCE, NOLAN AND TUBIOLO: ACT - WC PARKS PASSES FREE FOR VETERANS**

AN ACT providing Westchester County Parks Passes for Veterans free of charge.

Joint with LEG and VSY.

Guests: Law Department

Chief Deputy County Attorney Stacey Dolgin-Kmetz

Senior Assistant County Attorney Shawna MacLeod

First Deputy Commissioner Peter Tartaglia-PRC

II. OTHER BUSINESS

III. RECEIVE & FILE

1. [2024-580](#) **HON. ERIKA PIERCE - Free WC Park Passes for U.S. Military Veterans**

A Memo of Legislation proposing U.S. Military Veterans receive free Westchester County Park Passes and all the benefits a Parks Pass provides.

COMMITTEE REFERRAL: COMMITTEES ON PARKS & ENVIRONMENT AND VETERANS, SENIORS & YOUTH AND BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS

ADJOURNMENT

TO: HONORABLE BOARD OF LEGISLATORS
COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER

Your Committee recommends adoption of “An Act Providing Westchester County Parks Passes for Veterans Free of Charge.”

Your Committee is aware that veterans have made immense contributions to our nation, often at great personal cost, and should be recognized and honored for their dedication. By providing free Park Passes to Westchester County veterans, the financial barrier to accessing County Parks and the many programs they offer is lessened, and the County is given the opportunity to demonstrate its gratitude and commitment to their well-being.

Your Committee is informed that access to outdoor recreation can significantly improve mental health, reduce stress, and enhance physical fitness. This Act will allow U.S. veterans living in Westchester County to experience the numerous health and wellness benefits that come from spending time in nature. This Act may also aid veterans in their transition back to civilian life and help them engage with the broader community.

Your Committee is further informed that many veterans face financial hardships, and alleviating the cost of a County Park Pass may help ease their burden. Currently, the County provides free Park Passes to veterans with service-connected disabilities; this Act would extend that benefit to all U.S. veterans living in the County. In addition to requiring proof of residency—which is required for any County resident applying for a Park Pass—this Act requires veterans to provide documentation of their veteran status to receive a fee Park Pass. Ultimately, offering free Westchester County Parks Passes and all the benefits they provide to veterans is a small but important way to give

back to those who have given so much for our country. It is an investment in their well-being and a reminder that their service is deeply valued and appreciated.

Your Committee is informed that the proposed project does not meet the definition of an action under New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”) and its implementing regulations 6 NYCRR Part 617. Please refer to the memorandum from the Department of Planning, dated January 14, 2025, which is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Legislators. Your Committee concurs in this conclusion.

Based on the foregoing, your Committee recommends the passage of this Act.

Dated: _____, 2025
White Plains, New York

COMMITTEE ON

An Act Providing
Westchester County Parks
Passes for Veterans Free of
Charge.

BE IT ENACTED by the County Board of the County of Westchester as follows:

Section 1. U.S. veterans living in Westchester County shall be entitled to receive a Westchester County Park Pass free of charge. The Park Pass shall be valid for three years from the date of issue.

Section 2. To receive a free Park Pass from a Park Pass office location, a U.S. veteran must present:

- A. One of the following forms of proof of County residency: a New York State driver's license; or valid photo identification along with a document showing residency such as a lease, deed, or utility bill; and
- B. One of the following forms of identification: a Department of Veterans Affairs-issued Veteran Identification Card (VIC); a Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC); a Department of Defense Identification Card (DD Form 2, DD Form 2765, or Next Generation Uniform Services ID replacement); a New York State driver's license or identification card with a Veteran designation; or other valid form of proof of U.S. veteran status.

Section 3. This Act shall take effect immediately.

Erika L. Pierce**Legislator, 2nd District**

Chair, Committee on Public Works & Transportation

**Committee Assignments:**

Budget & Appropriations

Human Services

Information Technology & Cybersecurity

Parks & Environment

MEMORANDUM OF LEGISLATION

DATE: 11/07/24

TITLE: Free County Park Passes for Veterans

SPONSOR: Legislator Erika Pierce, 2nd District

PURPOSE OR GENERAL IDEA OF BILL:

To provide U.S. military Veterans free Westchester County Parks Passes.

INTENT:

To grant U.S. military Veterans free Westchester County Parks Passes and all the benefits a Parks Pass provides.

JUSTIFICATION:

Veterans have made immense contributions to our nation, often at great personal cost, and it is our duty to recognize and honor their dedication. By removing the financial barrier to accessing our parks, we demonstrate our gratitude and commitment to their well-being. This proposal will allow Veterans to experience the numerous health and wellness benefits that come from spending time in nature. Access to outdoor recreation can significantly improve mental health, reduce stress, and enhance physical fitness.

This proposal will also aid Service Members in their transition back to civilian life and help them to engage with the broader community. By inviting Veterans to enjoy our parks, we are not only recognizing their past sacrifices but also encouraging their active participation in community life as well as signaling the value Westchester County puts on their service.

Many Veterans face financial hardships, and alleviating this cost helps ease their burden. This support can make a significant difference in their quality of life, allowing them to take full advantage of the natural beauty and recreational opportunities available in Westchester County.

Ultimately, offering free Westchester County Parks Passes and all the benefits they provide to Veterans is a small but important way to give back to those who have given so much for our country. It is an investment in their well-being and a reminder that their service is deeply valued and appreciated. By providing easier access to our parks to Veterans, we are not just providing a recreational opportunity but also making a statement about our collective commitment to their health, happiness, and reintegration into civilian life.

PRESENT LAW: Free Park Passes are available to Active Service Members of the U.S. military and U.S. military Veterans who have a “service connected” disability.

AG/ag

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