



UNAPPROVED

Minutes of the
Parks and Recreation Commission
Meeting

April 17, 2018

In Attendance:

Phil Kearns, Chairman
David Thaxter
Gina Carey
Kim Hulber
Barbara Dobbin

Dennis DiPinto, Director
Robin Matthews, Asst. Dir-Rec
Bob Schneider, Asst. Dir-Parks
Jane Byrnes, Secty.

These minutes are a general summary of the meeting and are not intended to be a verbatim transcription.

Meeting called to order by Phil Kearns at 7:33 p.m.

Recognition of Guests:

No guests to recognize.

Approval of Agenda:

The agenda was amended to have the "Financial Status" covered under the Budget & Policy, sub-committee report. The agenda as amended was then approved.

Minutes:

The minutes from the March meeting as submitted were approved.

Financial Status – Eileen Cipolla:

Covered under Budget & Policy report.

Chairman:

Mr. Kearns stated that Kim Hulber has been reappointed to the Commission. Mr. Kearns thanked her for her continued support. Mr. Kearns mentioned that he will cover the financial report under the Budget & Policy section.

Director's Report- Dennis DiPinto

Mr. DiPinto reported he has been spending time getting a handle on the following:

- Current budget
- Meeting with Dick Aarons, Director of the Town's EOC, discussion some of the Director's responsibilities,
- Meeting with the Commission members,
- Meeting with the Conservation Commission in the upcoming weeks
- Attending building renovation meetings and staff discussions regarding flooring in Wellness Center
- Introductions with all staff members

Ms. Carey mentioned that she noticed that there is a scheduled walk on the Norwalk River Trail and Ms. Carey was wondering whether or not Parks and Recreation was involved with this walk. It was discussed that Ms. Dobbin would be attending the meeting and keep the Commission informed.



Ms. Carey also mentioned that she had noticed a public hearing scheduled at the Recreation Center sponsored by DEEP regarding the swamp damn near Fox Hill. Mr. Kearns mentioned that he was going to attend the meeting and he will keep the Commission informed.

Assistant Director-Recreation- Robin Matthews:

Ms. Matthews asked if there were any questions on her report.

Ms. Matthews mentioned that the ADA mats for Martin Park Beach will be installed for this summer. Ms. Dynia has been working with Tony Phillips, the Town's Social Services Director for proper installation.

Ms. Matthews mentioned that the recreation staff continues to be busy and pushing for camp and program revenue.

Mr. Kearns asked Ms. Matthews if there have been many complaints regarding the locker room renovation. Ms. Matthews mentioned that things are going smooth and members have been kept well informed. A brief discussion ensued regarding our procedure when questions come in from the public regarding the renovation.

Assistant Director-Parks – Mr. Schneider reported:

- Mr. Schneider is working on the spring inventory for materials and doing ordering. Working on IPM contract for athletic fields and parks for weed and pest Control program.
- The fields opened March 24th with high school play after the late snow storms.
- The youth sports fields are in good shape and just waiting for a few to dry out.
- Mr Schneider mentioned that Parks & Rec has retained our original Port-a-John company for this season.
- Working with Director on the locker room renovations.
- Working on the completion for the capital project on the playground at the Recreation Center.
- Met with the fireworks committee and the July 4 fireworks will take place on the fourth with a rain date of the fifth.
- Working on some power issues at Aldrich Park with the electric company.
- Working on hiring a new employee for the Ballard Park concerts.
- Working with Purchasing Department on bids for the tractor.
- Will be speaking with the Board of Education regarding the change in starting times for schools.
- Working on getting the new vehicle (5RI) as part of our fleet after it has been recalled.

Sub-Committee Reports:

Buildings & Grounds – David Thaxter

Mr. Thaxter reported the sub-committee is working on an issue regarding the Ridgefield Volunteer Firemen's annual carnival location. The sub-committee will be meeting this week with a representative from the RVF this week.

Brief discussion ensued regarding the location, field damage and scheduling.

Ms. Hulber mentioned that the First Selectman mentioned the expansion of the parking area at the Recreation Center. Ms. Hulber was looking for an answer on the timing on this project. Mr. Schneider mentioned that he has seen some cost estimates, but has no final timing.

Aquatics & Programs –David Thaxter:

Mr. Thaxter mentioned that he and Mr. DiPinto will be meeting with the First Selectman and representatives from Ridgefield Aquatics Club next week regarding the Barlow Mountain Pool facility.



There also was some discussion regarding the recent interest in the development of an outdoor pool.

Annual Goals & Marketing Plans- Evie Bottali:

The Commission reviewed the monthly membership reports. Mr. Kearns will meet with Ms. Bottali to discuss the input of annual trends to the report. Ms. Dobbin suggested that the report show the percentage trends of monthly memberships and the percentages of annual memberships. Mr. Kearns asked for the Commissioner's input in providing the information needed to complete the reports. There were some questions regarding the use of the department's software program RecTrac, to see if we can get the reports modified so that they automatically generate and provide meaningful trend data. Mr. Kearns suggested a meeting with Commission members, Director and staff, who are knowledgeable with the RecTrac system.

Budget & Policy-Phil Kearns:

Mr. Kearns mentioned that revenue is down slightly, with the gap coming from the aquatic and program sections; however memberships are reporting an increase. There was some discussion regarding the dance program. The Assistant Director-Recreation stated she will be meeting and working with the instructor on the future plans. Mr. Kearns mentioned that the summer camp revenue is on target and that we are anticipating that the numbers will increase over the next few months.

Special Services Issues – Barbara Dobbin:

As requested, the sub-committee has begun to reach out to the recreation staff and will reach out to the Commission as well for input, regarding the addition of the community outreach activities and community service projects.

As mentioned above, the aquatics section is working on the mats for Martin Park Beach.

Strategic Plan – Gina Carey

Ms. Carey reported that the sub-committee is currently reviewing the staff goals. Ms. Carey will meet with the Director at the end of the week on how to ensure that these goals are inline with the Strategic Plan and how the Commission will assist the Director in moving the strategic Plan forward. Ms. Carey mentioned that each strategic goal will align with the Commission's sub-committee's duties. One example of these goals is the customer experience. The strategic planning sub-committee will be working with the staff on putting together a customer experience plan.

Old Business- Committee Responsibilities – Phil Kearns:

Mr. Kearns summarized for the Commission the suggestion to formally align the strategic plan goals with the actual Commission sub-committees. Mr. Kearns reviewed all the strategic goals with relationship to the various Commission sub-committees. The Commission agreed with the aligning of the sub-committees with the staff goals.

A lengthy discussion evolved regarding how to develop a customer experience plan and engage the staff and their goals.

A discussion continued regarding our community service and doing a better job of branding the community service efforts performed by Parks and Recreation; let's also be sure we do as much as we can to support the community outreach components of our Mission.

Mr. Kearns stated he will keep this item on the agenda for next month so that the Commission has time to review.



RIDGEFIELD PARKS & RECREATION

195 DANBURY ROAD • RIDGEFIELD, CT 06877 • PHONE (203) 431-2755 • FAX (203) 431-2761 • WWW.RIDGEFIELDCT.ORG

New Business:

No new business.

A motion to adjourn was made by Barbara Dobbin and seconded by Gina Carey

Meeting adjourned 8:45pm.

Minutes Approved:

Gina Carey (in Ms. Bottali's absence)
Evie Bottali, Secretary