



**Town of Ridgefield Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, February 28, 2023 at 6:30 pm**  
**Meeting held via Zoom**  
**APPROVED**

**PRESENT:** P. Kearns, D. Shofi, K. Hulber, P. Nichols, D. DiPinto, B. Schneider, M. Knox, E. Cipolla, A. Platt

These minutes are a general summary of the meeting and are not intended to be a verbatim transcription. A recording of the meeting will be available for 45 days post: <https://www.ridgefieldparksandrec.org/about-parks-recreation/commission>

**Meeting called to order by Chair at 6:32 pm.**

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

David Shofi made a motion to approve the agenda with the following modifications: Move New Business after Recognition of Guests. Seconded by Pete Nichols. Motion carried 4-0.

**RECOGNITION OF GUESTS**

Eagle Scout candidates: Robert Pattison & Andrew Wilkinson

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. Robert Pattison presented his proposed Eagle Scout Project for improvements to the exterior of Sturges Cabin.

David Shofi made a motion to approve the project, subject to getting the proper approvals from the Building Dept. Seconded by Pete Nichols. Motion carried 4-0.

2. Andrew Wilkinson presented his proposed Eagle Scout Project for improvements to the exterior of Sturges Cabin.

David Shofi made a motion to approve the project, subject to additional research and barring any undue hazards with the proposed designs. Seconded by Pete Nichols. Motion carried 4-0.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion made by Pete Nichols to approve the January minutes. Seconded by David Shofi. Motion carried 4-0.

**BUSINESS UPDATES**

**Chairperson's Report** – Phil Kearns

Presented P&R budget to BOS, and additional work that is covered under the B&G Committee report.



### **Director's Report – Dennis DiPinto**

#### **February 2023 Director's Report**

- Two projects went to bid in the past month: 1) Governor Park tennis court replacement project, and 2) Barlow Mountain Pool HVAC system. Working with Rudy & Jake to lock-in contractors for both projects in the next couple of weeks.
- Round 2 budget deliberations are scheduled for March 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Met with The Ridgefield Playhouse to review a request for concerts outside at Governor Park this summer; Awaiting dates from the Playhouse.
- RAC/P&R Steering Committee met regarding the improvement plan at Barlow Mountain Pool; RAC has around 50% of the funding to-date and will continue fundraising efforts.
- Completed performance reviews for a couple of staff
- Met with the rep from Precor regarding the purchase of four treadmills for the Wellness Center
- Reviewed plans for recruiting seasonal summer employees with Mary and Amy; Amy organized a Lunch & Learn between HR and Parks & Rec staff which focused on the hiring process.
- Attended monthly revenue meeting at Town Hall, and the monthly Budget & Policy Committee meeting
- Attended a de-escalation training for Town employees
- Spoke with one of our members about joining the Friends organization

### **Financial Update – Eileen Cipolla**

Ms. Cipolla provided the monthly financial report. Revenue and expenses are on-target.

### **Assistant Director of Parks' Report – Dennis DiPinto reported on behalf of Bob Schneider**

- Productive winter so far
- Working on non-invasive plant policy information to bring back to the Buildings & Grounds Committee
- Training the new Building Maintenance Supervisor

### **Assistant Director of Program Operations' Report – Mary Knox**

- Spring/Summer program guides were mailed out last week
- Streamlined camp forms and processes to make registration as easy as possible
- Summer staff recruiting is underway, working with different channels to get the word out
- Attended the Lunch & Learn for hiring seasonal staff
- Attended the de-escalation training for Town employees
- P&R has two free events coming up: 1) Flashlight Egg Hunt on March 31<sup>st</sup> for grades 3-5, and 2) a 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. David suggested showcasing an adult fitness activity during the event.



## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Marketing & Promotions** – Kim Hulber reported in Evie Bottali's absence  
Nothing new to report.

**Membership** – Kim Hulber

- Kim is interested in bringing more nature programs/camps to P&R; Pete suggested contacting a teacher at the high school to lead these types of programs. Phil suggested reaching out to WCSU students. Mary will explore some options.
- Would like to explore an exit questionnaire for members who decide not to renew
- Guest satisfaction idea could involve happy/sad button technology
- Identify ways to track participant volume and trends

**Aquatic & Programs** – Barbara Dobbin (absent)  
Nothing new to report.

**Budget & Policy** – Phil Kearns

Met in preparation for our presentation to the BOS regarding the budget. Additional follow-ups and questions will be addressed at the second round BOS meeting on March 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Buildings & Grounds** – David Shofi

- Mr. Shofi, Mr. DiPinto, Mr. Schneider and Beth McKnight met with the Ridgefield Playhouse and feels the number of events should be kept to a minimum, so the baseball/softball fields will remain usable for the athletic teams.
- Met with the tree warden and a member of the tree commission regarding the new native plant policy the town has introduced. Will move forward with scheduling a meeting to discuss further with the Conservation Committee.

**Special Services & Community Outreach** – Pete Nichols

- Mr. Nichols will continue talks with Mary about opportunities to connect with some local organizations and identify where there may be some synergies.
- Kim will share her findings from the most recent accessibility study with Pete.

With no further business, Pete Nichols moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:06 pm. David Shofi seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

**REMINDER: Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, March 21st at 6:30 pm via Zoom.**