

UNAPPROVED

**Minutes of the
Parks and Recreation Commission
Meeting**

January 13, 2015

In Attendance:

Gina Carey, Chair
Phil Kearns, Vice Chair
David Thaxter
Barbara Dobbins

Paul J. Roche, Director
Robert Schneider, Asst. Dir.
Robin Matthews, Asst. Dir.
Eileen Cipolla, Acctg.
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 Chairwoman at 7:35 p.m.

Approval of Agenda and Minutes:

The agenda and minutes were approved as presented.

Financial Status:

Ms. Cipolla reported that revenue is ahead of projected budget. Memberships, programs and aquatics are also ahead of budget. Ms. Cipolla mentioned that we are seeing a slight shift in memberships from Wellness to All-Inclusive now that free child-sitting has been added to the All-Inclusive membership. Ms. Cipolla mentioned that we will continue to track this over the next few months.

The operating budget proposal will be discussed under the sub-committee report.

Chairwoman:

Ms. Carey had no issues to discuss at this time.

Director's Report:

Mr. Roche reported:

- The telephone bids are complete and the funding will be handled through the Town's IT budget. Mr. Roche mentioned that this system will help decrease the amount of incoming calls going through the front desk.
- The bike trail continues to progress and has the support of the First Selectman. Mr. Roche reported that they are also seeking grant monies for funding.
- Mr. Roche reported that he has met with Ms. Mannors regarding designs for a new stage in Ballard Park.
- Mr. Roche reviewed a brochure from the Connecticut Recreation and Parks Legislative Branch showing all the latest accomplishments and where they are heading in the future.
- Mr. Roche stated that he has been working with the committee on the fundraising strategies for the development of a new playground at Ballard Park. The committee is working hard with the design team and working on the proposed

fundraising requests. Mr. Roche has met with a donor this week to discuss the plans.

Assistant Director-Recreation:

Ms. Matthews asked if anyone had any questions on her January report. Ms. Matthews stated that the winter swim lesson session has been completely filled both with group and private lessons. The hallway games have been updated and continue to be very popular with intergenerational play. The new equipment in the Wellness Center has increased interest in our Spin classes and has enhanced the room.

The Commission asked if the hallway games we were replacing could be moved to the Barn. Ms. Matthews reported that they were in very poor shape and not usable.

Mr. Roche stated that the recreation section of the department is working together well and this was shown by the high revenue numbers in programs. Mr. Roche thanked Ms. Matthews and asked that she forward to the recreation section his praises on doing a good job. The staff continues to be motivated and Ms. Dynia has done a great job with the aquatic staff. We also have a great wellness staff that has brought additional memberships/revenue and developed great wellness classes that meet the needs of the members. The department feels that the free child-sitting has helped increase our All-Inclusive memberships.

Assistant Director-Parks:

Mr. Schneider reported on the following:

- Mr. Schneider is working on both the indoor maintenance calendar and the outdoor master calendar along with working with Beth McKnight on the development of this year's field schedule.
- Mr. Schneider is working on some issues with the snow removal and working on developing a spring work schedule for the outdoor maintenance crews.
- The Department is continuing to work on the OSHA compliance procedures. The Commission questioned if we had regular scheduled inspections or just random inspections. Mr. Schneider stated both.

Sub-Committee Reports:

Buildings & Grounds – David Thaxter

Mr. Thaxter reported that he has not heard anything further nor has Mr. Roche from a possible new sports team in Town.

Programs & Long Range Planning-Evie Bottali:

In Ms. Bottali's absence, Mr. Roche reviewed the yearly comparison membership report. The Director mentioned that we now have one full year of data to work on the comparisons. The Commission was pleased with both the report and the numbers.

Budget & Policy-Phil Kearns:

Mr. Kearns reviewed in depth the proposed Parks & Recreation Operating Budget for fiscal year 2015-2016.

The Commission had some questions regarding the budget process and accounting procedures, snow overtime, and expenses; however, they felt that we have provided a sound budget.

After much discussion, Mr. Kearns made the following motion:

“RESOLVE, to accept the 2015-2016 Operating Budget as presented by the Parks & Recreation Commission Budget Sub-Committee.”

The motion was seconded by Barbara Dobbin and passed unanimously.
Mr. Kearns will be writing a cover letter to be attached to the package and submit it to Town Hall.

Mr. Kearns reported that his committee will be meeting in the near future to discuss the e-mail received regarding our birthday party venue at the Recreation Center.

Special Services Issues – Barbara Dobbin:

Ms. Dobbin reported that the sub-committee had met to discuss future plans and recommendations for the department's Special Services fee. After a lengthy discussion, the Commission decided to table part of this recommendation and have it reviewed by David Shofi and the Budget and Policy sub-committee.

The Commission did however; make the following motion on part of the recommendation:

“The Commission hereby moves that the current Special Services fee (\$3.00) also be applied to each membership on an annual basis, beginning as soon as possible.”

The motion was seconded by Phil Kearns and unanimously passed.

Aquatics-David Thaxter:

Mr. Thaxter mentioned that the committee is working on some Martin Park Beach early membership incentives and would like the assistance of the budget sub-committee before making a final decision. Due to time constraints, the sub-committees will meet on Friday.

Old Business:
Covered above

New Business:
No current issues.

Motion to adjourn was made by Barbara Dobbin seconded by David Thaxter at 9:10p.m.

*Minutes Approved: _____
Evie Bottali, Secretary