



**Town of Ridgefield Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, November 14, 2023 at 6:30 pm**  
**Meeting held via Zoom**  
**APPROVED**

**PRESENT:** P. Kearns, B. Dobbin, D. Shofi, P. Nichols, K. Hulber, 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 6:36pm.**

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Pete Nichols made a motion to approve the agenda. Seconded by David Shofi. Barbara Dobbin proposed the following modification: Move Old Business before approval of the minutes to allow for Eagle Scout presentation. Motion carried 5-0.

**RECOGNITION OF GUESTS**

Harry Lovett, Eagle Scout

**OLD BUSINESS**

Harry Lovett shared his completed Eagle Scout project of new bird boxes on the Rec Center trail.

Barbara Dobbin made a motion to approve the project. Seconded by Pete to approve. Motion carried 5-0.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion made by Pete Nichols to approve the October minutes. Seconded by David Shofi. Motion carried 5-0.

**BUSINESS UPDATES**

**Chairperson's Report** – Phil Kearns

- Working with the Budget & Policy committee, Dennis and Eileen to create preliminary FY2024 budgets.
- Meeting with a potential candidate for the Commission vacancy.

**Director's Report** – Dennis DiPinto

- Project Updates:
  1. Governor Park Courts Project: Courts are now open and we are pleased with the project outcome



and the vendor's ability to keep the project on-schedule.

- Phil asked if bleachers will be placed near the basketball courts. Dennis confirmed the bleachers will be placed in the spring.
  - 2. RAC Barlow Mountain Pool Improvements: Phase 1 is complete and Commission had a walk-thru last week; Phase 2 is scheduled for summer 2024 and includes renovating the locker rooms.
  - 3. Barlow Mountain Pool Dehumidification: HVAC unit is now fully operational and should make for a better experience for everyone who trains in that facility.
  - 4. Prospect Ridge Courts: Planning to include in the FY2024 Capital budget.
  - 5. Rec Center RTU: Reached an agreement for design analysis with Southport Engineering. Project is scheduled to be completed in the next 6-8 months.
  - 6. Martin Park Beach: Facility improvements are planned. Engaged CCA to start some design work, including handicapped access.
- Meeting Attendance:
    1. Emergency Operations Meeting with department heads to review emergency procedures
    2. RHS fall season wrap-up meeting
    3. Working with staff to develop Customer Service training in the new year
    4. Leadership team met to review end of summer recap
    5. Met with members of the Ridgefield Men's Club and shared an overview of the department/Q&A
    6. Participated in the CRPA Fall Quarterly
    7. Monthly Revenue
    8. Working with Budget & Policy committee on the Capital and Operating budgets
    9. Welcomed new Marketing/Information Coordinator last week, Esela Archenti

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

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

#### **Assistant Director of Parks' Report – Bob Schneider**

- SCOR tourney took place over Veterans Day weekend
- Addressed some maintenance needs at the Bark Park. Bids for new fencing need to go out
- Winterizing irrigation systems and Martin Park Beach
- Will monitor the install of a new waterline at the Scotland School field
- New sound system was installed at the Rec Center

Commission Chair moved to modify agenda and discuss New Business next while there's a quorum.

#### **VII. New Business**

1. Review and vote on FY2024-2025 Capital Budget
  - Phil and Dennis shared Capital budget line items; Budget will be submitted to the First Selectman/BOS by end of November.



- David Shofi made a motion to approve the Capital budget on a contingency basis with final approval to be made at the December meeting when final figures are available for three areas: Pickleball (\$300,000), Spray Bay (\$117,000) and Martin Park (\$60,000). Seconded by Pete Nichols. Motion carried 4-0.

Commission Chair moved to return to regular agenda.

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

- Five Community Service events in the past month – great effort by all
- Continue to focus on preschool programs, art and some adult programs including horseback riding
- Early Dismissal Days are very popular, but looking to see what other specialty programs we could explore
- Next up: Wellness programs coming up with special holiday themes

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Marketing & Promotions – Evie Bottali**

Nothing new to report.

**Membership – Kim Hulber**

Nothing new to report.

**Aquatic & Programs – Barbara Dobbin**

Nothing new to report.

**Budget & Policy – Barbara Dobbin**

Committee will meet on November 15<sup>th</sup> to review Operating budget, and again in December with a vote at the December Commission meeting. Continue to monitor results on a monthly basis.

**Buildings & Grounds – David Shofi**

Very pleased with the improvements at Barlow Mountain Pool and look forward to the continued enhancements.

Discussion took place regarding the number of park benches

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

Nothing new to report.

With no further business, Pete Nichols moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:08pm. Barbara Dobbin seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

**REMINDER: Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, December 12 at 6:30 pm via Zoom.**