



UNAPPROVED

Minutes of the Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting

October 20, 2015

In Attendance:

Phil Kearns, Chairman
David Shofi – VIA Telephone
Evie Bottali, Secretary
David Thaxter

Paul J. Roche, Director
Robin Matthews, Asst. Dir.
Robert Schneider, Asst. Dir.
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 Chairman at 7:30 p.m.

Recognition of Guest:

The Commission introduced Barbara Manners, 109 Round Lake Road, Ridgefield.

Approval of Agenda:

Mr. Kearns asked that item "New Business, (a) "Dog Park – Lights" be moved up on the agenda. The agenda as amended was approved.

New Business –Dog Park Lights

Mr. Kearns introduced Ms. Manners.

Ms. Manners gave a presentation on a proposal for the Town's Dog Park. Ms. Manners is proposing the installation of lights in the Dog Park for those owners who can not get to the Park during the daylight hours. The following was discussed:

- Lighting with LED lights
- Lights would be set on timer to go out at 8pm
- Ms. Manners will spearhead funding for the project.
- The parking lot lights may have to be added along with the Park itself for safety reasons
- Check with First Selectman if possible LoCip funding could be used to help install lights in parking lot
- Permits, fees, and construction costs would have to be reviewed and obtained
- Possibility of adding out of town fees for non-residents who use the Park

Ms. Manners mentioned that she is looking for the Commission's support to move forward with the lighting project.

The Commission thanked Ms. Manners for her proposal.

After a discussion, Mr. Roche reiterated again that this project will take some time to become a reality. Permits and fundraising will be the biggest obstacles to overcome.



Mr. Thaxter made the following motion:

"The Commission hereby supports the conceptual plans for the addition of lighting in the Dog Park as submitted at the October 20, 2015 meeting by Barbara Manners."

The motion was seconded by Evie Bottali and passed unanimously.

Minutes:

The September minutes were approved as submitted.

Financial Status:

In Ms. Cipolla's absence, Mr. Kearns reported that year-to-date revenue is above budgeted numbers and year-to-date expenses are slightly over budgeted numbers due to timing. Mr. Kearns mentioned that to-date, the October numbers are showing slightly under budget.

Mr. Kearns asked about the Department's credit card system and Ms. Byrnes will have Ms. Cipolla look into this and report back to the Commission at their November meeting.

Chairman:

Mr. Kearns had no new business to report at this time.

Director's Report:

- The Ballard Park Imagination Station playground Grand Opening is scheduled for November 3 when the Department will have a special event – "Rock the Ropes" after the ribbon cutting. Mr. Roche invited all the members. Mr. Roche gave an in-depth summary of the project and how we have had terrific responses from the public using the facility.
- Mr. Roche reported he was working with the staff on their staff goals for the Strategic Plan.
- The Friends of Parks and Recreation will be having its annual meeting on November 5. There will be a dedication of the Friends plaque recognizing all their accomplishments over the past 30 years.

Assistant Director-Recreation:

Ms. Matthews reported that this has been a very busy month for the Department. Ms. Matthews reviewed the upcoming events for the Commission.

- Over 150 children participated in the Window Painting event in Town this past weekend.

Mr. Kearns asked if this event continues to be popular. Ms. Matthews stated that she had over 28 windows donated by the businesses in Town.

- Ms. Matthews summarized the aquatic summer 2015 review for the Commission.
- The Commission had some questions regarding the Spray Bay in terms of expenses versus revenue. Ms. Cipolla will report on that at the next meeting.
- The Commission mentioned that Joyce Dynia, Michaelene Lynch and Hannah Egbert did a great job with the end of the year report.

The Commission had a discussion regarding the promotion of early registration for Martin Park Beach and how this will affect revenue going forward.

Assistant Director-Parks:

Mr. Schneider reported on the following:



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- Mr. Schneider is working with the Ridgefield High School Booster Club on improvements to the varsity softball field.
- The SCOR tournament went well and the fields are in good shape after the high volume usage.
- Working with the Marine Corps League on repairing the fencing around Ballard Park, this will be moved to the spring.
- Mr. Schneider mentioned that there have been some challenges with the heat exchanger at the Barlow Mountain pool and the maintenance staff has been working on this problem.
- Working on improvements to the Aldrich Park Little League field.
- Since the water has been lowered slightly at Martin Park Beach, there seems to be no weed problems.

Mr. Schneider discussed with the Commission the cost of having handicap toilet facilities at our parks and fields. This item falls under the Special Services sub-committee and Ms. Dobbin has been working with Mr. Phillips of the Town's Social Services Department.

After much discussion regarding costs/responsibilities, bids, service and notification, it was decided that Mr. Roche would contact Ms. Dobbin to follow-up with next steps. There was also a suggestion to check with the Town's Purchasing Agent to see if we would be able to get State bids on this project and Mr. Roche will follow up with Town Hall.

Sub-Committee Reports:

Buildings & Grounds – David Thaxter

Mr. Thaxter was following up on last month's New Business item, Governor Park – Lighting after a meeting with Mr. Alicea for additional information. The following was discussed:

- The safety netting and poles are an important request regarding tenant safety issues and the sub-committee would like the approval on this item from the Commission.
- The lighting of the fields will be state of the art LED lights/poles and will be available in 2017. The sub-committee had no issues at the moment but stated that the softball fields must also be lit.
- There was a discussion of the potential addition of new softball fields on the Recreation Center grounds, Walpole property, and Schlumberger property. The Commission stated that the potential of using the Recreation Center property may not be in line with the Department's current Strategic Plans.
- The possibility of the concession area being open every day and run by an outside vendor.
- It was suggested that the addition of the storage area go to a Commission vote after they have had a chance to see the drawings.

After a discussion Mr. Shofi made the following motion:

"The Commission hereby approves the addition of safety poles and safety netting at the Governor Park Field."

The motion was seconded by Mr. Thaxter and passed unanimously.

Mr. Thaxter will notify Mr Alicea in a letter of the Commission's findings.

Aquatics & Programs -David Thaxter:

Mr. Thaxter said the report was covered above, and added that the staff did a great job this past summer season.



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Annual Goals & Marketing Plans:

Ms. Bottali reported the total # of members and memberships sold in September were above year ago numbers with the growth mostly attributable to All-Inclusive memberships. At the November meeting, the sub-committee will present a recommendation regarding an early Martin Park sales promotion.

Budget & Policy-Phil Kearns:

Mr. Kearns reported that we continue to show very positive numbers and that the Commission will vote on the Capital Budget at its November meeting.

Special Services Issues – Barbara Dobbin:

In Ms. Dobbin's absence, there was no report at this time.

Strategic Plan-Gina Carey

In Ms. Carey's absence, there was no report at this time.

Old Business:

No old business to report.

New Business:

Covered above.

Mr Kearns asked if there were any objections in moving the November meeting date. The secretary will contact the other members for their availability.

A motion to adjourn was made by Evie Bottali and seconded by David Thaxter at 9:40 p.m.

*Minutes Approved:

Evie Bottali, Secretary