



UNAPPROVED

Minutes of the
Parks and Recreation Commission
Meeting

December 15, 2015

In Attendance:

Phil Kearns, Chairman
Barbara Dobbin
Evie Bottali, Secretary
David Thaxter
David Shofi

Paul J. Roche, Director
Robin Matthews, Asst. Dir.
Robert Schneider, Asst. Dir.
Jane Byrnes, Secty.
Eileen Cipolla, Acctg.

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 7:50 p.m.

Recognition of Guest:

No guests to recognize.

Approval of Agenda:

The agenda as revised was approved.

Minutes:

Mr. Thaxter made a correction to the November, 2015 minutes. On page three, under Buildings & Grounds, should read; "Mr. Thaxter reported that he has not had any word from Mr. Alicea regarding the Governor Park project."
The minutes as amended were approved.

Financial Status:

Ms. Cipolla reported that year to date revenue for November was ahead of budget and this month is also looking good. Ms. Cipolla will be working on the operating budget, which will be voted on at the January 2016 meeting.

Chairman:

Mr. Kearns summarized for the Commission a meeting he and Mr. Roche had with the Board of Education's Business Manager and Maintenance Director to talk about the Department's capital budget. Mr. Kearns stated that the meeting went well.

Mr. Kearns stated that he had met with Mr. Marconi and they discussed several issues, such as:

The lease at the Yanity Gymnasium.

The Tiger Ridge project and funding. Mr. Kearns stated that the item would be discussed at the January 6, 2016 Board of Selectmen meeting. It was suggested that Mr. Kearns attend the January BOS meeting.

They also discussed Freedom of Information requirements.



Mr. Kearns also stated that he would like to make a change to the current Facility Use and Reservation Policy as follows:

Mr. Kearns presented the following motion:

“Hereby adopt the modification of the Facility Use and Reservation Policy

Under Section 8-9 Regulated uses in parks: (4) Golf and model airplanes

To read: (4) Golf, model airplanes and drones. The policy should also reflect the addition of “.....or devices such as drones,.....”

Before a vote was made, Mr. Kearns withdrew his motion, pending a discussion regarding wording.

Ms. Dobbin submitted the following motion:

“The Commission hereby adopts the modification of the Facility Use and Reservation Policy, Under Section 8-9, Regulated uses in parks (4) Golf and, model airplanes, to read:

Section 8-9 (4) Golf, model airplanes and drones. No person shall take part in the playing or practicing of the game of golf or hitting golf balls, or the flying of model airplanes or devices such as drones, except in areas designated by the Commission for such activities and at times that will not disrupt organized activities. If the Commission designates an area for conducting one or more of such activities, the Commission may issue any rules and regulations it deems appropriate for the proper regulations of such activities.”

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Director's Report:

- The Director has been working with the Tiger Ridge committee on the Ridgefield High School softball field improvements.
- Mr. Roche reported that Planning and Zoning had approved the request for lights to be installed at the Dog Park. Mr. Roche will be working with the Town on also lighting the commuter parking area.
- Mr Roche is working with the Town on the Recreation Center's proposal to expand the parking area.

Assistant Director-Recreation:

Ms. Matthews asked for any questions regarding her December report. The Commission had no questions at this time.

Ms. Matthews mentioned that the team is working on future special events and they will be doing some spot checking for memberships at the Wellness Center. Mr. Kearns asked about the aquatic staff and Ms. Matthews said they are well and that they just finished a large swim registration.

Assistant Director-Parks:

Mr. Schneider reported on the following:

- Mr. Schneider is working on the dates for the Annual Fields Meeting and completing the collection of outstanding invoices for a few sport groups.
- Since the weather has been so warm, the outdoor crews have kept up with the fall clean up.
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- Mr. Schneider is working with the Tiger Ridge committee on work at the RHS girls' softball field.
- Mr. Schneider mentioned he may have to do some costly repairs at the Scotland field and Mr. Kearns will follow up with a letter to Mr. Marconi regarding funds for future repairs if needed next spring.
- Mr. Schneider is working on reclaiming the sand at Martin Park Beach.

Sub-Committee Reports:

Buildings & Grounds – David Thaxter

Mr. Thaxter reported that the sub-committee had met and a formal letter will be sent to the Schlumberger committee regarding the Parks and Recreation's priorities for the development of that property. These priorities are softball fields, Pickleball courts and trails.

Mr. Thaxter also mentioned that he has not had any further contact with the Branchville Civic field group regarding their request to bring a presentation to the Commission. Mr. Schneider will follow up on this topic.

Mr. Thaxter will plan a visit of the Town fields with the sub-committee and staff, to get a feel on the conditions of the fields. This is due to comments they received from SCOR regarding these conditions. The sub-committee is also working on the Veterans Park and Onalfo field drainage study. Mr. Thaxter mentioned that he had a discussion with Mr. Alicia regarding the development of softball fields at the Recreation Center site. The Commission will review the Master Plan and revisit this after the first of the year.

Aquatics & Programs –David Thaxter:

On December 2, Mr. Thaxter met with the staff which was a very informative meeting. Some issues discussed included; the drone policy and security issues at Martin Park Beach.

Annual Goals & Marketing Plans:

Ms. Bottali reported that November member and revenue totals exceeded year-ago results. There was a discussion regarding membership trends and how our family memberships remain dominant. Ms. Bottali will discuss the results of the 2015 Martin Park Beach promotion at the January meeting,

The Commission thanked Ms. Bottali for her hard work on the development of the membership reports.

Budget & Policy-Phil Kearns:

Mr. Kearns reported that the sub-committee will be working on the operating budget and the Commission will be voting on it in January.

Special Services Issues – Barbara Dobbin:

Ms. Dobbin reported that she will visit the Town fields and parks to begin to develop a plan for accessible porta-potties for future installation. There was a discussion regarding the increase in the expense. After a meeting with the First Selectman regarding the expense, the Commission will add the expense over a period of time.

Strategic Plan-Gina Carey

In Ms. Carey's absence, this item was tabled until the January, 2016 meeting.

Old Business:

Meeting Dates

The Commission discussed the meeting dates for the next calendar year. After a review of the proposed 2016 Commission meeting dates, the following motion was put forth by David Thaxter and approved unanimously:



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"To accept the 2016 Commission dates as amended."

The motion was seconded by Barbara Dobbin and passed unanimously.

New Business:

Shadow Lake

Mr. Kearns reported that he received a proposal from Mr. John Adams asking to rename the Shadow Lake baseball field after his son, Ryan Adams. Mr. Kearns provided the Commission with the current policies on naming fields for their review. Mr. Kearns also asked the department to provide the Commission with additional information regarding names of all the fields in Town. A lengthy discussion ensued, and as is customary, the Commission decided to table this item to take some time to review the proposal.

A motion to adjourn was made by Barbara Dobbin and seconded by David Thaxter at 9:45 p.m.

*Minutes Approved: _____

Evie Bottali, Secretary