

Dec 2020 P&R Commission Meeting**Minutes of the
Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting**

December 9, 2020
Meeting Held Virtually

In Attendance:

Phil Kearns, Chair
Kim Hulber
Barbara Dobbin, Vice Chair
Eve Bottall, Secretary
David Shofi
Pete Nichols
Gina Carey

Dennis DiPinto, Director
Kathy Fassman, Marketing
Eileen Cipolla, Accountant

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 Chair at 6:40 p.m.

Recognition and Introduction of Guests:

No guests to recognize.

Approval of Agenda

G. Carey moved and B. Dobbin seconded the motion to approve the agenda as presented
The motion carried 7-0.

Approval of Minutes

E. Bottall moved and B. Dobbin seconded to amend the minutes of the November meeting to add Gina Carey to the "In Attendance" section on page one. The motion carried 7-0.

Financial Status – Eileen Cipolla

Ms. Cipolla stated that the department is closely monitoring revenue and expenses due to the continued effects of the COVID 19 pandemic. Ms. Cipolla stated that she has worked with the budget sub-committee on the new projections.

Business Items/Reports**Chairperson – Phil Kearns**

Mr. Kearns reported that he and Mr. DiPinto had met with the Conservation Commission regarding their future goal of obtaining additional open space. Mr. Kearns mentioned that they were looking at the Rec Center campus near the set backs.

Director's Report – Dennis DiPintoBuilding/Grounds

Working on final stages of pavilion – Met with Planning and Zoning for approval
Installation began Monday and we are now waiting for the roof to be completed

Financial

Working with Accountant and Commission on operating/capital budgets
Reviewing programs

Community:

Working with Town on COVID testing at Yanity
Working with sub-committee on additional Pickleball courts/ toured pickleball courts and possible new courts at MPB
Worked with community on Tiger Hollow turf project

Staffing-Programs:

Working with HR to fill Adm. Asst. position
Working with staff on COVID updates and programming
Worked with staff for smooth reopening of pool

The Commission asked if the department saw any changes in the number of people returning to the Rec Center after its recent closure. Mr. DiPinto mentioned that the flow seems to be the same.

Marketing/Programs – Kathy Fassman

Ms. Fassman reported that the winter brochure was mailed to residents. Ms. Fassman mentioned that the department had to push out some of our indoor programs due to recent COVID guideline changes. She mentioned that the two outdoor programs; horseback riding and skiing continue to be popular.

The department is offering an event this Saturday, pictures with Santa. The event will follow all State and local guidelines for social distancing and mask requirements. Santa will be seated behind a plexi-glass screen for safety. The event will be offered to members only with reservations.

Ms. Fassman reported that the department is staying very optimistic for the spring and summer program registrations to return.

Assistant Director-Parks- Bob Schneider

Mr. Schneider reported that the crews were busy helping install the lights on Main Street. Mr. Schneider is working with the Human Resources Director regarding protocols for COVID particularly with the winter snow removal. Crews are busy transferring from the fall season to winter; installing sanders on all trucks.

Mr. Schneider reported that the pavilion has been installed and we are waiting on the roof. The company moved very quickly and did a great job.

Sub-Committee ReportsMarketing, Promotion and Membership – Evie Bottall

Nothing to report at this time... covered by Kathy Fassman

Aquatics & Programs – Barbara Dobbin

Nothing to report at this time.

Budget & Policy – Phil Kearns

Mr. Kearns reported that he and the sub-committee were busy working on the new revenue projections for the department. Mr. Kearns reviewed these projections with the Commission. Mr. Kearns mentioned that he and the director had met with the First Selectman and Town Controller to review these new projections. There was much discussion regarding the budget numbers for the department going forward.

Buildings & Grounds – David Shofi

Mr. Shofi will meet with the sub-committee to finish work on the Athletic Fields Agreement. Mr. Kearns asked if the department would hold its annual fields meeting in January. Mr. Schneider mentioned that he would probably hold a zoom meeting.

Special Services, Community Outreach and Customer Experience – Kim Hulber

Kim Hulber mentioned that she met with Bobby Schneider to review the list of ADA projects for the department. Ms. Hulber mentioned that she is prioritizing the list into three categories; 1. usage (high, medium and low) 2. accessibility (high, medium and low) 3. overall cost (high, medium and low). There was some discussion regarding dividing the plan in two groups; parks and schools. Ms. Hulber said that she is targeting the end of December for the list to be completed. Mr. Schneider mentioned that most of the projects would include paving which have high costs. Mr. Kearns suggested that they also look at smaller less costly projects. They should also look to use funds to support those programs, which meet the criteria.

Strategic Planning and Annual Goals – Gina Carey

Ms. Carey mentioned her sub-committee is finishing review of the 2020 assessment plan and putting together the staff goals for 2021. Ms. Carey reported that by the January Commission meeting, the sub-committee would roll out the finished document, which focuses on 2021.

Old Business – Pickleball Discussion – B. Dobbin

Ms. Dobbin reported that she would be in touch with the pickleball community regarding their request for painting pickleball courts on the Governor Park tennis courts. Ms. Dobbin mentioned that several Commissioners had toured the pickleball facilities in Town, and reviewed the number of courts in some surrounding Towns. The sub-committee and Commission felt that at this time, they support maintaining the Governor Park tennis courts as single use courts as they are our only lighted tennis courts and that we currently have favorable comparisons with other Towns in terms of pickleball offerings. The Commission felt hesitant to make the tennis multi-use courts, which would possibly sacrifice the tennis community. The Commission would like to look further into the proposal to install courts at Martin Park Beach with some financial assistance from the pickleball community.

New Business:2021-2022 Capital Request

Mr. Kearns reviewed the proposed capital budget with the full Commission. After a lengthy discussion, the Commission thanked the sub-committee for their hard work in these difficult times.

G. Carey moved and B. Dobbin seconded to approve the 2021-2022 proposed capital budget as presented. The motion carried 7-0.

2021 Proposed Meeting Dates

Mr. Kearns reviewed the proposed 2021 Commission meeting dates. There were a few amendments and the Commission agreed. D. Shofi moved and P. Nichols seconded to accept the 2021 Commission meeting dates as amended. The motion carried 7-0.

With no further business, Pete Nichols moved and David Shofi seconded the motion to adjourn the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting at 8:45pm. Motion carried 7-0.

Minutes Approved



Evie Bottall, Secretary

Ridgefield Parks and Recreation
195 Danbury Road Ridgefield, CT 06877
203-431-2755