



UNAPPROVED
Minutes of the
Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting

January 8, 2020

In Attendance:

Phil Kearns, Chair
Gina Carey
Barbara Dobbin, via phone
Evie Bottali
Kim Hulber
David Thaxter

Dennis DiPinto, Director
Kathy Fassman, Marketing
Eileen Cipolla, Accountant
Jane Byrnes, Secty.
Bobby Schneider, Ast.Dir-Parks

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 6:35 p.m.

Recognition of Guests:

No guests to recognize.

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Kearns asked that the Sub-Committees, Directors, Marketing & Programs, Asst. Director-Parks and New Business reports be moved up on the agenda. The agenda as amended was approved.

Minutes:

There were no changes to the minutes.

Financial Status – Eileen Cipolla

Ms. Cipolla reported that there are some shortfalls in our membership numbers; however, we are waiting for our January revenue to bring us back on budget target. Ms. Cipolla mentioned that she will meet next week with Dennis DiPinto and Kathy Fassman to discuss memberships and they will be keeping a close eye on the Department's expenses.

The Department has been working on the 2020-2021 Operating Budget that will be discussed under New Business.

Chairperson's Report – Phil Kearns:



Mr. Kearns mentioned that his report would be covered under New Business and Budget & Policy.

Sub-Committee Reports:

Buildings & Grounds – David Thaxter

Mr. Thaxter stated that the sub-committee has had its first meeting and they will be meeting again in early February to discuss the Athletic Fields Use and Maintenance Agreement, which will expire in July, 2020.

The Commission asked for a summary of the financial details and Ms. Cipolla will forward it to the members.

Aquatics & Programs – David Thaxter

Mr. Thaxter mentioned that he has tried to reach Ridgefield Aquatics to see where they stand on their proposal to the Commission regarding the Barlow Mountain Pool. Mr. Thaxter stated that to date, he has not had any word from them.

Mr. Thaxter reported that the aquatics department has some concerns regarding the winter swim lesson registration numbers. Ms. Fassman stated that she is targeting past registrants and is doing some additional promotions and will send out surveys to get feedback. A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the softness in the lesson numbers and the effects from offering private versus semi-privates has on the numbers. It was suggested that we survey surrounding communities to see if their numbers have dropped as well. It was also suggested that we investigate the program levels to see which ones are down and then do a breakdown by age. There was also some discussion regarding rolling enrollments and adding additional sessions.

Annual Goals & Marketing Plans:

Ms. Bottali reported that December membership revenue was above December 2018 but fell short of the current year budget.

Budget & Policy – Phil Kearns

Mr. Kearns submitted to the Commissioners a copy of a memorandum he sent to Mr. Marconi with the department's capital budget. He will be writing a similar memo to be submitted with the operating budget. Mr. Kearns will be meeting with Mr. Marconi next week.

Special Services & Community Outreach – Barbara Dobbin

Mr. Kearns reported that Ms. Dobbin is working on the ADA Five Year Plan with the Department.

Strategic Planning – Gina Carey

Mr. Kearns suggested that the sub-committee add its feedback to the Strategic Plan Analysis regarding things that the department feels did not work. Ms. Carey stated that they were looking at adding that to the next assessment. Ms. Carey will meet with Mr. DiPinto to discuss.

Director's Report- Dennis DiPinto



Building/Grounds

- Waiting for bids on the family changing room renovations

Financial

- Met with Town regarding last month's revenue numbers
- Met with Commission and staff finishing up budget requests
- Working on additional grant requests with Friends, Thrift Shop and Lewis Fund for the outdoor pavilion project.

Community

- Working with staff on new programs and reviewing current ones - revenue generated, etc.
- Member coffee scheduled for January 29 in lobby

Staffing-Programs

- Working with staff on skate park spring programs

Mr. DiPinto was part of a recent conference call regarding a potential regional funding for the rail trail extension project.

Marketing & Programs- Kathy Fassman

Ms. Fassman reported that the joint program with Thunder Ridge ski is going well with registrations doubling. We also have doubled our numbers in our Come and Play program. Ms. Fassman reported that Saturday programs have been a challenge and we have had to cancel a few due to low enrollments. Working on the spring/summer brochure and the winter postcard was delivered to residents in early January.

Assistant Director-Parks – Bob Schneider:

- With the good weather, the crews have been working on leave clean up
- Working on budget changes and quotes
- Working on field requests from Town organizations, fields annual meeting set in February
- Working on the new yearly calendar
- Indoor maintenance is working on final numbers for Spray Bay flooring
- Outdoor position has been filled waiting for background checks to return

New Business – Parks and Recreation Operating Budget 2020-2021 – Phil Kearns

Mr. Kearns submitted to the Commissioners some of the highlights of the 2020-2021 department-operating budget. Mr. Kearns asked Mr. DiPinto and Mr. Schneider to summarize a few of the highlight requests.

Mr. Kearns summarized for the Commission the proposed 2020-2021 Parks and Recreation Operating Budget as presented by the Budget Sub-Committee.

After a lengthy discussion, and a thorough review of the proposed budget, Mr. Thaxter made the following motion:

“Move to accept the 2020-2021 Parks and Recreation Operating Budget request as proposed by the Budget & Policy Sub-Committee.”



Motion seconded by Kim Hulber and with no further discussion, unanimously passed.

Mr. Kearns thanked the staff as well as the sub-committee members for their hard work on this year's budgets.

Old Business

Nothing at this time.

With no further business, a motion to adjourn at 7:45pm was made by Gina Carey, seconded by Evie Bottali and unanimously passed.

Minutes Approved: _____

Evie Bottali

Evie Bottali, Secretary