



UNAPPROVED

RIDGEFIELD PARKS & RECREATION

Minutes of the
Parks and Recreation Commission
Meeting

November 13, 2018

In Attendance:

Phil Kearns, Chairman-via telephone

Dennis DiPinto, Director

Evie Bottali, Secretary

Kathy Fassman, Marketing

Kim Hulber

David Thaxter

Jane Byrnes, Comm. Secty

Barbara Dobbins, Vice Chair

David Shofi

Gina Carey

These minutes are a general summary of the meeting and are not intended to be a verbatim transcription.

Meeting called to order by Vice Chair at 7:35 p.m.

Approval of Agenda:

Ms. Bottali motioned to accept the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by David Thaxter and passed unanimously.

Recognition of Guests:

No guests to recognize.

Minutes:

The minutes as presented were approved.

Financial Status – Eileen Cipolla:

In Ms. Cipolla's absence, Mr. Kearns reported that membership numbers are up and programs are even with budget. Mr. Kearns also stated that at this time with the memberships up and programs on target, the Department is exactly where they should be in the budget. Mr. Kearns stated that the Department did a great job to bring up the program and membership revenue numbers.

Chairperson's Report – Phil Kearns:

Mr. Kearns stated that he has worked closely with the Director over this past month, so he will defer to the Director's report and if necessary, will add any comments.



Director's Report- Dennis DiPinto

Building/Grounds Updates

- Mr. DiPinto reported that the renovation is substantially completed and that there may be just a few small punch list items remaining. The locker rooms look great and we have had very positive comments from the members. A brief discussion ensued regarding water pressure.
- We have hired a new Indoor Maintenance Supervisor who starts on the 26th. Mr. DiPinto and Mr. Schneider have been covering any issues that may arise prior to his start.
- Met with the Conservation Commission to discuss joint projects.
- The Director is working with the Town's Purchasing Department for the Recreation Center parking expansion.
- Mr. DiPinto has been working with staff regarding building security and better controls of people coming and going from the building.
- The Director has been working with the Wellness staff for additional storage space for equipment used in the land Wellness classes.

Financial

- The Director attended a Town revenue meeting and the next one is scheduled for tomorrow. Discussed recent revenue increases.
- Mr. DiPinto is working with staff and department Accountant on the completion of the Capital Budget.

Community

- With The Gym facility closing, the building has been very active and we have seen an increase in memberships and class enrollments.
- Mr. DiPinto has been working on the December 1 rollout of the Pickleball membership and is working with their Advisory Committee to develop some guidelines.
- The Director stated that the department hosted two member appreciation days, which were well received. We will have another day with Nature's Temptation providing healthy snacks in the Wellness area.
- Working with the Ridgefield Aquatics Club on the future possibilities of an aquatic facility at Barlow Mountain Pool.

Staffing-Programs

- The Department hosted a Halloween Howl event, which was a big success with over 250 people attending. We also hosted a family event on Election Day which we had several different activities, i.e. laser tag, mini golf, and swimming. There were over 400 people at this event.
- Working with the Wellness staff on a possible rowing program.
- Working with staff on streamlining the hiring process for winter programs.
- Met with staff members to follow-up on their goals.



Marketing & Programs- Kathy Fassman

Ms. Fassman summarized for the Commission some challenges she is having with the new program development for the proposed after school program in the Ridgefield schools.

The Commission questioned what avenues the Department is using for advertising the community events. Ms. Fassman explained that we advertise through the school flyers, Ridgefield Patch, Hamlet Hub and our web site.

Ms. Fassman mentioned that we are working with Thunder Ridge on a ski and snowboarding program for this winter.

We will also have a holiday camp program during the winter break week.

The three for three promotion will be going out this winter.

Assistant Director-Parks – Mr. Schneider:

Mr. DiPinto reported in Mr. Schneider's absence:

- The outdoor crews have been working on fall clean up, but have had some weather challenges.
- The crews are also busy getting equipment ready for the upcoming winter weather.

Sub-Committee Reports:

Annual Goals & Marketing Plans- Evie Bottali:

- Ms. Bottali reported that October was a good month for memberships. It was the first month of this fiscal year when both the number of memberships and revenue increased versus October 2017.

Buildings & Grounds – David Thaxter:

- Mr. Thaxter mentioned that the sub-committee had met to discuss a request that permanent bathrooms be installed in Ballard Park. The committee had follow-up with the resident. The Commission mentioned that the resident might now be contacting the Board of Selectmen regarding the request.

The Commission had questions regarding who would be addressing the cost of maintenance, amount of open times, and other items regarding this project.

Recreation Center Locker Room Renovation

Mr. Kearns mentioned that he would like the minutes to reflect what an outstanding job Mr. Rick Zini, Architect for Doyle Coffin Architects and Mr. Gerald Roche, of Roche Inc. had done on the renovation for the locker room and how pleased the Committee was with their work. Ms. Carey also stated that the Building Committee did an outstanding job as well and did a great service to the Town and Department. On behalf of the Building Committee, Mr. Kearns will follow up with formal thank you to both Mr. Zini and Mr. Roche.



Aquatics & Programs –David Thaxter:

Mr. Thaxter mentioned that the sub-committee had met again with Ridgefield Aquatics and the First Selectman regarding an aquatic facility at the Barlow Mountain Pool. They will be bringing an overview of their plans to the next Commission meeting for the Commission's review.

Budget & Policy-Phil Kearns:

Mr. Kearns reported that the sub-committee and staff of reviewing the first draft of the budget and they will bring it to the December meeting for a final vote.

Special Services Issues & Community Out Reach – Barbara Dobbin:

Ms. Dobbin will be meeting with the staff in the near future on how we are going to handle the financial aspects of events moving forward.

Strategic Plan – Gina Carey

Ms. Carey mentioned that the staff would be meeting at the end of the month on a customer service and teamwork training session.

Old Business-

No new business.

New Business-

Mr. DiPinto summarized for the Commission a recent meeting he had with the Conservation Commission and their request for Lake Windwing. After much discussion, the Commission decided to table this issued until the December meeting when Mr. Schneider is available to give his input.

The Commission received a copy of the proposed meeting dates for 2019. They will review and vote at the December meeting.

With no further business, a motion to adjourn was made at 8:58 pm, by Barbara Dobbin and seconded by Dave Shofi.

Minutes Approved: _____

Evie Bottali, Secretary