

UNAPPROVED

**Minutes of the
Parks and Recreation Commission
Meeting**

October 18, 2016

In Attendance:

Phil Kearns, Chairman	Paul J. Roche, Director
David Shofi	Robin Matthews, Asst. Dir.
Evie Bottali	Eileen Cipolla, Acct.
Kim Hulber	Jane Byrnes, Secty.
David Thaxter	

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 7:35p.m.

Approval of Agenda:

The agenda as presented was approved.

Recognition of Guests:

Mr. Kearns welcomed and introduced Mr. Ryan McIntyre, Ridgefield resident. Mr. McIntyre is working on his Eagle Scout merit badge.

Approval of the Minutes:

The minutes of the September meeting were approved as presented.

Financial Status – Eileen Cipolla:

Ms. Cipolla reported that we are ahead in revenue and on target with expenses. Ms. Cipolla mentioned that the Department is in very good shape, and has been for the last several months.

Ms. Cipolla stated that the Commission and Department is currently working on the capital and operating 2017-2018 budgets.

Chairman- Phil Kearns:

No report at this time.

Director's Report – Paul Roche:

Mr. Roche stated that he was happy to announce that the Ms. Matthews has been selected as the Connecticut Recreation and Parks Association's 2016 Distinguished Service Award Recipient. This is the most prestigious award that CRPA offers. To receive the Distinguished Service Award, the nominee shall be a CRPA member and an individual who has made outstanding contributions, over a significant number of years, to the recreation, and/or parks field. Such contributions might be for outstanding leadership; committee work on a state or national level; outstanding service as a professional worker; research; promoting the profession; or outstanding development of equipment, layout or design.

The Commission congratulated Ms. Matthews on this award.

The Director reported on the following:

Mr. Roche reported he is working with the Special Olympic committee to help with fundraising. Over the past several years the program has grown and they are in need of some items; including transportation and athletic wear.

The Director is also working with the Coalition Against Substance Abuse committee on a new program; Family Facetime. The Department will help facilitate the program and help with some advertising. The Department agreed this was an important program to support.

Mr. Roche also mentioned that he is working with the staff and Commission sub-committee on the upcoming capital budget requests.

Assistant Director-Recreation:

Ms. Matthews reported that the Department still has an open position in our Aquatic section which may have some impact on the swim lesson enrollments. There was a discussion regarding the comparison of salaries of the aquatic staff members and other Town employees. It was mentioned that open aquatic positions are a State wide challenge for many Parks and Recreation Departments. Ms. Matthews also mentioned that the current trend is moving toward private and semi-private swim lessons.

Assistant Director-Parks:

No report at this time.

Mr. Kearns stated that the Sturges Park cabin installation is moving along and he mentioned that it should be completed before the winter season begins. The committee is working on some additional fundraising.

Sub-Committee Reports:

Buildings & Grounds – David Thaxter

Sturges Park cabin, covered above.

Aquatics & Programs –David Thaxter:

Mr. Thaxter reported that the current issue continues to be staffing, which was covered under the Assistant Director-Recreation's report.

Annual Goals & Marketing Plans – Evie Bottali

Ms. Bottali reported that overall membership sales were down slightly versus September 2015. However, the all-inclusive family and wellness memberships showed strong gains versus last year.

Ms. Bottali gave a summary of the upcoming winter promotion proposal offering SPIN, TRX and Yoga the sub-committee worked on with the staff. Mr. Shofi questioned if staff and our facility would be able to handle current and new users. The staff mentioned that these classes are currently soft and that a promotion may give them a boost.

Ms. Cipolla will work on the numbers and get back to the Chairman by the end of the week. The Commission was asked to forward their comments and/or suggestions to the Chairman regarding the promotion.

Budget & Policy – Phil Kearns

No report at this time.

Sub-committee working on the upcoming 2017-2018 capital budget and meetings has been scheduled. The Commission will be voting at its November meeting on this budget.

Mr. Kearns mentioned that there has been a capital item in our budget for the past few budgets for improvements related to the Wellness Center locker room tile. Due to high estimates, we have not spent

the capital allocated for this project. Mr. Roche has proposed bringing in an architectural firm to review the locker room configurations and give suggestions and assessments for the future plan.

Mr. Kearns made the following motion:

“The Commission hereby approves the expenditure of \$5,000 from the capital account allocated for the wellness locker room improvement fund in order to have an architectural appraisal and cost estimate for the locker rooms improvement plan.”

Mr. Kearns asked for any discussion or questions, hearing none, Mr. Thaxter seconded the motion. The motion unanimously passed.

This will be pending approval from the Town Finance Director.

Special Services – Barbara Dobbin

In Ms. Dobbin's absence, Mr. Kearns mentioned that the sub-committee is working with the Social Services Director to continue the Department's five year plan for the accessibility of Park and Recreation facilities. The committee, along with the Social Services Director, Parks & Recreation staff members, Chairman of the Disability Committee and others will be doing a tour of Park and Recreation facilities to create a list of accessible issues. Parks and Recreation will then determine which issues should be handled by Parks and Recreation and which ones will be handled by the Town. The tour is scheduled for Tuesday of next week.

Strategic Plan – Gina Carey

In Ms. Carey's absence, Mr. Shofi reported that the sub-committee is making good progress and is currently working on quantitative and quantified survey being prepared for the final report. Interviews have been done with Town official, Department Heads, Board of Selectmen, Board of Education, etc. The sub-committee is looking to finalize and release the plan late winter or early spring.

Old Business:

No old business to report at this time.

New Business:

No new business to report at this time.

A motion to adjourn was made by David Shofi and seconded by David Thaxter at 8:25pm.

*Minutes Approved: _____
Evie Bottali, Secretary