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UNAPPROVED

Minutes of the  
Parks and Recreation Commission  
Meeting

October 16, 2018

In Attendance:

Phil Kearns, Chairman  
Evie Bottali  
Kim Hulber  
David Thaxter

Dennis DiPinto, Director  
Robert Schneider, Asst. Dir-Parks  
Eileen Cipolla, Acct.  
Jane Byrnes, Comm. Secty  
Kathy Fassman, Marketing & Programming

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 7:30 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:

Ms. Cipolla reported that overall revenue is down slightly to budget and expenses are on target. Ms. Cipolla stated that the Budget Sub-Committee is working on the 2020 capital and operating budgets. The committee is looking at the athletic fields budget numbers as well. Ms. Cipolla stated that the Town is currently reviewing the Departments electricity account for discrepancies. The Accountant also reported that the October membership numbers are seeing some comeback and may exceed budget. She will monitor them closely. The Commission questioned the Martin Park Beach revenue numbers comparing to last summer.

Chairperson's Report – Phil Kearns:

Mr. Kearns report will be covered under old and new business.

Mr. Kearns mentioned that he had met with the Charter Group regarding the Recreation Center's trail. This will be covered under New Business.



Director's Report- Dennis DiPinto

Mr. DiPinto reported on the following:

Building/Grounds

- Working with the Building Committee on the locker room renovation. We had a soft opening today and the members were happy with the renovation. A few punch list items need to be addressed over the next few weeks. There was a discussion regarding the recent closure of The Gym and how the Department is rolling out some membership promotions.
- The Director mentioned that the Department is planning its locker room grand opening event for October 23 and October 24.

Financial

- The Director had met with the Town regarding Department revenue.
- Mr. DiPinto is working with the Accountant and the staff on the next capital and operating budgets.

Community/Staff

- Working to roll out the membership plan for Pickleball by December 1. There was a discussion regarding tightening up the monitoring of drop-in pickleball players at the Yanity Gym.
- Working with staff on the first community event – The Halloween Howl, scheduled for Friday, October 26. Mr. Kearns asked if we had advertised this event at other sites in Town such as the library, Town Hall, etc. Ms. Fassman mentioned that it is in the school flyers, a large banner at the entrance, and several flyers posted around the building.
- Mr. DiPinto also mentioned that the department is working on a few adult education programs scheduled for this winter. He has also met with the dance, tennis and karate instructors to discuss their programs.
- Ms. Fassman gave an explanation on some of the other programs the department is working on to roll out in January. Ms. Fassman asked for clarity regarding some new program ideas. A lengthy discussion took place regarding the department's mission, working on programs that tie into memberships and competing with other businesses in Ridgefield.
- The Commission had some questions regarding communications for program information between our sub-contractors and our program participants. The Commission mentioned the importance in clear and correct communication of information that is asked at our front desk. Ms. Fassman mentioned that most instances the sub-contractor does not inform the department on their program changes, which causes challenges when the front desk is asked a question.
- Ms. Fassman also discussed some new ideas for the upcoming promotion.

Marketing & Programs- Kathy Fassman

Covered above.

Assistant Director-Parks – Mr. Schneider:

Mr. Schneider reported on the following:

- Mr. Schneider mentioned that the indoor maintenance staff is working on the winterizing of the Rec Center Spray Bay.
- This week he is working with the Human Resources Department on interviewing candidates for the Indoor Maintenance Supervisor's position.
- Outdoor crews are busy prepping for the fall/winter high school athletic season.
- The crews are also doing fall renovation on Diniz and Onalfo infields.
- The crews are also working on snow removal equipment for the upcoming winter season.
- Working on the draw down of the Martin Park Beach Pond.
- The Asst. Director is currently working with the Accountant on the upcoming capital budget.





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## RIDGEFIELD PARKS & RECREATION

- Working with the crews on the fall clean up and putting in woodchips by Governor Park, Chef's Warehouse, and Town properties.
- The Fountain cover will be installed next week.

### Sub-Committee Reports:

#### 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 will follow-up on this with the resident.

#### Aquatics & Programs –David Thaxter:

- Mr. Thaxter stated that there were no current issues, and that Ms. Dynia did a great job with the end of the year Martin Park Beach report.

#### Annual Goals & Marketing Plans- Evie Bottali:

September membership revenue was down slightly versus last year, however, memberships sold increased, indicating a shift towards monthly memberships. Ms. Bottali and Ms. Cipolla will continue to work on aligning RecTrac memberships/revenue with Accountings' data.

#### Budget & Policy-Phil Kearns:

Covered above.

#### Special Services Issues & Community Out Reach – Barbara Dobbin:

Mr. Kearns stated that the sub-committee is working on input for the upcoming capital budget.

#### Strategic Plan – Gina Carey

No report at this time.

#### Old Business- Charter Group:

Mr. Kearns stated that he had attended the Town public meeting to verbalize the Commission's support for the Charter Group's proposed project. A short discussion ensued regarding the meeting.

#### New Business-Charter Group Partners – Phil Kearns

Mr. Kearns reported that the AARP is introducing a new program, which will supersede the SilverSneakers program. The sub-committee is doing further investigation on this program.

With no further business, a motion to adjourn was made at 8:43pm, by Evie Bottali and seconded by Dave Thaxter.

Minutes Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Evie Bottali, Secretary