

Town of Ridgefield Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, December 12, 2023 at 6:30 pm
Meeting held via Zoom
UNAPPROVED

PRESENT: P. Kearns, B. Dobbin, D. Shofi, E. Bottali, P. Nichols, D. DiPinto, B. Schneider, M. Knox, E. Cipolla, A. Platt

These minutes are a general summary of the meeting and are not intended to be a verbatim transcription. A recording of the meeting will be available for 45 days post:

<https://www.ridgefieldparksandrec.org/about-parks-recreation/commission>

Meeting called to order by Chair at 6:33pm.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Pete Nichols made a motion to approve the agenda. Seconded by Barbara Dobbin. Motion carried 4-0.

RECOGNITION OF GUESTS

Keith Wolff

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Pete Nichols to approve the November minutes. Seconded by Barbara Dobbin. Motion carried 4-0.

BUSINESS UPDATES

Chairperson's Report – Phil Kearns

Report will be covered under the Budget & Policy Committee.

Director's Report – Dennis DiPinto

Project Updates:

- Prospect Ridge Courts: Will be discussed in more detail under Old Business/Capital Budget review.
- Rec Center Rooftop Units: Reached an agreement for design analysis with Southport Engineering.

Meeting Attendance:

- Attended annual CRPA Conference
- Met with the staff for our monthly Leadership team meeting; Reviewed new closures/delays flow chart ahead of any inclement weather
- Continue to work with the Budget & Policy Committee to review monthly revenue reports & the 2024 Capital & Operating budgets.
- RAC / Barlow Mountain Pool project discussions continue for Phase II of the project

Staff Updates:

- Stephen Saxton was promoted to Member Services Coordinator at the Rec Center.

Financial Update – Eileen Cipolla

Ms. Cipolla provided the monthly financial report. Revenue and expenses are on-target.

Assistant Director of Parks' Report – Bob Schneider

- Scheduled to attend the Town's Stormwater Management meeting later this week
- Security camera upgrades are planned at the Rec Center
- Snow removal plans / responsibilities will be discussed with the town ahead of winter
- Assisted the Garden Club with the placement of benches in Ballard Park
- Preparing outdoor equipment for the winter/snow removal
- Talking with Ridgefield Little League about the possibility of synthetic turf at Serefillipi Field
- Moved sand at Martin Park Beach for weed control
- Ed Gabbianelli has completed his first 6 months at the Rec Center
- Finished mowing all fields for the Conservation Commission

Assistant Director of Program Operations' Report – Mary Knox

- Winter program guide is expected to mail in early January
- New preschool age programs will begin in January
- Working with the RHS Astronomy Club to offer a star gazing program
- Jingle Bell Zumba and Winter Solstice Yoga are scheduled for this month

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Marketing & Promotions – Evie Bottali

Nothing new to report.

Membership – Kim Hulber (absent)

Nothing new to report.

Aquatic & Programs – Barbara Dobbin

Nothing new to report.

Budget & Policy – Phil Kearns

Continue to meet monthly to review results and finalize the budget proposals for FY2024

Buildings & Grounds – David Shofi

Nothing new to report.

Special Services & Community Outreach – Pete Nichols

Nothing new to report.

New Business

1. Vote on FY2024 Operating Budget

- Reviewed Operating Budget line items (Attachment A); Budget will be submitted to the First Selectman/BOS for approval.
- Pete Nichols made a motion to approve the 2024-2025 Operating Budget as presented. Seconded by David Shofi. Motion carried 4-0.

2. 2024 Commission Meeting Schedule

- Reviewed proposed meeting schedule and discussed modifications (Attachment B).

- Pete Nichols made a motion to approve 2024 meeting schedule as presented. Seconded by Barbara Dobbin. Motion carried 4-0.

Old Business

1. Vote on Final Amended FY2024-2025 Capital Request

- Reviewed modifications since the Commission last reviewed in November. [Attachment C]
- Barbara Dobbin made a motion to approve the revised 2024-2025 Capital Budget as presented. Seconded by David Shofi. Motion carried 4-0.

With no further business, Phil Kearns moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:33pm. Barbara Dobbin seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0.

REMINDER: Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, January 16, 2024 at 6:30 pm via Zoom.

[Attachment A]

Proposed 2024-2025 Parks and Recreation Operating Budget Highlights

- Overall Expenses:
 - o +4.32%/+\$229,213
 - o Budget increases from \$5,303,393 to \$5,532,606
- Overall Revenue:
 - o +6.59%/+\$238,120
 - o Revenue increases from \$3,613,827 to \$3,841,947
- Net Revenue to Expenses:
 - o Revenue increase exceed expense increases by \$8,906.
 - o The portion of budget not self-funded remains basically the same (-0.5%) at \$1,680,659.
- Town Funded Portion of budget:
 - o Recreation Center and recreation programs are basically covered by the department’s revenue.
 - o Unfunded portion are non-revenue producing maintenance responsibilities including, but not limited to, maintenance of grounds at town facilities, maintenance of grounds at all schools, snow removal at same
- Key Sources of revenue increase:
 - o Programs: +\$127,500/+7.13%
 - o Memberships: +\$93,503/+11.89%
 - o Aqua: +\$10,000/+4.00%

• Key drivers of expense increase:

Expense Area	Increase	Overall Increase	Share of Increase
Salaries	+\$126,885	+2.39%	55.4%
Programs (tied to revenue increases)	+\$42,056	+0.79%	18.3%
Utilities	+\$34,742	+0.66%	15.2%
Facility maintenance, ground and pool care supplies, uniforms	+\$25,530	+0.48%	11.1%
Total	+\$229,213	+4.32%	100%

- Salary Increases:
 - o 46% of the salary increases (\$56,499) is mandated minimum wage increases
 - o Additional portions is “catch up”. As minimum wage increases those above need to be adjusted

[Attachment B]



**Town of Ridgefield Parks and Recreation Commission
Approved Meeting Schedule
January - December 2024**

Meetings take place on the 3rd Tuesday of the month and begin at 6:30 PM, unless otherwise noted.

January 16, 2024

July 16, 2024

February 27, 2024

August – No Meeting

March 19, 2024

September 17, 2024

April 16, 2024

October 15, 2024

May 21, 2024

November 19, 2024

June 18, 2024

December 10, 2024



[Attachment C]

Proposed 2024-2025 Parks and Recreation Capital Budget Updates

At the November meeting, we voted on a provisional budget. There were three open areas summarized below. There were also some minor changes to the ADA Compliance expense and the Parks, Fields & Schools safety Improvements. These changes bring our total capital request to \$1,602,500 versus our preliminary November vote of \$1,362,851. An increase of \$239,649.

1. Martin Park Site Planning: Final cost is \$10,000. Was \$60,000
2. Spray Bay Flooring: Final cost is \$67,788. This after some changes to the cost (down from \$117,966 in November to \$89,788) and an offset from our ADA funds of \$22,000.
3. Pickleball Courts: This was the most significant change. The very rough placeholder in November was \$300,000. The cost included in our capital will now be \$779,465 offset by grants of \$146,777 for a final cost of \$635,688. This is an increase of \$335,688.