



UNAPPROVED  
Minutes of the  
Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting

June 18, 2019

In Attendance:

Phil Kearns, Chairman  
Evie Bottali, Secretary  
Kim Hulber  
Barbara Dobbin, Vice Chair  
David Shofi, via phone

Dennis DiPinto, Director  
Eileen Cipolla, Acct.  
Bobby Schneider, Asst. Dir.-Parks  
Jane Byrnes, Secty.

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

The agenda as presented was approved.

Recognition of Guests:

No guests to recognize.

Minutes:

The minutes as presented were approved.

Financial Status – Eileen Cipolla:

Ms. Cipolla reported that membership numbers continued to be strong in the early part of June. Camp numbers are on target and the department is keeping an eye on expenses.

Chairperson's Report – Phil Kearns:

Mr. Kearns mentioned that he had sent out to the Pickleball Community the response regarding the Pickleball fees. Mr. Kearns also reported that he has sent the Commission's response to the Conservation Commission regarding the Town's ten-year plan.

Director's Report- Dennis DiPinto

- Director is working on capital projects, which include the parking expansion, resurfacing of tennis courts, and the Rec Center's HVAC unit replacement. The Commission questioned the timing on the replacement of the roof top units.
- Waiting for the plan for the family changing room renovation. The Director may have the building committee back on site for a review. The Commission asked if the renovation could be done during the pool closing. Mr. DiPinto did not think the timing would work.
- Working on pricing for the patio slab.
- Mr. DiPinto attended the CRPA Conference regarding building safety.
- The Director attended the Special Olympics annual dinner and it was very successful.
- Working on some personnel challenges and working with staff on their goals for the Strategic Plan.

Marketing & Programs- Evie Bottali (Kathy Fassman)

1) We had Tadd, our high school intern, walk around with an iPad, asking people to take a brief survey. He asked parents from dance, karate, and our new track and field. He also asked adults from fitness classes. The results have been overall positive.



- 2) We hosted summer solstice yoga in the park last Saturday and it was very well attended.
- 3) We hosted the sixth annual kids duathlon on [June 9](#). Everyone had a great day and we drew many new families into our facility.
- 4) We are working on offering cooking classes for adults and kids.
- 5) The technology instructor is retiring and instead of hiring another independent contractor, we are looking into a new idea. We can buy educational programs, like coding 101 and robotics, and then hire middle school science teachers as instructors. We already have many of them interested. That way, we own the curriculum and there are rotating instructors who can commit to just one session or more. It allows us to grow without depending on one person. STEM for kids is booming and we will be working with Mr. Nash from Ridgefield Academy in helping us pick the educational package that is right for us.
- 6) Our memberships continue to be strong and we are confident that our price point puts us in a good position, despite the opening of other fitness clubs. We had Tadd visit Fit Club and discovered that they do not offer child sitting and they seem to be more expensive.
- 7) Camp starts next week and we will surely have a very busy summer.

The Commission questioned if there have been any concerns regarding parking during the summer camp; and if the camp counselors could park in the lot off Route 35. Mr. DiPinto mentioned that the counselors park near the field and there was not a problem last year; however, he will keep an eye on the parking.

Assistant Director-Parks – Mr. Schneider:

Mr. Schneider report on the following:

- Working on the Town Fountain with the insurance company after an accident with a car hitting the planters.
- Working with contractor on some Spray Bay surfacing issues.
- Working with the Town and crews on the upcoming July 4 Fireworks celebration.
- Crews lining Town courts.
- Crews busy with spring clean up at the Rec Center campus.
- A new gate was installed at Martin Park Beach.
- Fixed bat problem at Sturges Cabin

The Commission asked Mr. Schneider to look at the bushes along the first row of the front area of the parking lot facing the building they may need to be replaced.

Sub-Committee Reports:

Buildings & Grounds – Aquatics & Programs - David Thaxter:

No report at this time.

Aquatics & Programs – Evie Bottali - (David Thaxter)

Ms. Bottali reviewed the pickleball memo regarding the summer schedule with the Commission. There were no questions or comments. The memo will be forward to the Pickleball Community.

The pre-season lifeguard training went well for the pool and Martin Park (very well attended). Another in service is planned with the Ridgefield Fire Dept. for Sunday June 23 at Martin Park Beach. Zoomfloom and Wibit are set up. The zoomfloom is planned on opening June 23 when we are full staffed. Martin Park Beach is been running great.

All summer supplies ordered: first aid supplies, bathing suits, paddleboard, and kayak. Working on one paddleboat to be purchased.

Rentals at Barlow Pool are in place at Ridgefield Academy and Ridgefield High School (opening full time Saturday June 22).

Four new guards are needed to be hired to run the pool efficiently. Aquatics hope to do this in the next two weeks.



Swim Lesson we have 133 swimmers registered. New this year offering some privates and semi privates.

Annual Goals & Marketing Plans- Evie Bottali:

Membership sales in May exceeded those of May 2018. Monthly membership sales increased strongly while All-Inclusive also gained but at a slower pace.

Budget & Policy-Phil Kearns:

Mr. Kearns stated that the budget was covered under Ms. Cipolla's report, and that the Commission is happy that the Department has done so well for the year.

Special Services & Community Out Reach – Barbara Dobbin:

Department continues to do a great job with community events.

Strategic Plan

Mr. DiPinto will be getting in touch with the sub-committees over the next two months to set up meetings to discuss their areas of the Strategic Plan and the staff's goals. The sub-committees will be using the assessment template provided by the Strategic Planning Committee and a full summary will be brought to the Commission in the fall.

Old Business

Nothing to report at this time.

New Business

Nothing at this time.

With no further business, a motion to adjourn was made at 8:20pm by Barbara Dobbin and seconded by Evie Bottali.

Just a note that the next meeting is scheduled for July 23, 2019 at 7:30pm.

Minutes Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Evie Bottali, Secretary



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## RIDGEFIELD PARKS & RECREATION