



Town of Ridgefield Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 17, 2023 at 6:30 pm

Meeting held via Zoom

APPROVED

PRESENT: P. Kearns, B. Dobbin, D. Shofi, E. Bottali, P. Nichols, K. Hulber, 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 6:34pm.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Pete Nichols made a motion to approve the agenda. Seconded by Barbara Dobbin. Motion carried 5-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Barbara Dobbin to approve the September minutes. Seconded by David Shofi. Motion carried 5-0.

BUSINESS UPDATES

Chairperson's Report – Phil Kearns

Nothing new to report outside of the committee reports.

Director's Report – Dennis DiPinto

- **Project Updates:**
 1. Governor Park Courts Project: Surface paint went down today and lines will be painted next. No site release date from the contractor yet.
 2. RAC Barlow Mountain Pool Improvements: Phase 1 is nearly complete and includes the construction of a single restroom and new plexi glass in the observation area upstairs. Phase 2 is slated for summer 2024. Mr. Kearns requested a site visit which will be scheduled after the HVAC unit is operational around November 1.
 3. Barlow Mountain Pool Dehumidification: HVAC unit was installed on October 9 and is scheduled to be fully operational around November 1.
 4. RHS Courts: Courts were power washed, crack sealed, repainted, and have reopened.
 5. Rec Center RTU: Meeting this week with engineer and purchasing to start plans for replacement.
- **Meeting Attendance:**
 1. State of the schools' meetings are now complete. Bob will address during his report.



2. A site visit was held with the PRC Buildings & Grounds Committee at the Dog Park. Bob will report on that.
3. Attended Monthly Revenue Meeting and we are in good shape in terms of membership and revenue at this point.
4. Capital budget development for FY2024 is underway.
5. New Asst Supervisor of Member Services was hired to assist with the Rec Center's front desk operations.

Mr. Kearns asked if there were any remaining Capital items that are pending. Mr. Schneider confirmed the fencing at Ballard Park has not yet gone out for bids.

Financial Update – Eileen Cipolla

Ms. Cipolla provided the monthly financial report. Revenue and expenses are on-target - many are ahead of the projected budget. Due to a demand for more personal training staff, the number of instructors was increased from one to four. Fitness numbers are up. No concerns with expenses.

Assistant Director of Parks' Report – Bob Schneider

- SCOR tournament was canceled this fall.
- During the recent site visit to the dog park, some erosion issues were addressed, as well as concerns for access and seating. Bids for fencing at the dog park will go out soon. New signage was requested for overly aggressive dogs by some members of the public. Commission will consider suitable language.
- Skate Park asphalt received a seal coating/crack repairs.
- State of the schools' site visits were completed in order to review maintenance and discuss Park Maintenance access to courtyard areas during school hours.
- New benches are being installed on the Rec Center walking trail this week.
- Ballard Park was seeded and the Ridgefield Garden Club area received some seasonal maintenance.

Assistant Director of Program Operations' Report – Mary Knox

- Interviews are still underway for the Marketing/Information Coordinator position at the Rec Center.
- One of our Fall goals was to increase our preschool programming – two new programs added.
- Glow Zumba event is scheduled and lighting was purchased to use for other glow events throughout the year.
- Downtown Window Painting took place over the weekend. Credit was given to Megan Roche for managing this event for the community.
- Two pop-up events are scheduled this month at the Rec Center, including a floating pumpkin patch in the pool on October 29th & floating pumpkins on the pond on October 26th.
- Mr. Shofi asked if there are any programs that need a boost. Mary shared that programs targeting kids grades K-3 have received a more favorable response than some programs targeting older kids.



COMMITTEE REPORTS

Marketing & Promotions – Evie Bottali

Nothing new to report.

Membership – Kim Hulber

Waiting for past member survey information from P&R staff.

Aquatic & Programs – Barbara Dobbin

Nothing new to report.

Budget & Policy – Barbara Dobbin

Met to review Capital budget FY2024. There are a lot of new initiatives we're hoping to accomplish in the next five years.

Buildings & Grounds – David Shofi

- Looking forward to all of the improvements happening at Barlow, Governor Park and the Skate Park.
- Dog Park:
 - Members of the committee conducted a site visit to address some of the concerns a member of the public had shared. An email then followed with her appreciation for the work that was completed.
 - Mr. Nichols raised the question about the possibility of adding a handrail or additional benches to the dog park. Committee agreed this would require more discussion.
- Non-Native Plant Policy: Members of the committee attended the BOS regular meeting on October 11, and the revised policy that P&R created with the Conservation Commission was approved by the BOS. A copy of the new policy will be shared with the rest of the PRC.

Special Services & Community Outreach – Pete Nichols

Handicapped parking was requested at the Dog Park. Mr. DiPinto shared that this will be included as a line item in the FY2024 Capital budget.

Miscellaneous

Mr. Kearns would like to advertise for the open spot on the Commission.

With no further business, Pete Nichols moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:34pm. David Shofi seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

REMINDER: Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, November 14 at 6:30 pm via Zoom.