



UNAPPROVED

RIDGEFIELD PARKS & RECREATION

Minutes of the
Parks and Recreation Commission
Meeting

December 19, 2017

In Attendance:

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

Paul J. Roche, Director
Robin Matthews, Asst..Dir-Rec
Bob 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 7:40 p.m.

Recognition of Guests:
No guests to recognize.

Approval of Agenda:
The agenda as presented was approved.

Minutes:
Minutes from the November meeting were approved as presented.

Financial Status – Phil Kearns:
In Ms. Cipolla's absence, Mr. Kearns reported that the November revenue numbers made budget; however, overall we are still soft in revenue. Mr. Kearns also mentioned that it is still too early to report on the December numbers, but we are waiting for the results of the recent promotion to come in.

Chairman:
Mr. Kearns' report will be covered under Budget and Policy.

Director's Report- Paul Roche:
Mr. Roche mentioned that the recreation staff is working on getting our programs moving forward and that we are facing some tough competition in many areas.

- Meeting with the Building Committee for the locker room repairs. The committee is moving along in the right direction; however, still some concerns regarding costs. The committee looked at some low cost/high quality samples of proposed materials. The bids will be going out After the first of the year and the project is expected to begin in mid-February and run till the middle of June.
- Mr. Roche and Mr. Schneider have been working on the installation of cameras in Ballard Park. They both were very impressed with the system and feel it will help with the vandalism. This item was added to the capital budget. Since the cameras are currently on loan, Mr. Kearns suggested that the Director download some footage to share with the Board of Selectmen if needed.



- The Director mentioned that he had attended a Town wide meeting at the Leir Foundation regarding anti-bullying and other community topics.

Mr. Roche mentioned that personal training is going very well and we have hired two additional trainers. He also mentioned that birthday parties are soft, but the staff is working on some new themed party ideas.

Mr. Kearns questioned if there was any development regarding jurisdiction of the Town parks. Mr. Roche mentioned that that he and David Shofi had done some preliminary research regarding the jurisdiction of Town parks and that no conclusions were developed. Mr. Roche will meet with Mr. Kearns and Mr. Shofi next month to further work on this.

Assistant Director-Recreation- Robin Matthews:

Ms. Matthews reported on the following:

- Ms. Matthews and the staff are working on brainstorming some ideas in all department areas for new programs. A lengthy discussion ensued regarding possible reasons for the decline in program participation and ways to bring in more people.
- Personal training is going well along with group exercise classes and we have seen an increase in the Wellness Center. There was a brief discussion regarding the new pool inflatable and moving forward with the purchase.

Assistant Director-Parks – Mr. Schneider reported:

- Mr. Schneider is working on the Governor Park project with the installation of power for the press box.
- Working with the Town Engineer regarding the parking area near the bridge construction.
- Working on the sand issue at the golf driving range near Martin Park Beach.
- Crews are working on the fall clean up until the winter weather arrives.
- There were two accidents at the fountain this week; glass was broken and there was damage to the planters.
- Working on dates for the annual fields meeting.
- Mr. Schneider is also working with Highway Department on repairs of the curbs at the Venus Building.

Sub-Committee Reports:

Buildings & Grounds – David Thaxter

Mr. Thaxter mentioned again that he is very impressed with the architect and contractor for the Center's locker room project and that he is confident with their knowledge.

Aquatics & Programs –David Thaxter:

Mr. Thaxter mentioned that Ms. Dynia did a great deal of research on the new inflatable for the pool. All the contracts for the Barlow Mountain pool have been completed and signed.

Annual Goals & Marketing Plans- Evie Bottali:

Ms. Bottali reported that the November revenue and memberships sold increased versus last year. Strong sales of All Family and Wellness memberships drove the increase. However, Total year to date sales (July through November) are below those in 2016.

Mr. Kearns summarized for the Commission the plan for the renovation of the Recreation Center locker rooms. He said that work may begin in mid-February and that the sub-committee and staff should begin to plan ways of notifying the public of the renovations and possible inconveniences. It was suggested that the staff develop a story-board of the



damage with an explanation of the repairs and renovations help to explain the work that will be done. Ms. Bottali will set up a meeting in early January.

Mr. Kearns mentioned that the Town's Charter Revision committee was looking for comments from each department. Mr. Roche mentioned that the committee may have already met, but he will follow up on that and report to the Commission.

Budget & Policy-Phil Kearns:

Mr. Kearns presented to the Commission the proposed 2018-2019 Parks and Recreation Capital Budget. There were some questions regarding the replacement of the Scott's Ridge turf field and the pool resurfacing.

After a full review of the proposed 2018-2019 budget, the following motion was made by Barbara Dobbin:

“Move to accept the 2018-2019 Parks and Recreation Capital Budget.”

Mr. Thaxter seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

Special Services Issues – Barbara Dobbin:

Ms. Dobbin gave a summary on the Special Services fund and the Recreation Center locker room renovations expenses along with the modification to enhance the accessibility of the Wellness area.

After a discussion regarding the Recreation Center renovation, Ms. Dobbin made the following motion:

“The Parks and Recreation Commission hereby allocates \$40,000.00 from the Special Services fund for the renovation of the accessible changing and accessible shower areas within the Recreation Center Wellness Locker Rooms. This is part of the planned locker room water damage repairs and renovations.”

The motion was seconded by Phil Kearns and passed unanimously

Strategic Plan – Kim Hulber

In Ms. Carey's absence, Ms. Hulber reported that there were some questions regarding the Parks and Recreation's new Vision Statement. The committee will check on this; however, the Strategic plan should be rolled out shortly.

Old Business:

The Commission brought forward its changes to the proposed 2018 meeting date schedule.

The Commission made the following motion regarding the 2018 meeting dates:

“To hereby approve the 2018 Commission Meeting dates as amended.”

The motion was seconded by Barbara Dobbin and passed unanimously.



New Business

Mr. Kearns gave a summary on the history of the Friends of Ridgefield Parks and Recreation. Some of the current members of the Friends are planning to retire, and Mr. Kearns was looking for suggestions for replacements. Mr. Kearns stated that this is a great asset for Parks and Recreation Department and something he does not want to see end. He did mention he had spoken with a past Commissioner who may be interested, but wanted suggestions from the Commission to see if they had anyone they thought might be interested in serving. Ms. Hulber asked for a description of the Friends positions and member's responsibilities. Ms. Byrnes will send this information off to her. Mr. Kearns suggested a meeting with Ms. Hulber, Mr. Roche and himself to discuss the qualifications further.

A motion to adjourn at 9:10 p.m. was made by Evie Bottali and seconded by David Thaxter.

Minutes Approved: _____
Evie Bottali, Secretary