



UNAPPROVED
Minutes of the
Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting

March 25, 2020
Meeting held virtually

In Attendance:

Phil Kearns, Chair
Gina Carey
Barbara Dobbin, Vice Chair
Kim Hulber
Evie Bottali, Secretary

Dennis DiPinto, Director
Kathy Fassman, Marketing
Eileen Cipolla, Accountant
Jane Byrnes, Recording Secretary

These minutes are a general summary of the meeting and are not intended to be a verbatim transcription.

Meeting called to order by Chair at 6:40 p.m.

Recognition of Guests:

The Chairman introduced and welcomed Mr. Peter Nichols. Mr. Nichols gave a brief summary of his experience in the Town of Ridgefield. Later during the meeting, Mr. Christopher Kristofferson logged on.

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Kearns asked that Plant Blindness be added to the April agenda under old business.
The agenda as presented was approved.

Minutes:

Ms. Dobbin made a correction to the minutes of the February meeting. On page 2, under Special Services, should read: "Ms. Dobbin suggested the need to survey the environment for ADA needs."
The minutes as amended were approved.

Financial Status – Eileen Cipolla

Ms. Cipolla reported that revenue from February was down slightly due to decline in memberships and programs. A discussion ensued regarding the current financial situation and the department's needs going forward. Further discussion will be covered under the budget & policy section.

Chairman's Report

Mr. Kearns reported that he has been working with the aquatic & program sub-committee on resolving some pickleball issues.
Mr. Kearns read a letter he had received from David Thaxter regarding his position on the Commission.

Director's Report – Dennis DiPinto

Building/Grounds

- Bids on the family changing room renovations completed and a walk through was held. Work to begin soon.
- Looking at expansion on parking.
- Met with donor on the Spray Bay new flooring.

Financial

- Working with accountant on revenue and expense projections.
- Working with staff on program plans and future registrations.

Community

- Working with marketing to be sure community is informed and up-to-date on the department's status for registration for programs.



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- The Friends received a grant in the amount of \$10,000 from the Ridgefield Thrift Shop and a grant from the Discovery Center for \$5,000 for the pavilion. Grant requests continue.
- Attended Annual Fields Meeting 2/27/20.
- Worked with staff on pickleball challenges.

Staffing-Programs

- Met with Youth Program Staff to hire new child-sitting specialist (met early March).
- Worked with fitness staff on a new on-line class registration (discussed early March).
- Developed a Staff Working Remotely plan and met with all sections regarding the plan.
- Meeting via phone and e-mail with all supervisors for daily updates.

Questions

The Commission had some questions regarding the maintenance on both the Recreation Center pool and the Barlow Mountain pool. Mr. DiPinto stated that the maintenance department is checking these areas daily.

The Commission also asked if the department was working on plans for when the crisis is over.

Mr. DiPinto stated that the staff is currently working on projects for pushing out camp, swim lessons, summer programs, etc.

Mr. DiPinto stated that the Administrative staff members are currently working remotely.

Marketing and Programs – Kathy Fassman

In our continued support of community outreach, we have teamed up with Social Services. We are designing a flyer that will be emailed and put in the mailboxes of senior citizens letting them know that there are volunteers who will call to check in on them and go and buy groceries/medications for them.

Before the virus, we pulled all names of families who participated in Adventure Day Camp last year and invited them to come back in March to take advantage of the Early Bird Special.

We let people know that we have extended the Camp and Beach Early Bird Specials for the length of time that we are closed. We let members know that we will extend their memberships for the length of time that we are closed.

Our staff will be meeting to talk about how we should continue our communication in regards to financial issues and whether we should open a Zoom account to offer online classes to our members.

Assistant Director Parks – Dennis DiPinto (In Mr. Schneider's absence)

Mr. DiPinto reported that with the fair weather this winter, the crews were able to extend field and park cleanups.

The outdoor staff has put up signage around the Town's parks, fields, courts and playgrounds informing the public that these sites are closed. In some sites, locks and caution tape have also been set up.

There have been some groups playing lacrosse on the Tiger Hollow field and signage has been posted there as well.

The crews are currently on-call and ready to mobilize when needed.

Buildings & Grounds

Covered above.

Aquatics & Programs

Nothing to report at this time.



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Annual Goals & Marketing – Evie Bottali

Ms. Bottali reported that she and Ms. Fassman are currently working on a demographic study of membership which can be used to aide development and targeting of programs offered.

Mr. Kearns mentioned that following a six to twelve month trend would give the department a broader sense of the program needs of the members.

Budget & Policy - Phil Kearns

The accountant is currently working on several scenarios/outcome, each reviewing the impact on future revenue the longer the department is shut down.

Mr. Kearns will meet with budget & policy sub-committee next week to review potential future impacts. Discussion ensued regarding recouping expenses and current salaries.

The Commission questioned if the department would receive any emergency aid from the Town's insurance policy.

Special Services & Community Outreach - Barbara Dobbin

Ms. Fassman mentioned that the department is working on some children's activities for our Facebook followers; such as downloading a Ridgefield parks coloring book.

Strategic Plan – Gina Carey

Nothing at this time.

Old Business: Nothing at this time.

New Business: Nothing at this time.

With no further business, a motion to adjourn at 7:45pm was made by Gina Carey, seconded by Barbara Dobbin and unanimously passed.

Minutes Approved: _____
Evie Bottali, Secretary