

UNAPPROVED

**Minutes of the
Parks and Recreation Commission
Meeting**

November 15, 2016

In Attendance:

Phil Kearns, Chairman-Via Phone
David Shofi
Gina Carey
Evie Bottali, Commission Secty.
David Thaxter

Paul J. Roche, Director
Robin Matthews, Asst. Dir.

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

Meeting called to order by acting Chairwoman, Gina Carey at 7:30p.m.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda as presented was approved.

Recognition of Guests:

No guests to recognize.

Approval of the Minutes:

The minutes of the October meeting were approved as presented.

Financial Status:

In Ms. Cipolla's absence, Mr. Kearns reported that the October numbers were very positive: the revenue is on budget and expenses are ahead of last year to date. There was a discussion regarding both the karate and fencing programs revenue numbers. The department will continue to monitor these programs. Mr. Kearns mentioned that the Skate Park and birthday parties are doing well. The Commission stated that they will continue to watch the lap memberships as they are reporting some softness.

Mr. Kearns stated that overall, things look positive versus last year.

Mr. Shofi questioned when the department determines, based on financials, to cancel a program if the program is not making revenue. Mr. Roche gave a summary of our program criteria.

Ms. Bottali asked if the department had held additional events at the Skate Park to increase revenue. Mr. Roche stated that we have opened the Park up to both BMX bikes and scooters which has sparked interest. There was some discussion regarding safety and our policies.

Mr. Shofi asked if we had a business model for the future of the Skate Park. Mr. Roche summarized our current plan but said that we may want to revisit the plan as we haven't looked at it for several years.

Chairman:

Mr. Kearns stated that he will cover his report under Budget Sub-Committee's report.

Director's Report:

The Director reported he is working on the following:

Work continues on the Sturges Cabin and it is very impressive and will be a great asset to the Town. There was a brief discussion regarding the oversight and management of the rental of the cabin. Mr. Kearns mentioned that he is working with the department on developing some guidelines for the rental of the cabin.

Mr. Roche reported he is working with the Special Olympic committee to help with fund raising. Over the past several years the program has grown and they are in need of some items.

Mr. Roche reported that he is working with the staff to complete the capital budget and work has begun on the operating budget. There was a discussion regarding the locker room updates.

The Director mentioned that he had our sub-committee, staff and Social Services Director, join him for a tour of the Town facilities regarding the accessibility of these facilities. The sub-committee is currently working on our five-year plan for the small capital items.

David Thaxter mentioned how informative this tour had been.

Mr. Roche mentioned that the Family Fun Day was a great success and the staff did a great job with the event.

Assistant Director-Recreation:

Ms. Matthews reported that the Department still has an open position in our Aquatic section. Mr. Thaxter asked if there was any progress with the wage review and Town Hall. Ms. Matthews said yes, and there have been some adjustments to aquatics and camp.

Ms. Matthews also mentioned that there were over 300 people at our Family Fun Day event and that it was a great success.

Ms. Matthews reported that the Destination Wellness, a community event, had a low turnout this year. Ms. Matthews said that she will meet with the Chamber of Commerce to look at future options to help make the event popular again. The Commission discussed some the advantages of this event for Parks and Recreation.

Ms. Matthews mentioned that Max Robbins will be our intern for this spring. Max is an employee who has worked in our Adventure Camp and also works in our Recreation Station after school program.

Assistant Director-Parks:

In Mr. Schneider's absence Mr. Roche reported on the following:

The outdoor crews are currently working on the fall renovation of the athletic fields and with the good weather, they are on schedule.

A position has been made available through Town Hall to allow replacement of our opening. There was some discussion regarding the part-time summer staffing. Paul gave a quick synopsis of the hiring process.

Sub-Committee Reports:

Buildings & Grounds – David Thaxter

Mr. Thaxter stated that he had received an e-mail regarding the condition of the middle school softball field. Mr. Roche discussed in detail the e-mail and the work Mr. Schneider was scheduled to do. Mr. Roche mentioned that using the low bid vendor has created some challenges for our projects.

Mr. Thaxter mentioned that the Buildings & Grounds sub-committee met with Mr. Bob Alicea, President of Babe Ruth Baseball regarding Governor Park. Mr. Thaxter mentioned the following items:

The Commission shared preliminary plans for the Recreation Center's ten-year Master Plan. The group discussed the possibility of a softball field in Town and possibly on the Recreation Center site. It was also recommended that the Veterans Park site be looked at.

The Commission also discussed the lighting of Governor Park field and Mr. Alicea's recent e-mail regarding softball. It was decided that the sub-committee would meet again for further discussions with Mr. Alicea. The secretary will set up a meeting as soon as possible.

Aquatics & Programs –David Thaxter:

Mr. Thaxter reported that the department has two on-going challenges; staffing and monetary issues, which were covered under Ms. Matthews' report.

Annual Goals & Marketing Plans – Evie Bottali

Ms. Bottali reported that membership sales and revenue increased versus last year. Sales in all-inclusive and wellness drove the increases. Ms. Bottali reported that renewals were also strong this month.

Budget & Policy – Phil Kearns

Mr. Kearns reported that they are working on the capital budget and they are waiting for some final numbers to come in before it can be presented at the December Commission meeting for approval and vote. Mr. Kearns stated that they will be working on the operating budget and present it at the January meeting for final vote.

Special Services – Barbara Dobbin

No report at this time.

Strategic Plan – Gina Carey

Ms. Carey said that there has been some progress and the sub-committee will be meeting next week to regroup and to finalize the plan.

Old Business:

Nothing to report at this time.

New Business:

Ms. Carey asked that the Commission review the proposed meeting dates for 2017 and come to the December meeting with any changes and be prepared to vote.

A motion to adjourn was made by David Shofi and seconded by David Thaxter at 8:25pm.

*Minutes Approved: _____
Evie Bottali, Secretary

