

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL BY THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION.

The Parks and Recreation Commission held a regular meeting on Tuesday, February 9, 2015 in the conference room located at 3 Main Street in Newtown, CT.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ed Marks, at 6:00 pm.

Present: Edward Marks, Patrick Barczak, Vincent Yanni Jr., Maureen Crick Owen, PJ Yochum

Absent: Warren Spencer, Thomas DiNicola.

Staff Present: Amy Mangold, Carl Samuelson, RoseAnn Reggiano.

Public: Linda Hess, Newtown Soccer Club

Acceptance of Minutes:

Motion:

Commissioner PJ Yochum made a motion to approve Minutes from December 8, 2015 Commission Meeting. Commissioner Vincent Yanni, Jr. seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

Old Business:

Budget Update:

- Chairman Marks distributed the revised 2016-17 Capital Budget approved by Parks and Recreation Commission, less the Board of Selectmen \$20,000.000 reduction adopted on 2/1/16, is now \$202,000.00. The installation of electrical service and irrigation at Walnut Tree Field in the amount of \$25,000.00 was cut and the \$5,000.00 was added to the access control infrastructure.
- The need for another Parks Maintainer was presented to the Board of Selectmen on February 1, 2016. Assistant Director Carl Samuelson explained to the commission that he presented to the Board of Selectmen the need for another maintainer due to the continuing increase in the Parks Department responsibilities. He provided to the BOS the growing list of additional responsibilities. Director Amy Mangold noted that the Parks Department was severely understaffed in 2015, due to short term disabilities and long term disabilities. Now with a full operating staff it will be easier to truly evaluate the need for an additional maintainer. There was discussion on whether this position would be a full time maintainer or two part time maintainers. Mr. Samuelson suggested hiring two part time maintainers. The current full time maintainers are not earning as much as comparable positions in surrounding towns; like Danbury, Brookfield and Beacon Falls to name a few. In the last year The Parks Department has lost 3 very good maintainers to these towns. The current Parks staff counts on snow removal for overtime to supplement their incomes. It would be unfeasible to the current staff to hire another full time maintainer that could potentially take away from overtime hours. The benefits of hiring 1 to 2 part time maintainers would be: they would not be eligible for overtime, so this would help protect the number of potential overtime hours for the current staff ; and it would be an opportunity to train an employee for a potential job opportunity in a full time position.

- Mr. Samuelson suggested that security funding be preserved in the budget as a priority. Vandalism continues to be a problem at all the parks especially Treadwell Park, where there has been \$25,000.00 worth of damage. There are security cameras set up, but not very modern and hard to detect details.
- At the Board of Selectmen meeting, Mr. Samuelson was asked about pesticide applications. Mr. Samuelson explained to the commission the ongoing studies that are being done across the country regarding field thresholds and hardness of playing fields. Those products containing neonicotinoids are being gradually eliminated to address water course and pollinator concerns.
- Mr. Barczak suggested that perhaps using surcharge to cover some items that were not covered by budget, for example: Install electrical service and irrigation at Walnut Tree Field; Walk behind beach groomer; Gates at Lillinonah and Orchard Hill; Watertown Field 2 renovation; or Skate Park maintenance and expansion.
- Ms. Mangold stated that the next step of the budget is the approval of the Board of Finance.

Director's Report:

Amy Mangold, Director of Parks and Recreation:

- Ms. Mangold spoke with Mr. Raymond Hoesten, President of Lake Zoar Authority and the Lake Authority regarding renting boat slips. The Lake Authority will be renting two boat slips at Eichler's Cove, at full price. Parks and Recreation has added 6 boat slips for 2016 summer, so this should not have an impact on returning and/or new boat slip renters. Alpine Drive Park is a more desirable location for the Lake Authority; however, the town and area is not yet equipped to rent to the Lake Zoar Authority.
- Ms. Mangold and Mr. Samuelson have scheduled a meeting to meet with Rob Sibley, Deputy Director of Planning & Land Use, regarding to future of Alpine Drive Park.
- Ms. Mangold attended the BOS, BOF and Legislative Council meetings to present special appropriations for the reconstruction of driveways at Dickinson Park and Eichler's Cove. Both projects were approved for bonding.
- The Lion's Club is scheduled to have a Work Day on June 11, 2016, at Orchard Hill.

RoseAnn Reggiano, Assistant Director of Recreation:

- A Garden Party is scheduled for May 1, 2016, at the Victory Garden. Ms. Reggiano is working with Harvey Pesin, Victory Garden Manager for this event. Ms. Reggiano is looking for volunteers from possibly the Girl/Boy Scouts.
- Senior Prom for seniors is scheduled for May 20, 2016, from 4-8pm at Nunnwauk Meadows, Newtown. This event is being sponsored by Newtown Parks and Recreation, Senior Center, Ben's Bells and Newtown Youth and Family Services. The theme will be *Black and White*.
- Calista Giroux from Girl Scout Troop 51170 is looking to earn her Gold Award. Ms. Giroux needs to complete 80 hours of community service hours and in order to obtain this and has offered to run a Theatrical Program through Parks and Recreation, called *Kid Prov Improv*.
- The ice skating party was held on February 6, 2016 at Dickinson Park and was a huge success. There were approximately 100 people in attendance. The Party was sponsored by Parks and Recreation, Ben's Bells, Kitty Corner, and Northshore Animal.
- Ms. Reggiano continues to prepare for summer 2016: hiring summer staff, organizing camps and summer programs.
- Ms. Reggiano discussed the poor condition of lane lines at the High School pool. Mr. Samuelson suggested that we take a look at Treadwell pool lines and possibly give them to the High School Pool.

Carl Samuelson, Assistant Director of Parks:

- With relatively little snow the staff has been able to keep working outdoors this past month.
- The skating rink has mostly melted with above average temperatures, however will attempt to build ice as the weather cools down again.
- The pool house heating system has been repaired and the lightning detection vandalism was repaired. Unfortunately the Musco panel that controls Tilson Field was also vandalized. Still waiting for damage estimates. Some of the activity was caught on camera.
- The boat ramp gate at Lake Lillinonah was vandalized, which has since been repaired.
- Continued to remove campus brush and dead wood from Fairfield Hills Campus.
- The second Wintergreen application was applied at Oakview.
- New docks for Eichler's Cove have been pre fit and anchors made for new dock sections. Lightning detection sensors have been removed for the season.
- Some of the infield work on the NHS baseball field was completed and only a few strips of sod remain to be place in the spring.
- Mr. Samuelson stated that there have been some complaints about the lack of lighting at the parks. When the lights go off, it gets very dark. Mr. Samuelson is looking into possibly keeping 2 lights on at each park.

Chairman's Report:

- Mr. Marks talked about the upcoming Community Center Meetings dates and times. Mr. Marks attended a Community Center Meeting and shared with the commission some of the concepts the Community Center Commission have come up with and the public feedback that occurred at the meeting.
- There was a brief discussion regarding the replacement of the score board at the Newtown High School pool, which will be discussed again at the next Parks and Recreation Commission meeting.

Correspondence:

- Mr. Marks stated that Gregg Simon, NHS Athletic Director had said that his life has changed since Carl Samuelson started Parks and Recreation, because he is doing a terrific job, which is making his life easier.

Motion:

Commissioner Vincent Yanni, Jr. made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 pm. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Patrick Barczak, which was carried unanimously.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 8, 2016 at 6:00 pm at 3 Main Street, Newtown, CT in the conference room.

Submitted, Gabriella Chernoff, clerk