

**Minutes of the
Parks and Recreation Commission
Meeting
April 27, 2011**

In Attendance:

Barbara Dobbin, Chairman
Phil Kearns, Vice Chairman
Evie Bottali
Jon Chase
David Thaxter
Gina Carey

Paul J. Roche, Director

Robert Schneider, Asst. Director
Robin Matthews, Asst. Director
Eileen Cipolla, Accountant
Jane Byrnes, Rec'd Secty.

Meeting called to order by the Chairman at 7:35p.m.

Approval of Agenda

There was an addition to the agenda under New Business; add item (a) Commission Elections. The agenda as amended was approved.

Minutes:

The minutes as submitted were approved.

Financial Status

Report/Budget Summary

Ms. Cipolla stated that the Town's public budget hearing is scheduled for May 2, 2011 at 7:30pm at the Playhouse. The Commission was asked to attend, and Mr. Roche stated that he will be there to answer any questions the public may have regarding the Parks and Rec budget. Ms. Cipolla reported that revenue is down to date; however the Department has frozen some items and therefore, has had savings in expenses. Ms. Cipolla stated that she had reviewed the April membership numbers and they seem to be coming in as projected. Ms. Cipolla also reported that athletic fields, Barlow Mountain rentals and Martin Park Beach revenue numbers should also meet budget.

Chairwoman's Report

The Chairwoman had no report at this time.

Director's Report:

Mr. Roche mentioned that the Department currently has a few open positions and he has been interviewing candidates for these positions. There was some discussion regarding the effect this will have on the daily operations.

Mr. Roche reported that he is working on the following projects:

- 911Memorial
The Director is working with the 911 Memorial sub-committee on fundraising for the project. The Director mentioned that the sub-committee has received over \$38,000 in donations to-date.
- Ciuccoli Field
The Ciuccoli Field renovation project is going well. Fundraising efforts continue to be successful. The crews have installed new sod, a new scoreboard has been installed, new bleachers and construction continues on the concession stand. Mr. Roche invited the Commissioners to visit the site.

- Skate Park
The Director stated that he is meeting with the Supervisor weekly to review budget and expenses. To-date, the Park seems to be meeting its projected budget.
- Spray Bay
The Director reported that the Spray Bay proposed project had been rejected by the Board of Finance at the budget deliberations. The Commission discussed options suggested by the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance to raise most of the funding and possibly in the future bring the project back for review. The Commission was very supportive of this project and they would like to review alternative ideas and possibilities. The Commission discussed the importance of the Spray Bay as an extension of the all accessible playground. Mr. Chase mentioned that the Commission needs to be realistic with the projects we bring to the Town Boards. Ms. Carey suggested that as the Commission and Department move forward with its Long Range Plan, there may be a need to address and consider these goals and objectives.
- CHIRP Concerts
Mr. Roche reported that he has met with Ms. Manners regarding the 2011 CHIRP concert season. Ms. Manners has 21 concerts scheduled for this year. There was some discussion regarding Parks and Recreation's role with staffing of these events.
- Outdoor Fitness Garden
Mr. Roche mentioned that the Fitness Garden should be ready for the opening ceremony in early May. The equipment was installed last fall and we are waiting for the flooring to be installed. Mr. Roche invited the Commission to the ceremony.

Due to some time limits, the Chairwoman requested that New Business be moved up on the agenda.

Mr. Roche opened the floor for nominations for a new slate of officers.

The Commission nominated for Ms. Barbara Dobbin as Commission Chairwoman, Ms. Gina Carey for Vice Chairwoman and Mr. Tinker for Commission Secretary. The floor was opened for discussion; hearing no objections or changes; *"The nomination was seconded and the slate of new officers was passed unanimously."*

The Parks and Recreation Commission officers are:

Barbara Dobbin, Chairwoman
Gina Carey, Vice Chair
Wayne Tinker, Secretary

Director Report Continued:

- Mr. Roche reported that he had met with the Parisi family to present them with a gift certificate for Natalie who won the CPRA art award.
- Mr. Roche also mentioned that he had been part of the Special Olympics program to choose candidates to attend the World Games to be held this summer.

Assistant Director-Recreation:

Ms. Matthews reported on the following:

- Ms. Matthews reported that she has been meeting with the summer camp senior supervisor to review the upcoming camp season. Ms. Matthews has hired staff, discussed programs and trips and will be tying up loose ends this

week. Ms. Matthews mentioned that she is confident that the supervisor and the program will run smoothly during this transition.

- The Assistant Director has also been interviewing for the current Youth Supervisor's position and she stated that a candidate has accepted the position.
- Ms. Matthews has been meeting with her staff regarding the marketing strategic plan and reviewing department budgets.

Mr. Roche thanked Ms. Matthews for doing a great job filling the staffing void and making the transition easy.

Assistant Director-Parks

Mr. Schneider reported that he is working on the following:

- Mr. Schneider reported that he has received a park rental fee from the Run Like A Mother event and he will be meeting with representatives from the TriRidgefield on Friday to discuss their rental fees. The Commission reinforced its support for the rental fees.
- The Assistant Director mentioned that he is working with the high school Athletic Director on the summer camp program. Mr. Schneider also mentioned that they are working on additional rentals for the Tiger Hollow facility.
- Mr. Schneider stated that the recycling initiative at the ball fields has begun and he is working on a schedule for the weekends.
- The Fountain cover has been removed and the Fountain is running smoothly. There will be some major cover repairs that need to be done and Mr. Schneider has forwarded the estimates to Town Hall for review.
- Mr. Schneider and the crews are busy finishing the Outdoor Fitness Garden, getting the surface complete before the Grand Opening Ceremony in early May.
- Mr. Schneider stated that the Recreation Center will be hosting the Town Truck event on Saturday at 10am. The Department will have "big trucks" for the public to view along with a fire truck.
- The Department did some major cleanup at the elementary schools and did some seeding at Ballard Park during the spring break.

Mr. Schneider mentioned that due to current State fertilizing regulations that over time, the public will notice differences between the grass qualities of the elementary school athletic fields versus the Town park properties.

Ms. Dobbin had some questions regarding the upcoming Annual Firemen's Carnival. Mr. Schneider assured the Commission that the same agreement as last year is in place again for this year.

Sub-Committee Reports:

Buildings and Grounds- Mr. Tinker

In Mr. Tinker's absence, Mr. Roche reported that the Ridgefield Basketball Association would like to meet with the sub-committee regarding the Yanity Gym and Rec Center rental fees. Mr. Roche will touch base with Mr. Tinker to set up a meeting.

Programs & Long Range Planning-Evie Bottali:

Membership Report

Ms. Bottali reported that the 2011-2012 Strategic Plan is about two-thirds complete. Ms. Bottali stated that she will have the recommendation ready to submit to the Commission at the May meeting. Upon receipt of the Plan, Ms. Bottali asked that the Commission give feedback as soon as possible.

Ms. Bottali reported that both recreation and lap membership were soft; however year to date numbers are high. Ms. Bottali reported that she checked briefly the April numbers and they seemed very positive.

Budget & Policy-Phil Kearns:

Mr. Kearns mentioned that it was a grueling budget process this time and that there were mixed feelings regarding the proposed Spray Bay. The Commission mentioned the Spray Bay is a bridge between the all accessible playground and the zero entry pool .

ADA Issues – Gina Carey:

Ms. Carey stated that there were no new issues at this time.

Aquatics-David Thaxter

Ms. Matthews mentioned that the Town had hired an Aquatic Coordinator.

Old Business

No current issues.

New Business

Covered above.

Meeting adjourned 8:25pm

Minutes Approved: _____
Wayne H. Tinker, Secretary

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