

**Minutes of the
Parks and Recreation Commission**
January 19, 2010

In Attendance:

Barbara Dobbin, Chairwoman

Phil Kearns, Vice Chairman

Evie Bottali

Wayne Tinker, Secretary

Gina Carey

David Thaxter

Jon Chase

Paul J. Roche, Director

Robin Matthews, Asst. Director

Eileen Cipolla, Accountant

Robert Schneider, Asst. Director

Jane Byrnes, Comm. Secty.

Meeting called to order by the Chairwoman at 7:00 p.m.

Approval of Agenda:

The Chairwoman asked that "Budget & Policy Sub-Committee" report be moved up on the agenda and be placed under "Financial Status". The agenda as amended was approved.

Minutes:

The minutes as distributed were approved.

Financial Status

Report/Budget Summary

Ms. Cipolla reported that budget revenue is down slightly; however, expense savings is up. A lengthy discussion ensued regarding projected year-end revenue and expense numbers. The Accountant will follow-up with year-end forecasts for the next meeting.

Budget & Policy-Phil Kearns:

Ms. Dobbin and the Commission thanked the sub-committee for its hard work in developing the 2010-2011 capital and operating budgets.

Mr. Kearns summarized for the Commission the proposed P&R Operating Budget for 2010-2011. The Commission had several questions regarding expenses and future revenue figures. Mr. Kearns reviewed his in-depth presentation for the Commission on the following:

- P&R Trended Revenue
- Revenue Shortfalls Vs Budget
- Operating Budget Year to Date
- P&R Revenue Sources
- P&R Focus Going Forward
- Non-Resident Charges
- On-Going Initiatives

The Commission will summarize this presentation for the Board of Finance members at the meeting later this evening. After discussions; Mr. Thaxter made the following motion:

“**RESOLVE**, to accept the 2010-2011 Operating Budget, pending final personnel numbers from the Town’s Controller, as submitted by the P&R Commission Budget Sub-Committee for presentation to the Board of Selectmen.”

The motion was seconded by Gina Carey and passed unanimously. The Chairwoman reiterated what a fabulous job the Sub-Committee did on the preparation of this year’s budget. Mr. Roche mentioned that the staff worked hard to carefully look at expenses.

Chairwoman’s Report:

Ms. Dobbin updated the Commission on a recent Sturges Park development. Ms. Dobbin stated that there had been a request that P&R no longer use millings for the driveway and parking lot maintenance. P&R agreed to substitute ¾ inch processed stone/Item Four in place of millings for maintenance on the parking lot and driveway. Ms. Dobbin will continue to update the Commission as she is notified.

Guests:

Kevin Santoro, 56 Remington Road, Ridgefield, CT
The Commission welcomed Mr. Santoro.

Director’s Report:

Mr. Roche presented, according to policy, a list of the Director’s Current Complimentary Memberships for the Commission’s review. There were no objections with the list presented.

Mr. Roche reported he is working on the following items:

- Mr. Roche has been working with the CT Legislature on several issues, some include: supporting legislation that protects Integrated Pest Management, legislation that strengthens background checks and legislation that supports encouraging opportunities for recreation and wellness that will help combat the obesity crisis.
- Mr. Roche is also working with the Friends of Barlow Mt. Pool on fundraising for the pool renovations. To-date the committee has received \$54,000 in pledges. The Commission is looking for Town support for additional funding. The pool will need the following: repairs/replacing the pool liner, repairs to the filter and other maintenance issues.
- The Director is also working on making all P&R facilities/parks ADA accessible. He is working the P&R Sub-Committee, Social Services and the Commission for the Disabled to develop a future Vision Plan. The Director mentioned “that making the Town facilities all accessible will benefit all”.
- Mr. Roche reported that Barbara Dobbin had met with the 911 Memorial Committee on the placement of the 911 Memorial near the Rec Center facility. The Commission discussed placement and care of

the site. The Commission was in agreement with the project and questioned whether the local families had been involved with the project. Ms. Dobbin stated that the 911 Committee had handled all the details of the project. In moving forward, Ms. Dobbin gave the Commission's approval to the Committee to continue working with the landscape architect.

Assistant Director-Recreation:

Ms. Matthews thanked the Commission for its continuing support. Ms. Matthews stated that she has been working with the staff on updating the Department's Action Plan and that they are keeping a close eye on memberships, program and future revenue issues.

Membership Report

The Assistant Director reported that memberships are still down; however as she has mentioned in the past, we are seeing a leveling of the numbers.

Assistant Director-Parks:

Mr. Schneider reported on the following:

- The outside crews are busy with winter indoor projects such as painting the Administrative Offices at the Rec Center and also painting the inside of the Parks garage.
- Mr. Schneider reported that the Department was given a used MR700 truck from the Highway Department to be used for plowing and sanding of the schools.
- Mr. Schneider held an Athletic Fields Sub-Committee meeting on the 14th; however, there was very little turn out from the members.
- The Assistant Director is working on bids for the new truck.
- The Annual Athletic Fields Agreement has been signed by P&R and the Town's Sports Groups. P&R is waiting for the Board of Education to review and sign-off on the updated Agreement.
- Mr. Schneider reported that he had sent out reminders (copy attached) to those Sports Groups who were delinquent in payments and other field related issues. The reminder requested that the Sports Group contact Bob Schneider to set up a meeting to discuss its issues prior to the Annual Fields Meeting. Mr. Schneider mentioned that Youth La Crosse and the Rebels had issues that needed to be resolved.

Mr. Kearns asked if the post had been repaired at Sturges Park, Mr. Schneider answered that the post had been repaired.

Sub-Committee Reports:

Buildings and Grounds- Mr. Tinker/Mr. Kearns

Covered above under Assistant Director's report.

Programs & Long Range Planning-Evie Bottali

Ms. Bottali stated that she has been working with the P&R staff investigating membership re-packaging options. Ms. Bottali reported that a draft is currently being

developed by the staff and sub-committee. The goal is to gain an understanding of Parks & Rec revenue (from memberships and programs) and memberships trends in order to identify/determine if pricing/packaging should be modified or remain as currently configured. Ms. Bottali stated that a preliminary report should be ready to be presented at the May Commission meeting.

ADA-Gina Carey

Covered above under Director's report.

Aquatics-David Thaxter

Mr. Thaxter reported that Collene Gregory had submitted the Ridgefield Parks and Recreation a list of those who desire to host the Connecticut Lifeguard Competition. The competition would be held at Martin Park Beach this summer. Ms. Gregory will not know the results until late February. The only concern may be the closing of the beach during the time of the competition. The Commission was supportive of the competition.

Old Business

No current issues

New Business

No current issues.

Mr. Kearns summarized at length, his presentation for the Board of Finance regarding P&R 2010-2011 Budget.

The Commission adjourned at 8:00pm to join the Board of Finance meeting.

Minutes Approved: _____
Wayne H. Tinker, Secretary

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