

**Minutes of the
Parks and Recreation Commission**
July 28, 2009

In Attendance:

Barbara Dobbin, Chairwoman
Phil Kearns, Vice Chairman
Wayne Tinker, Secretary
Gina Carey
Evie Bottali

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

Meeting called to order by the Chairwoman at 8:03 p.m.

Approval of Agenda & Minutes:

The agenda and minutes were approved as submitted.

Chairwoman's Report:

Sturges Park

Ms. Dobbin reported that the Sturges Park issue has not yet been finalized. There are still some outstanding questions regarding the property line.

Field Criteria

Ms. Dobbin also reported that she, along with the Town's Attorney and some members of the Board of Selectmen, had received an e-mail from Bob Jewell representing the Rebels Girls Softball Association questioning the P&R Field Use Criteria. Ms. Dobbin, Mr. Roche and Mr. Kearns will meet with Mr. Jewell later this week.

Director's Report:

Richardson Park

Mr. Roche reported that the Friends of Parks and Recreation had received a check in the amount of \$25,000 from the Anne E. Richardson Foundation for a Richardson Park grant request. The funds will be used to purchase specimen replacement trees. Mr. Roche gave a summary of the grant's requirements. The Commission discussed the tree selection and future plans for the Park.

Yanity Gymnasium

Mr. Roche reported that Ron Lovalvo, Supervisor of the Yanity Gym facility had received donated funds from the Ridgefield Basketball Association to replace the gym's scoreboards. Miller Electric and Al Dotsun have agreed to donate their time for the installation.

Skate Park

The Director reported that construction is coming along as planned for the new Skate Park. The new site looks great and it should be a good location. The Park has been temporarily moved to the Veterans Park School Market Street parking area. Mr. Roche reported that attendance is “light”. Mr. Kearns asked for the cost of the new apparatuses. Mr. Roche stated between \$2,000-\$5,000. The Commission discussed various avenues for fundraising such as: P&R budget, Grants, community involvement - church and youth groups. Mr. Kearns also suggested that the Department should promote the Park during its grand opening activities.

Sturges Park

The Director discussed and reviewed plans with the Commission regarding the placement of the electricity pole at Sturges Park. A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the issue and the development of a permanent site map.

Barlow Mountain Pool

Ms. Collene Gregory and members of the Ridgefield Aquatic Club visited a pool in West Hempstead, New York to review pool liners. The group was not fully satisfied with the product and will continue to research options for pool liners for the Barlow Mountain pool.

Financial Status

Report/Budget Summary

In Ms. Cipolla’s absence, Mr. Roche summarized for the Commission the year-to-date revenue comparison report.

A discussion took place regarding the revenue numbers. The Commission was happy with the numbers and felt that the staff has shown great efforts in keeping expenses down. Ms. Dobbin mentioned that the staff should be congratulated.

Ms. Bottali did have a question regarding the reported numbers. After further review, Mr. Roche will check with the Accountant and report back to the Commission.

Mr. Kearns asked Mr. Roche the status of the condemned outdoor maintenance Mack truck. Mr. Roche reported that the Town is planning to sell the truck and use the funds to repair the other truck.

The Commission discussed the Department’s future vehicle budget requests.

Assistant Director-Recreation:

Ms. Matthews reported:

- Ms. Matthews reported that summer camp and Martin Park Beach enrollment numbers are down, which may be due to rainy summer weather and current economic issues. Ms. Matthews stated that she felt that people are being cautious with camp sign-ups and that they are not enrolling for additional weeks.
- Ms. Matthews stated that the Department has seen an increase in on-line registration in aquatics, youth programs and specialty camps.

Assistant Director-Parks:

Mr. Schneider was not present to give his report; however, Mr. Roche stated that due to wet weather conditions, the crews have been busy with mowing.

Sub-Committee Reports:

Programs & Long Range Planning-Evie Bottali

Ms. Bottali reported that Mr. Roche has, from time to time received requests regarding a-la-carte memberships. Ms. Bottali stated that the sub-committee is suggesting that if a person has a medical condition, (with doctor's note) and is requesting use of the whirlpool, sauna, pool or wellness center, they will have the ability to purchase a three month membership card (at the third of the price of a full membership) similar to that of the "home for the holidays or summer college pass." The Commission requested that this be put into the P&R policy manual.

Budget & Policy-Phil Kearns:

Mr. Kearns reported that he had presented to the Board of Selectmen, the P&R Maintenance Staff Reduction Impact plan. Mr. Kearns stated that the report was not as well received as he had expected. Much discussion ensued regarding future approaches the Commission will take when presenting issues to the BOS.

Ms. Dobbin summarized for the Commission a meeting she had attended regarding the Planning and Zoning Commission's 2010 Plan of Conservation and Development.

Buildings and Grounds- Mr. Tinker

No report at this time.

ADA-Gina Carey

No report at this time.

Aquatics-David Thaxter

No report at this time.

Old Business

No report at this time.

With no further business, the Commission adjourned at 8:51 pm.

Minutes Approved: _____
Wayne H. Tinker, Secretary

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