

Park and Recreation Commission
Minutes of the Meeting
April 18th, 2018

Meeting called to order: 7:30 pm.

Commissioners in Attendance: George Caye, Al Larson, Renee Powell, Mindy Lewis, Jeff Trachtenberg, Bill Nowak. Toby Lewis, Katie Graham, Dan Rezende

Also in Attendance: Ray Favreau and John Caldwell and Shawn Jacobaccio (SW Rotary Club)

Al wanted to let everyone know about the Rotary Club Auction that was held on April 7th. The Rotary club has donated nearly \$1million to the Town Parks and Rec.

Approval of Minutes: Motion made and seconded to approve the March minutes. Passed unanimously.

Public Input: Shawn Jacobaccio wanted to know what can be done to improve the Linear Park. He read an article about the dedication on September 14, 1998. This is the 20 year anniversary of the park. He would like to see some benches and picnic tables put up and see what can be done to improve the boat launch. John said the parks crew will install cement benches in the area. Ray will speak with Jeff Folger on what can be done with the boat launch.

Ray asked that we suspend the order of the meeting to address 9.1 4th R update. Motion made to suspend order of the meeting. This was seconded and voted on and passed unanimously.

4th R Update: The 4th R program is at capacity right now with nearly 350 kids in the program and close to 100 on the waitlist. The Rec. Dept. has been asked to just take the 100 kids on the waitlist but Ray is not willing to do this for the following two reasons.

- 1) Spacing: Limited additional appropriate space available at the schools to accommodate additional kids.
- 2) Staffing: We follow the state standards as much as we are able to in the schools. The State requires a 10 to 1 ratio of kids to staff. Taking on the extras kids means taking on extra staff to comply with state regulations. If a negative situation occurred because of a larger group without proper supervision this could present a major liability issue and Ray is not willing to put the participants or the Town in jeopardy. They have been trying to increase staff and have not been able to get qualified applicants. The hours are hard to staff because it's a 2 hour shift in the morning and two hours in the afternoon. Additionally, staff is transient – they come and go as their school schedules and involvement changes, and the process of replacing employees is the first challenge to meet the status quo before we can even consider expanding staff. When this program started 11 years ago, there were 100 kids enrolled. Now the potential is 450. This program has been well run which is why it is so popular. Ray is asking PARC to support what the Parks & Rec. Dept. is trying to do. He and the staff are meeting next week with the Superintendent and the Town Manager to try find a solution to the problems. One option may be to get a private building where there is no local day care (PRS district for example).

- 3) Ray cautioned PARC members not to get involved in the social media. If you would like to make a comment please do so and state that it is as a private citizen and not as a PARC member.

Commission Expectations: The Town Council will be evaluating all the Boards and Commissions. They are asking that we attend all meeting and not miss more than three consecutive meetings. This could be grounds for removal from PARC. We are trying to change are members from 10 members and two alternate to 8 and 4 but the Town Council is putting off any changes to any Boards and Commissions at this time.

Master Plan Revision: Ray put a revised Master Plan copy on the screen dated 10-11-17. He will email a copy to all members to review. The plan is to get this fast tracked so we can get a new PARC Master Plan in place. This will allow us to get grant money for projects. Toby asked that we all review the 10-11-17 Master Plan and be ready to tackle this at our next meeting. We will break up into small groups and try and get sections of the plan completed.

Report of Council Liaison: None

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Report of Parks and Rec. Dir.: Ray passed out a flyer about “Sustainable CT” Kick Off on April 30th, 2018 from 7-9 pm in the Town Hall Chambers. All Board and Commission members are urged to attend as they will be expected to participate in the process on areas pertinent to parks & recreation.

John Caldwell also had a flyer to pass out. Distinctive Tree Care is the contractor South Windsor uses for all their tree service that can’t be handled in-house. They have purchased new equipment and will be doing a demo on the Priest Farm. There are about 15 to 20 invasive and rotting trees that need to be removed. Initial cost for the work was going to be around \$12,000. Distinctive Tree is going to do a Demo Day on Thursday May 3rd, 2018 from 11-2 to remove the trees from the property at no cost to the town. They will be inviting other towns to see how their new equipment works. Thanks to John for helping to put this together and at a great savings to the town.

SWWWW: Ginny Hole will be receiving the Eugene Pollicelli award next month for all her work with the group. SWWWW has been a great asset to the town and Ginny was the person who started this subcommittee of PARC.

Other: Collins Sledding hill has been renamed the Porter Collins Hill.

Meeting adjourned 9:05 pm

Next Meeting: 7:30pm May 9th, 2018

Respectfully Submitted

George S. Caye