

Park and Recreation Commission

Minutes of the Meeting

February 9, 2022

Meeting called to order: 7:30pm.

Commissioners in Attendance: George Caye, Genevieve Coursey, James Hennessey, Michael Kelly, Kristen Kozikowski, Toby Lewis, Renee Powell, and Miguel Proano

Also in Attendance: Molly Keays, John Caldwell, Kerry Macchi, and Erica Evans

Approval of Minutes: Motion made by Renee Powell and seconded by Miguel Proano to approve the January 12, 2022 minutes. Passed unanimously.

Public Input: None present

Report of Council Liaison: Councilor Evans provided an update on the Park and Recreation Facility Planning and Implementation Committee. She stated that there are six out of seven spots filled, and the last spot has a potential member that will most likely fill the spot. She hopes that they can get the process going and start the meetings soon.

Report of the B of E Liaison: None due to the absence of the liaison.

OSTF: George Caye reported that there was no meeting this month.

Report of Parks and Rec. Director: Molly Keays, Director of Parks and Recreation, provided updates on the following:

- All public facilities still have a mask requirement in place, but the mask mandate for small businesses has been lifted as of today, 2/9/22. We have no intentions of changing any of the requirements within our department at this time.
- The indoor sports rules will continue for the Winter, and the Springs sports rules are anticipated to come out soon.
- There has been some progress with the Cross Town Trail over the last month. Eversource is reviewing the proposed trail, and are looking at the environmental, engineering, and construction perspectives. They are looking at some modifications of the trail because there are several privately owned parcels located along the right of way. The next steps will include contacting all the owners of those parcels, and get written permission from them to have the trail go through their properties. Without that, we will have to relocate portions of the trail.
- Rye Street Park update: Originally, we were going to be asking for additional funds from Capital to finish part of the Pickleball/Dek hockey project, but now have to stick to our original budget, as the funds were not approved. John has been working with the contractors, and have been able to get decent quotes from them. We will also be looking for sponsorships for the lighting or the boards.
- Pickleball is growing rapidly, and we have opened up our gym space for some nights during the week and on Sundays.
- We are planning for our Spring and Summer seasons and the brochure is in the planning process as well. We are looking forward to being back in residents' mailboxes this year!

John Caldwell, Superintendent of Parks, provided updates on the following:

- The Parks department is holding interviews this week for two open positions within the department for Maintainer I positions.
- The crew is working on updating some of the signs around town to have a more consistent look. These include signs for the John J. Mitchell Fairgrounds, Avery Street Community Gardens, and Porters Hill.
- The crew has been working with Street Services for snow removal for all the storms that we have been having.
- The Margaret Drive tennis courts have been officially removed.

Other Business: Mr. Lewis wanted to know if Pickleball would eventually be a revenue source for the department. Ms. Keays said that yes, we are making a small revenue right now based on the facility rental, but that is not substantial. The goal is to offer leagues and more playing time when the outdoor courts are finished.

Mr. Lewis also asked if it was appropriate for the commission to get a gift card for Cheryl Gerber, whom Molly shared earlier in the meeting, is retiring. The commission agreed.

Mr. Lewis also wanted to discuss the meeting time, and the possibly making “winter hours” and “summer hours”. It was decided to talk about it at a future meeting, maybe when we vote for appointments in September.

SWW&WW: Nothing to report.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55pm – motion made by George Caye and seconded by Mike Kelly- passed unanimously.

Next Meeting: March 9, 2022

Respectfully Submitted – Kerry Macchi, Administrative Secretary