

**Stonington Recreation Commission Meeting
Monday, February 28, 2022 at 6:00 PM
SPS District Office – Board Room
40 Field Street, Pawcatuck**

Meeting Minutes

Present: Chairman C. Michael Crowley & Vice-Chair Frank Prachniak
Commissioners Joe McKernan, Jennifer Norcross, Larry Theadore & Stephanie Hartell
Alternate Ben Kepple
Recreation Administrator Richard Ward
Recreation Program Coordinator Pete Christina
Director of Human Services Leanne Theodore

Absent: Commissioner Jeff Moore

I. Call to Order – Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Crowley called the meeting to order at 6:01 P.M.

II. Publics' Opportunity to Address the Commission

III. Secretary's Report

a. Approval of minutes from Jan 2021 Commission meeting

A motion was made by Commissioner Theadore to approve the Regular Meeting, January 24, 2022 Stonington Recreation Commission Secretary's Report as submitted. Motion seconded by Commissioner Norcross, all in favor, motion approved.

IV. Recreation Administrator's Report

Wrap of Winter Programs – Spring/Summer Update

Mr. Ward stated that they have wrapped up the winter basketball programs and the kids all had a blast. The COMO Rec league has also wrapped up with much success. Mr. Ward also received positive feedback for progression trainings for the younger kids. This season, they played 3 on 3 basketball (5 children per team) and are planning on staying with those numbers. This gets each player more involved.

Mr. Ward provided the Recreation Commissioners with a copy of the Spring/Summer backpack flyer. He noted that they added back the horseback riding and summer soccer. There was some discussion about putting the flyers in businesses around town.

Mr. Ward is hoping to get disc golf up and running this spring. They are just waiting on the weather to cooperate. He will get the word out once the course is finalized. So far, nine holes are in.

V. Finance Reports

a. General Fund -10173

Mr. Ward noted that some lines have been spent down. Director Theodore informed the Recreation Commissioners that they have requested a small increase this year to the Utilities line item. They have asked for an additional \$1000 making the Utilities line item \$5500 next fiscal year if it is approved by the Board of Finance. Director Theodore noted that the Board of Finance likes to see the usage balanced with program revenue. She also stated that she will check with Barbara McKrell to make sure they are up to date with supplier rates.

Director Theodore noted that salaries are all on target and they are asking for a 2% increase to the Parts & Labor line item.

b. Special Activity -21100

According to Mr. Ward, the Special Activity-21100 account is showing \$63,876 in revenue, \$117,620.97 in expenses and a cash balance of \$86,370.63. As usual, this is upside-down until summer camp registrations start to come in. Mr. Ward stated that this past February has been the best month ever for summer camp registrations. They have over 70% of the registrations filled. New this year, they are offering weekly registrations at a higher rate. Mr. Ward noted that they may still have to follow some lingering Covid-19 protocols but he is hoping to be able to utilize the school building more than they were able to last year.

c. Disc Golf Fund -21102

Mr. Ward stated that there is \$17,754.10 in revenue for the disc golf fund with \$1256 in expenses so far. They will start spending down this account once work begins. They are designing the logo for the disc golf which incorporates the top sponsorship.

Commissioner McKernan made a motion to approve the Finance Reports as submitted. Motion seconded by Commissioner Norcross, all in favor, motion approved.

VI. Chairman's Report

Chairman Crowley stated that the crew team received a one-million-dollar donation. They still need to raise another million for the Boathouse project. He further noted that they are still working on getting money from the State.

VII. Facilities Ad-hoc Committee Report

VIII. Old Business

a. Tennis Courts

Mr. Ward provided a breakdown of the estimates for the tennis courts. Plan A is an "all-in" estimate that incorporates everything the Recreation Commission wanted to see. This came in

at \$975,703.57. There is approved funding of \$639,264, so this estimate is over by 53% and they would need to ask for an additional \$336,439.57. Plan B is for half the bank of lights so only three courts and the paddle ball courts would be lit. This option came in at \$846,442.69 which is over by 32% and they would need to ask for an additional \$207,178.69. Plan C is for just the courts and does not include any lights. This option came in at \$735,516.07 which is over by 15% and they would need to ask for \$96,252.06.

Director Theodore informed the Recreation Commission that she was trying to get the numbers before the budget process. She noted that the condition of the courts is not good and continuing to patch them is expensive. She is interested in moving a plan forward. She further noted that the tennis programs generate a lot of revenue. Director Theodore also pointed out that the Board of Ed has not contributed to this project.

Chairman Crowley stated he would like to see the full project complete but he thinks Recreation can live with Plan B. Commissioner Norcross agreed that Plan B is a good option. She noted that the tennis courts get a tremendous amount of use and if they are fixed, they will get even more use. She also would like to see motion sensor lights. Commissioner Theodore stated that it is good to start in the middle with Plan B. Vice Chairman Prachniak stated his choice is for Plan B. Commissioner Hartell stated she would like to at least see Plan B but would like to add back in the wind screens. She asked Mr. Ward about possible funding or grants if the smaller courts are called junior courts. Mr. Ward stated that he will look back into that and Director Theodore noted that due to the Town's population, Stonington may not qualify for some grants. Commissioner McKernan stated that he is for Plan A. He noted that many times they settle for less and he feels they should at least ask for the "all-in" plan and settle for Plan B if they are rejected. He further stated that adding in the lighting at a later time may cost even more down the road or that materials may not even be available. Mr. Ward will inquire about costs to add lights. Commissioner McKernan asked if the demolition costs can be negotiated to which Mr. Ward stated that it is still open for discussion.

Chairman Crowley stated that the courts have to be fixed and the majority of the Recreation Commission would like to see a minimum of Plan B.

Commissioner Theodore made a motion to recommend Plan B to the Board of Finance for the replacement of the tennis courts. Motion seconded by Vice Chairman Prachniak. Commissioner Norcross in favor, Commissioner Hartell in favor, Commissioner McKernan opposed Plan B for Plan A, (Commissioner Moore absent). Motion to recommend Plan B approved.

b. Flag Pole at Multipurpose Field

Mr. Ward presented three options for the flag pole which would be installed to the left of the scoreboard on the multipurpose field. Lighting can be wired from the electricity that runs to the scoreboard. The first option is a traditional pole which came in at a cost of \$1911 including installment. The second option is a hinge pole which came in at a cost of \$2267 including installment. The third option is a Zeus flag pole which came in at a cost of \$3414 including installment. Mr. Ward noted that there are additional costs to light the flagpole and for the flag itself. This can be funded using the Special Activity 21100 account. They will work out who will raise and lower the flag. There was some additional discussion on the different options.

Commissioner McKernan made a motion to install Option 3, the Zeus flagpole. Motion seconded by Commissioner Norcross, all in favor, motion approved.

IX. New Business

a. New Swing in Spellman Park Playground

Mr. Ward stated that he was asked by Mr. Neil Solar to look into installing a handicap accessible swing. Mr. Ward stated that they found a spot at Spellman Park where an existing swing could be replaced with a handicap accessible swing for approximately \$3500. There are lots of options out there but they are interested in a seat that accommodates someone with disabilities that can be put on an existing structure. It also has to be ADA accessible.

Item tabled until Mr. Ward has time to gather pictures and options. Mr. Ward noted that the requestor, Mr. Solar, is also making a donation to the project.

According to Mr. Ward, the potential date for dedicating the trail is June 11th.

X. Meeting Adjourned

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Theadore at 7:09 P.M. Motion seconded by Vice Chairman Prachniak, all in favor, motion approved. Meeting adjourned.

Notes:

a. Next meeting: 6:00 pm, March 28 at SPS District Offices

Respectfully Submitted,



C. Michael Crowley, Chairman