

**Stonington Recreation Commission Meeting
REGULAR MEETING - VIRTUAL
Monday, January 25, 2021 at 6:00 PM**

**Dial: 1-408-418-9388
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Meeting Minutes

Present: Chairman C. Michael Crowley
Commissioners Joe McKernan, Jennifer Norcross & Larry Theadore
Alternates Ben Kepple & Stephanie Hartell
Recreation Administrator Richard Ward
Recreation Coordinator Pete Christina
Human Services Director Leanne Theodore

Absent: Vice-Chair Frank Prachniak & Commissioners Joe Ciriello & Jeff Moore

Chairman Crowley called the meeting to order at 6:08 P.M.

Commissioner Norcross made a motion to add the two alternates, Ben Kepple and Stephanie Hartell, to this meeting. Motion seconded by Commissioner Norcross, all in favor, motion approved.

I. Publics' Opportunity to Address the Commission

None.

II. Secretary's Report

a. Approval of minutes from Oct 2020 Commission meeting

A motion was made by Commissioner McKernan to approve the Special Meeting October 26, 2020 Stonington Recreation Commission Secretary's Report. Motion seconded by Commissioner Norcross, all in favor, motion approved.

Note: Monthly meeting in Nov & Dec were canceled

III. Finance Reports

a. General Fund -10173

According to Mr. Ward, the General Fund -10173 account is on target. He spent down two lines on the expense side, the Utilities line item and the Program Expense line item. Mr. Ward informed the Recreation Commissioners that the funds in the Utilities line item went quickly. He further discussed that the light bill for the basketball courts was higher than expected. Mr. Ward is exploring what might have happened and if necessary, they will make adjustments going forward. Director Theodore stated that they are unable to attribute the increase back to a

certain program. She did note that, if the lighting bill continues to be higher than budgeted for, they can go back to Finance and ask for an appropriation. Mr. Ward stated that this was around the same time that the Eversource bills increased so that may be the issue. He was under the assumption that switching to the LED lighting and installing the timer would have saved money.

b. Special Activity -21100

Mr. Ward stated that, in the Special Activity -21100 account, the program revenue was \$65,010.10. This time last year, the program revenue was approximately \$79,000. He noted that Recreation took a big hit because they were unable to run the indoor flag football program. He stated that the COMO Youth Basketball program's revenue was only \$12,000 this year compared to \$19,000 last year. Mr. Ward had some good news about the tennis programs. The revenue for tennis was up significantly from \$3,000 last year to close to \$14,000 this year and the soccer program was \$3,200 last year and \$18,000 this year. Mr. Ward commented that the overall revenue is lower since they simply did not run as many programs. Net revenue over expenditures so far this year are negative \$15,555.07 compared to negative \$45,000 last year. Mr. Ward hopes to be able to turn this negative number around when he is able to run more programming. Mr. Ward stated that the cash balance is at \$36,218.34. He noted that Recreation was committed to the significant expense of patching the tennis courts before the pandemic, however, this was a necessary project to complete.

A motion was made by Commissioner Norcross to accept the finance reports as presented. Motion seconded by Commissioner McKernan, all in favor, motion approved.

IV. Recreation Administrator's Report
COVID-19 Update
Winter Program Report
Spring & Summer Plan

According to Mr. Ward, they were able to run a couple of special events. He noted that they had forty-two participants at open skate night. Mr. Ward and Mr. Christina are working on outdoor activities that can be held this spring. Mr. Ward noted that the COMO is also working on spring activities. Mr. Christina is planning an adult flag football league. Mr. Ward stated that he is working on putting together a spring/summer flyer with the hopes of being able to run all the programs he advertises, depending on Covid-19 guidelines at the time of running each program.

Mr. Ward further noted that the high school track coach is planning on doing some track programming and that Recreation has been booking reservations for the October golf tournament.

Mr. Ward has been putting energy into flag football and softball registrations. Mr. Ward had a conversation with the school administration and the Town to decide when it is safe to run certain programs. They will be having another meeting soon. Mr. Ward technically could have done some basketball programs but they decided not to go forward just yet. Mr. Ward stated that unfortunately he had to disappoint some groups. It is better to be safe than sorry. The school has started up some of their basketball programs so Mr. Ward thinks he will start looking into some outdoor basketball programming. Chairman Crowley agreed it is better to wait to run certain programs until it is safe to do so.

V. Chairman's Report

According to Chairman Crowley, Director Theodore and Mr. Ward have been to a few Boathouse meetings. He further stated that the Boathouse committee would like to see the Town cover the costs of the building. On April 7th, the bond money from the State will be awarded, however, the exact amount is unknown. Mr. Ward stated the house that is on the property is historical and needs to be salvaged and moved. The rowing club wants the Town to complete and pay for its removal. Mr. Ward further stated that Recreation was always focused on the outdoor space and that it would not be beneficial for the Town to take over the whole removal cost with programming.

Chairman Crowley commented that this project is ongoing.

VI. Facilities Ad-hoc Committee Report

a. Tennis Courts

Mr. Ward informed the Recreation Commission that the Tennis Court Committee has been set up and are bringing on the firm Kaestle Boos. They need to solidify their contract for replacing the six tennis courts with post-tension concrete. Chairman Crowley asked what the timeline will be for this project to which Mr. Ward answered that it is still a moving target, however, if the CIP is approved, the funding will be available July 1st. Mr. Ward is hoping that they will be able to start late summer, early fall. Kaestle Boos is aware of those plans and they felt this was possible. Mr. Ward is not sure how long the actual construction will take to complete. Director Theodore is hopeful that when the contract is signed, they will have a better answer in regard to the timeline.

The cost to hire Kaestle Boos is \$12,500 which includes the field investigation, the data collection and drilling to expose any subsurface issues. After this step is complete, they will provide a design and cost estimation. Mr. Ward indicated that Public Works Director Barbara McKrell will decide if there is a need for the firm to look into the subsurface issues. This will all be charged to CIP and not to Recreation. Director Theodore stated that the cost may be more than the original estimates since those were acquired almost three years ago, however, the project needs to be done and she is confident that they will be awarded the necessary funding through CIP.

VII. Old Business

a. Spellman Park footbridge

Mr. Ward informed the Recreation Commissioners that the foot bridge has been built by Mr. Chad Obrey. The bridge is sixteen inches to twenty-four inches wide which is what was approved by the Wetlands Commission. The bridge is safe to walk on but may be a bit difficult to run on. Mr. Ward commented that the goal is to be able to provide ADA compliant passageways. Mr. Ward stated that the Boy Scouts have reached out about another location that is in need of a foot bridge. The Boy Scouts will also help clean debris from the area.

VIII. New Business

None.

IX. Meeting Adjourned

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Norcross at 6:42 P.M. Motion seconded by Commissioner McKernan, all in favor, motion approved. Meeting adjourned.

Notes:

Next meeting: Feb 22, 2021 at 6:00 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Michael Crowley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

C. Michael Crowley, Chairman