

**Stonington Recreation Commission Meeting
REGULAR MEETING - VIRTUAL
Monday, April 26, 2021 at 6:00 PM**

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Meeting Minutes

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

Absent: Vice-Chair Frank Prachniak & Commissioner Joe Ciriello

Chairman Crowley called the meeting to order at 6:03 P.M.

I. Publics' Opportunity to Address the Commission

Mr. Ward informed the Recreation Commission that he received a letter from First Selectwoman Danielle Chesebrough and he will read it to the Commission under agenda item New Business.

II. Secretary's Report

a. Approval of minutes from March 2021 Commission meeting

There was one correction noted, under Old Business, to change the paths have been cleared to the paths have been mapped out but not cleared yet.

A motion was made by Commissioner Norcross to approve the Regular Meeting March 22, 2021 Stonington Recreation Commission Secretary's Report as corrected. Motion seconded by Commissioner Moore, all in favor, motion approved.

III. Finance Reports

- a. General Fund -10173**
- b. Special Activity -21100**

According to Mr. Ward, the Special Activity 21100 Account's revenue is \$111,380.92 and the expenses are \$87,303.86. He will report the actual numbers for each program when that information is available. Summer Camp registrations started February 1st and has generated approximately \$30,000. Mr. Ward noted that, during the Summer Camp season, if it rains, they are able to all take cover under the pavilions since there are currently 60 participants. Usually by this time in a normal year, Summer Camp registrations are between \$50 and \$60,000. Chairman

Crowley asked Mr. Ward if the camp numbers will increase after the State of Connecticut reduces restrictions on May 19th. Mr. Ward stated that they will open up to those on the wait list. In a normal year there are 130-150 participants with a daily attendance rate of about 100. So currently with 60 participants the program is running at about 50%. Mr. Ward also stated that he did not advertise as he usually would for the program, however, he is assuming that as they are able to open up more the number of participants will increase.

Mr. Ward commented that everything is in order in the General Fund 10173 account.

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

IV. Recreation Administrator's Report

COVID-19 Update

Spring Program Update

Summer Camp Plans

Mr. Ward commented that parents and children have been great about wearing masks during games and while on the sidelines. He noted that there are some concerns with incoming towns not following the mask guidelines. Mr. Ward stated that they are seeing a good response so far. People have been happy to get out and high school students and parents have been following the rules.

Recreation has started a basketball camp with the COMO.

Mr. Ward provided the Recreation Commission with the number of participants in the spring programs. There were 51 registered for the scavenger hunt, 25 in Rec Basketball, 44 in the COMO Rec League, 11 in Fencing, 36 in Senior Fitness, 120 in the Flag Football Tournament, 259 in HIKE Stonington, and 10 in Sunday Soccer. Tennis lessons are sold out and there are over 30 registered for Rec Soccer. So far, there are 722 participants registered for the spring not including the eight teams for Adult Softball. According to Mr. Ward, this looks like a very busy spring.

Mr. Ward introduced intern Corrin Garraty. She is a student at Eastern and has been doing a fantastic job with the HIKE Stonington program. Ms. Garraty stated that she is having a great experience and has realized her calling to get everyone in the community together.

Mr. Ward noted that they are going forward with the idea that they will be holding camps as they normally do each summer. Track and Horses Healing Humans programs will both be coming back and they also added a field hockey program. Mr. Ward is putting together a magazine along with a Recreation flyer.

V. Chairman's Report

Chairman Crowley had nothing new to report in regard to the Boathouse project. They will be hearing about the grant from the State of Connecticut at the end of June. If they get the funds, they will be ready to start the park.

Chairman Crowley commented that the HIKE Stonington program is really popular. He suggested Mr. Ward provide handouts noting all the trails. Mr. Ward stated that they have a handout available for those who register for the HIKE Stonington program. It is also on the website. Mr. Ward

commented that he was amazed at the number of trails Stonington has to offer. Chairman Crowley stated that trails are nice for summer visitors to utilize as well. There was some further discussion on the trails and how they benefit the local businesses. Mr. Ward commented on the recently held scavenger hunt and how it involved local businesses.

VI. Facilities Ad-hoc Committee Report

a. Tennis Courts

Mr. Ward displayed for the Recreation Commission the preliminary design of the tennis courts. They can fit six courts and also add two pickleball courts or U10 tennis courts. There is a grant from the US Tennis Association to help fund the U10 courts. Mr. Ward stated that they will be presenting the preliminary design to Ad-hoc. Core samples will be taken soon. He also noted that all the lighting will be all along the outside of the courts. They are still on target to break ground this fall. There was some discussion about the game of pickleball, also known as deck tennis.

VII. Old Business

a. Spellman Park Trails

Mr. Ward informed the Recreation Commission that the Wetlands Commission went out and approved creating a trail from the bridge area out to Moss Park. The next step is to request a right-of-way from an abutting property owner. Chairman Crowley suggested that if someone on the Commission knows the family to help reach out.

b. Disc Golf

Mr. Ward stated that this idea was posted on social media and they received mixed reviews, however, overall, they were positive reviews. Public Works helped map out three holes. They will clear and cement in the three goals. Once Mr. Ward gets a feel for the response to the disc golf, he will start fundraising and get sponsorships in hopes of constructing a nine-hole course. There was some further discussion on other local disc golf courses.

VIII. New Business

Mr. Ward stated that he received a letter from First Selectwoman Danielle Chesebrough which he read to the Recreation Commission. She thanked the Recreation Commission for the fantastic work they have been doing and she is looking forward to walking the new trails. The main reason for her letter was to ask if one of the trails could be named after Mr. Tom McCoy. The trails in Spellman Park would be a fitting location. She noted that Mr. McCoy has been a wonderful asset to this community and that he would appreciate the gesture of naming the trail after him.

All the Recreation Commissioners approved of this idea and they could not say enough positive things about Mr. McCoy and his dedication to the community. Mr. Ward will map out the trail and present it to First Selectwoman Chesebrough. Commissioner Theadore questioned if this would set a precedent for the naming of all the trails. There was further discussion about setting up a separate committee to formally nominate people and set guidelines in the naming of the trails, fields, etc.

Director Theodore commented that Mr. Ward will be honored at the Bears Classic Golf Tournament put on by the SHS Boys Soccer and she extended her congratulations.

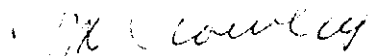
IX. Meeting Adjourned

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner McKernan at 6:58 P.M. Motion seconded by Commissioner Theodore, all in favor, motion approved. Meeting adjourned.

Notes:

Next meeting: May 24, 2021 at 6:00 pm

Respectfully Submitted,



C. Michael Crowley, Chairman