

**Stonington Recreation Commission Meeting
SPECIAL MEETING
Monday, October 26, 2020 at 4:00 PM
Spellman Park (Behind Stonington High School)
West Pavilion**

Meeting Minutes

Present: Chairman C. Michael Crowley & Vice-Chair Frank Prachniak
Commissioners Jennifer Norcross, Joe Ciriello & Larry Theadore
Alternate Ben Kepple
Recreation Administrator Richard Ward
Recreation Coordinator Pete Christina

Absent: Commissioners Joe McKernan & Jeff Moore

Chairman Crowley called the meeting to order at 4:10 P.M.

I. Publics' Opportunity to Address the Commission

None.

II. Secretary's Report

a. Approval of minutes from September 2020 Commission meeting

A motion was made by Commissioner Ciriello to approve the Special Meeting September 28, 2020 Stonington Recreation Commission Secretary's Report. Motion seconded by Commissioner Norcross, all in favor, motion approved.

b. Meeting Schedule for 2021

Recreation Commission meetings are held the fourth Monday of the month in the Human Services Community room. No meetings in July, August or December.

A motion was made by Commissioner Ciriello to approve the 2021 Stonington Recreation Commission meetings as submitted. Motion seconded by Commissioner Theadore, all in favor, motion approved.

III. Finance Reports

a. General Fund -10173

b. Special Activity -21100

Mr. Ward noted that, usually this time of year, Recreation is upside down in revenue due to camp expenses, however, since there was no summer camp this year Recreation is in the positive. He further noted that Recreation is 85% better than this time last year. Mr. Ward tried to keep himself relevant so he did as much extra programming that he could during the pandemic.

Mr. Ward informed the Recreation Commissioners that tennis was at \$2100 this time last year and this year it was \$13,485. Soccer was at \$2700 this time last year and this year it was \$17,526. Senior exercise was at \$405 this time last year and this year it was \$1855 and flag football was approximately \$9,000 this time last year and this year it was \$18,272. Last year's revenue was \$33,000 and this year it is at \$61,477.

Mr. Ward stated that the General Fund -10173 is on target. He will be spending down the Consumable and Program Expenses line items before using the Special Activity -21100 Account.

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

IV. Recreation Administrator's Report
COVID-19 Update – Fall Programming Report
Winter Update

Mr. Ward stated that there were 989 participants total for the Fall. Recreation's soccer programming was at 109 participants, the Golf Classic had 80 golfers, there were 434 participants for HIKE Stonington and approximately 325 participants for Flag Football. Mr. Ward noted that there were 37 participants in the fitness classes which was moved outside. This program received a lot of interest and has outgrown the space at the Stonington Arms. At this time, Stonington Arms is not willing to allow the program back indoors at their facility, therefore Mr. Ward is looking for a larger indoor space.

Mr. Ward gave an update on the Winter programs. He stated that the schools are still reluctant to allow in outside groups. He noted that basketball is being held three days a week on the outdoor courts. Mr. Ward is unsure how the basketball season will run. Mystic Indoor Sports plans to open under Covid-19 protocols and will begin Flag Football in January for a twelve-week period. Mr. Ward commented that Boomer Exercise will continue outdoors until he can locate a larger indoor space. Mr. Ward is planning on keeping the pavilions open longer than usual. He noted that they will have to eventually close the bathrooms but he will arrange to set up a porta-john. Mr. Ward commented that he will be reaching out to Yawgoo Valley and Powder Ridge to see if he can offer a program or two at those facilities. He is looking at other outdoor venues to provide some additional Winter programming.

There was some discussion about renting out the fields during the pandemic. Mr. Ward stated that he has been asking organized groups what their Covid-19 protocols are and then he compares them to and makes sure they fit within Recreation's Covid-19 guidelines before he allows the group to use the field. There was some further discussion about not being able to hold tackle football due to the fact that the Department of Health has decided it is unsafe. Mr. Ward instructed the Recreation Commissioners if anyone asks about field usage to direct them to him.

V. Chairman's Report

According to Chairman Crowley, there has been no news on the Boathouse Project.

VI. Facilities Ad-hoc Committee Report

a. Tennis Courts

Mr. Ward listed the members of the Tennis Court Committee; Joe Ciriello, Mike Crowley, Larry Theadore, Barbara McKrell and/or Chris Greenlaw and George Crouse. Mr. Ward has been working on putting together a list of potential vendors that do the technique they are interested in. He noted that East Lyme and Groton have recently installed new courts. Mr. Ward is trying to get the committee together to get the ball rolling as soon as possible. He has a good feeling that they will have the support needed to fund and complete this project.

Commissioner Ciriello noted that he has been getting reviews on possible vendors that install post-tensioned concrete courts. He composed a variety of questions to ask each vendor. Commissioner Ciriello further noted that the longer they hesitate the longer the potential vendors waitlist grows. He stressed they need to get into a contract as soon as possible. There was some further discussion on pricing, design and fencing for the courts.

Mr. Ward stated that he will arrange to have the committee meet as soon as possible and he will be in contact with Jim Sullivan, Director of Finance, to make sure they follow Town regulations.

VII. Old Business

Mr. Ward informed the Recreation Commissioners that the bridge has not been built yet but Mr. Obrey is on target to get it installed this year.

Mr. Ward further stated that he met with Ms. Sue Cullen, Director of Economic and Community Development, and Mr. Keith Brynes, Town Planner, about the trail idea that Recreation has been discussing; creating the loop on the east side of Spellman Park, connecting to Moss Park then connecting Spellman Park to the Avalonia Land Conservancy through the Davis Standard property. They stated there is the potential to make the trail ADA accessible and also that CIP possibilities should be looked into. There was some discussion regarding parking for the trail. Chairman Crowley noted that they should concentrate on and complete small areas at a time.

VIII. Meeting Adjourned

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Theadore at 4:57 P.M. Motion seconded by Vice Chairman Prachniak, all in favor, motion approved. Meeting adjourned.

Notes:

Next meeting: Nov 23, 2020 at 6:00 pm

Respectfully Submitted,



C. Michael Crowley, Chairman