

**Stonington Recreation Commission Meeting**  
**SPECIAL MEETING**  
**Monday, September 28, 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, Joe McKernan & Larry Theodore  
Alternates Ben Kepple & Stephanie Hartell  
Recreation Administrator Richard Ward

**Absent:** Commissioner Jeff Moore

Chairman Crowley called the meeting to order at 4:04 P.M.

**I. Publics' Opportunity to Address the Commission**

None.

**II. Secretary's Report**

**a. Approval of minutes from June 2020 Commission meeting**

**Note: The Rec Commission does not regularly meet in July or August**

A motion was made by Commissioner McKernan to approve the Special Meeting June 22, 2020 Stonington Recreation Commission Secretary's Report. Motion seconded by Commissioner Ciriello, all in favor, motion approved.

**III. Finance Reports**

**a. General Fund -10173**

**b. Special Activity -21100**

Mr. Ward informed the Recreation Commissioners that he included the fiscal year end report dated June 30, 2020. This report includes all things Covid-19, however, it does not reflect all the Summer Camp revenue. He did note that even though the net revenue over expenditures was negative \$86,769.97, there was a \$53,000 increase in revenue compared to fiscal year end in June 2019. Flag football generated \$43,036.22 in revenue.

Mr. Ward stated that the month ending August 2020 shows a revenue of \$44,088.92 which is a 31% increase from this time last year. Mr. Ward was pleasantly surprised and noted that there was a 28% increase in flag football revenue and a 75% increase in tennis program revenue. The soccer programs also reflected an increase from last year. Mr. Ward pointed out that the \$17,842 expense under the Facilities Maintenance line item reflects the work done on the tennis courts. He further commented that it will be interesting to see if Recreation can maintain these increases next year.

Mr. Ward commented that, in the General Fund – 10173 account, he will be spending down the Program Expense line item and the Equipment & Trophies line item more quickly than he did last year.

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

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

Mr. Ward stated that he was amazed by the tremendous response to the programs he was able to run during the Covid-19 pandemic. He further commented that people were very happy with what was provided.

Mr. Ward gave a fall update. Everything for the fall has been cancelled, including fencing and open gym basketball, with the exception of flag football. They were able to add a soccer program which will begin on Saturday. The school is hesitant to resume indoor activities, however, Mr. Ward is hopeful that they will begin again in January. He mentioned that the Mystic Indoor Sports facility has been listed for sale and he is unsure if it will be open and available to Recreation this winter.

Chairman Crowley asked Mr. Ward to clarify who dictates the Covid-19 protocols to which Mr. Ward stated there is a bit of confusion. The CIAC governs the school teams, however, Recreation falls under different regulations. He noted that the Department of Public Health and Ledge Light have specific guidelines and there are different regulations depending on the sport. Mr. Ward also commented that regulations vary from state to state. There was some further discussion on Covid-19 protocols. Chairman Crowley commended Mr. Ward for doing so well despite all the issues. Mr. Ward suggested adding ice skating, hockey and / or outdoor flag football this winter. Commissioner Ciriello suggested more hiking or even snowshoeing, if possible.

Mr. Ward informed the Recreation Commissioners that Chad Obrey will be building the bridge for the Spellman Park trail. He will only be billing Recreation for the materials as he will be volunteering his time to install the bridge. Once the bridge is built, the boy scouts will help clean up the area. This is part of the project to connect the Parkwood Drive neighborhood to Spellman Park and then eventually Spellman Park to Barn Island. Commissioner Ciriello stated that it would be better to advertise that trail parking is available at Spellman Park and to discourage parking in the neighborhood. There was some further discussion in regard to the proposed trail path as well as marking the trail. Mr. Ward stated that he would love to eventually be able to map out all the trails in Stonington. Chairman Crowley suggested creating a plan for the trails and submitting it as a CIP item.

**V. Chairman's Report**

Chairman Crowley informed the Recreation Commissioners that there has not been a meeting for the Boathouse project in several months.

Chairman Crowley commented on the great job Mr. Ward and Mr. Christina have done this past summer. He has heard many positive comments regarding Stonington Recreation being first class

and he has also received comments on the great conditions of the fields. He further noted that Public Works has been fantastic and that Recreation has a great working relationship with them.

**VI. Facilities Ad-hoc Committee Report**

Mr. Ward suggested establishing a committee for the trails project once the bridge has been completed.

**VII. Old Business**

**a. Tennis Courts**

Mr. Ward asked Commissioner Ciriello to be part of the committee for replacing the tennis courts. Mr. Ward is anticipating receiving full funding through CIP to replace the courts and he suggested establishing a committee under Recreation to layout the scope of the project. Mr. Ward has an estimate of \$600,000 to replace all six courts along with lighting and fencing. Chairman Crowley suggested having a member from the Board of Finance, the Board of Selectmen, the Recreation Commission, the Town Engineer and Public Works on this tennis court committee. Mr. Ward noted that they were originally splitting the CIP request with the school, however, the CIP will fall completely under Recreation. He further noted that, in theory, the entire \$600,000 will be available for this project July 1, 2021. Chairman Crowley commented that timing for this project will be crucial since it will be advantageous to not interfere with the tennis program's schedule.

Commissioner McKernan made a motion to set up a Recreation Tennis Court Committee to replace the old courts. Motion seconded by Commissioner Norcross. All in favor, motion approved.

**b. Golf Classic Event**

Mr. Ward encouraged the Recreation Commissioners to support this event.

**VIII. Meeting Adjourned**

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Theadore at 5:20 P.M. Motion seconded by Vice Chairman Prachniak, all in favor, motion approved. Meeting adjourned.

**Notes:**

Next meeting: Oct 26, 2020 at 6:00 pm

Respectfully Submitted,



C. Michael Crowley, Chairman