

**Stonington Recreation Commission Meeting
Monday, November 28, 2016 at 6:00 PM
Human Services Community Meeting Room**

Meeting Minutes

Present: Chairman C. Michael Crowley & Vice-Chair Frank Prachniak
Commissioners Jennifer Norcross, Joe McKernan, Larry Theodore & Jeff Moore
Recreation Administrator Richard Ward
Bob Dimock

Absent: Commissioner Joe Ciriello

Chairman Michael Crowley called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Chairman Crowley began the meeting by congratulating the Stonington High School Football team for their Thanksgiving Day win.

**I. Publics' Opportunity to Address the Commission
-Bob Dimock regarding Youth Flag Football League**

Bob Dimock gave the Commission an overview on the Youth Flag Football League. The program has been running for five years and has grown. Mr. Dimock made note that Mr. Ward has been very helpful and a main part of the success of the program. Youth Flag Football was started as a fun, safe alternative to tackle football. The league started with 40 participants and now has 16 teams, 30 coaches and 160 participants. Coaches have expansive training and weekly communications regarding conduct and rules. The rules have expanded for safety. There have been no serious injuries to date. Some coaches come from community service programs. The only foreseeable issue would be field space if the program continues to grow. Up to 4 teams practice on the new field and 2 teams on the football practice space. It may be possible to line another field to use as practice space in the future.

Mr. Dimock pointed out that sponsorships and signup fees help to pay for equipment and maintenance, major expenses have already been paid. Having sponsors for every team helps to keep costs down. There is a great online registration process in place through human resources, however, 30-40 participant's signup on sign up day, but the bulk of the signups are done online. There are 2 draft nights to rate the players and set up evenly distributed teams. Every child is given play time on the field. The program is heading in the direction being offered year-round. Mr. Dimock assured the Commission that there is a system in place so that the future of the league is secure if any of the organizers leave. The young kids ages 8-10 play 2, 20 minute halves. The older kids ages 11-14 play 2, 25 minute halves. They may add a 15-17 age group but the league cannot interfere with the tackle football schedule. The rules are very similar to tackle football and Mr. Dimock will get the updated rules to Mr. Ward to post on the website.

Chairman Crowley stated that he has heard all positive feedback about the league. Mr. Dimock noted that they encourage parents to get involved. Mr. Ward stated that the league is very well run thanks to Mr. Dimock. The Commission thanked Mr. Dimock for his overview of the Flag Football League and for his success with the program.

II. Secretary's Report – Approval of minutes from October, 2016

A motion was made by Commissioner McKernan to approve the October 24, 2016 Secretary's Report as submitted. Motion seconded by Commissioner Theodore, all in favor, motion approved.

III. Proposed change in Rec Commission BY-LAWS

a. Article III, Section A regarding meeting dates (Action Required)

Mr. Ward checked the bylaws on file with the Town Clerk. The Commission needs to officially change Article III, Section A from "last" Monday of the month to "4th" Monday of the month. The change is reflected in the 2017 dates that have been agreed upon.

A motion was made by Commissioner Norcross to change the Recreation Commissions meeting bylaws in regard to meeting dates. (In the bylaws, the Recreation Commission meets on the last Monday of the month, now the Commission would like to change the bylaws to read: "Nine (9) regular scheduled public meetings shall be held convening the 4th Monday of the month; or as otherwise specified. Special meetings will be held as needed.") Motion seconded by Commissioner Moore, all in favor, motion approved.

IV. Finance Reports – Month Ending October 2016

a. General Fund -10173

b. Special Activity -21100

According to Mr. Ward the 21100 report is down slightly from last year on account that the Boston Celtics game is being held at a date later in the year compared to last year. There is \$1600 in revenue from the tennis program and \$4700 in revenue from field usage fees.

The Town budget is on target. Mr. Ward is concerned that utilities are up a little from last year. Chairman Crowley would like to see the utilities line budgeted more closely to actual costs instead of covering the overage by moving funds from other line items. Recreation's total budget is \$98,000.

It is still uncertain how the future Boathouse Park will figure into Recreation's budget. Chairman Crowley believes there is still a long way to go before the Boathouse Park will be turned over to Recreation. According to Chairman Crowley, a project engineer should be consulted and a committee should be formed to work out all the details before it is handed over to Recreation.

A motion was made by Vice Chairman Prachniak to approve the financial report month ending October 2016 as presented. Motion seconded by Commissioner Moore all in favor, motion approved.

V. Recreation Administrator's Report

a. Mystic Indoor Sports Arena

b. Preview Winter Programs

Mr. Ward informed the Commission that Recreation is renting space at the Mystic Indoor Sports Arena, located on Welles Rd. in Mystic, in order to offer more, all new winter programs. Mr. Ward has negotiated a reduced hourly rate with the Mystic Indoor Sports Arena. Programs will start in January 2017. In addition to adding Indoor Flag Football there will also be a new Multi-Sport Blast program for ages 4&5. The facility can be split into thirds. Each third is about the size of the Mystic gym. Recreation will be renting the space for 84 hours at \$180/hr. adding in 72 hours for instructors at \$35/hr. for a total expense of \$17,640. There will be 2, six-week sessions and a goal of 130 participants per session. The cost is \$60.00 per participant which breaks down to \$10/week. If all goes well, Recreation will net \$4560. FUTSAL will also be moved to this facility which will open up gym space.

Chairman Crowley thinks this will be great for Recreation and the community, very positive.

Mr. Ward informed the Commission that Adult Volleyball is not running this year, high school basketball starts soon and the Jets/Patriots trip went well. There are 25 people signed up for the Safe Boating class. Mr. Ward will have a program report ready for the next meeting.

VI. Chairman's Report

Chairman Crowley asked Commissioners Moore and Norcross to get an update on the softball scoreboard from Bill King. He would like to see it installed and the fence to be put back up before spring.

Chairman Crowley asked Mr. Ward about the cracks in the tennis courts. Mr. Ward has a professional coming to look at them this week. The hurdle is the timing. The cracks would either have to be fixed before tennis season which starts in March, or, if it is determined that the courts still are playable, the cracks would need to be fixed once the season is over which could be as late as June. The professional cannot commit to an exact time since the project is weather dependent. Mr. Ward will consult the professional and Mr. Crouse.

Chairman Crowley asked Mr. Ward about the plan for clearly defining the playground boundaries. Mr. Ward stated that he has submitted to Capitol Improvement Project or CIP to finance the playground boundaries of all three playgrounds in question. He has already received bids ranging from \$9,000 to \$10,000. As part of the proposal to CIP, Mr. Ward also included some items from Barbara McKrell's to do list such as fencing. This would be a \$45,000-\$47,000 total project. Mr. Ward will be contacted in January whether or not it is approved.

VII. Facilities ad-hoc committee

Mr. Ward informed the Commission that Acorn Tree Service has done some tree removal and cut back branches in Spellman Park. Chairman Crowley asked what the game plan is for the land at the Spellman pavilions. Mr. Ward is meeting with organizations that do master plan work. They will get feedback from the community in order to figure out what the community would like in that space. This will help give Recreation a plan to move forward with. Mr. Ward has just started to look into a park plan. Chairman Crowley thinks this is worthwhile and wants to keep the community involved.

VIII. Old Business

IX. New Business

X. Meeting Adjourned

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Theodore at 6:48 pm. Motion seconded by Commissioner Moore, all in favor, motion approved. Meeting adjourned.

Note: NO REGULAR MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR DECEMBER

Next Regular Monthly meeting is scheduled for January 23, 2017.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "C. Michael Crowley".

C. Michael Crowley, Chairman