

**Stonington Recreation Commission Meeting
Monday, January 27, 2020 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 Theadore & Jeff Moore
Recreation Administrator Richard Ward

Absent: Commissioner Joe Ciriello

Chairman Crowley called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

I. Publics' Opportunity to Address the Commission

None.

II. Secretary's Report

a. Approval of minutes from November 2019 Commission meeting

A motion was made by Commissioner McKernan to approve the November 25, 2019 Stonington Recreation Commission Secretary's Report as written. Motion seconded by Commissioner Norcross, all in favor, motion approved.

III. Finance Reports

a. General Fund -10173

According to Mr. Ward, Recreation is on target with the General Fund. He noted that there will still be some money left in Consumable Supplies and they will be giving money back under the Utilities line item. The lights were not used as much this past fall due to the Triple E curfew.

b. Special Activity -21100

Mr. Ward provided the Recreation Commission with the month ending December 31, 2019 Special Activity 21100 account. He noted that we are halfway through the fiscal year and revenue is up 14% from last year. Mr. Ward thought the numbers had gone flat but the numbers are actually still showing an upward trend. Recreation has a cash balance of \$93,993.45. Mr. Ward did note that, as usual, they are still a bit upside down due to Summer Camp.

Commissioner McKernan asked if there are any plans in place to limit the Triple E threat. Mr. Ward responded that he wants to get ahead of Triple E this year and all local Towns will need to be on the same page. There was some discussion about the curfew that was put in place last fall. Mr. Ward

stated that several years back they created a Tick Task Force. It may be beneficial to set up a similar task force for Triple E.

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

IV. Recreation Administrator's Report

a. 2019 Year End Report

Mr. Ward provided the Recreation Commissioners with a printout showing Recreations Revenue and Expenses over the calendar year. This shows an approximate \$64,261 loss for the year 2019 due to spending \$115,000 to update the playground equipment. Mr. Ward did note that there was \$17,500 in donations from the Stonington Village Improvement Association and the Board of Warden & Burgesses for the playground equipment.

Mr. Ward pointed out the growth in the basketball and flag football programs. Senior Exercise has been moved to Stonington Arms and there is no longer a rental fee. There are about 15 to 20 participants in this program.

Mr. Ward informed the Recreation Commission that there has been a 101% growth in revenue since 2014. Overall, for the 2019 calendar year, there were 2935 participants in Recreation programs.

b. Winter Programs

According to Mr. Ward, the Como/Rec basketball program is winding down. There were 204 players and 25 teams. Flag football had 294 players and 34 teams. High School Rec had 25 players and 5 teams. Overall, winter programs had 523 players and 61 different teams.

c. Spring/Summer

Mr. Ward commented that this spring they will be expanding the fencing program. It will be held at Pawcatuck Middle. They will continue to have the Safe Boating class. They will also be running the UK International Soccer Camp this spring during spring break. Mr. Ward is hoping to add more exercise classes.

Men's and Co-ed Softball sign ups will begin in the spring as well as the Adult Flag Football league. He is also looking to run a tennis league as well.

Mr. Ward reminded the Recreation Commission that the Yankees / Red Sox bus trip will be Sunday, July 25th and that the Recreation Golf Tournament will be held October 5th.

V. Chairman's Report

Chairman Crowley gave the Recreation Commission a brief update on the Boathouse project. At the last Boathouse meeting it was discussed that to reclaim and develop the property they need a \$2.8 million grant from the State. They may possibly know in April if bond money becomes available.

According to Chairman Crowley, it is hard to make plans when they are unsure how much money will be available. He did note that there is still an issue with parking.

Mr. Ward provided the Recreation Commissioners with a printout showing the many possibilities for Recreation if the Boathouse Park becomes a reality. Mr. Ward noted that the Boathouse Committee also shared Recreations ideas on their page.

VI. Facilities Ad-hoc Committee Report

a. Tennis Courts

Mr. Ward informed the Recreation Commission that the patch work on the tennis courts will begin in the spring. Hopefully this \$17,000 repair will last for two years. The surface underneath the courts is shifting. Some tennis matches may need to be cancelled due to the condition of the courts. Recreation will have \$175,000 put into CIP this year and \$150,000 next year for the replacement of the tennis courts. The School Department will also be contributing. It will cost approximately \$100,000 per court, which includes fencing and lighting.

b. Borough Playground Unit

The boat unit is on order and will be installed in the spring. The expense for this unit was shared with the Stonington Village Improvement Association.

c. Basketball Court

They are installing new LED lights at the basketball courts for a cost of approximately \$10,000. These will be on a timer. Mr. Ward is hoping that people will see how great the lights are and he will be able to get the necessary funding to put new lights in at the softball field and tennis courts. Vice Chairman Prachniak asked if there will be some sort of warning before the lights go out. Mr. Ward was unsure so he will do some research on the timer.

Mr. Ward reached out to the gentleman that will be building the bridge on the walking path. They will try to get this done before it becomes too wet in that area.

VII. Old Business

a. Pawcatuck Middle School

Mr. Ward is hopeful that the gym will be available soon so that he can run more programs there.

b. Mystic River Park

See Chairman's Report.

c. MOU – School/Rec/Public Works

The School Department, Recreation and Public Works all met to update the existing MOU in regard to the care of the fields and gymnasiums. This includes the baseball field, practice fields

and fields at Dean's Mill and West Vine. The Town will now be responsible for all field maintenance, excluding the turf field which will still be managed by the School Department. In exchange, the School Department will not charge Recreation fees for using the gymnasiums. Mr. Ward is hopeful that this will be a win, win and that the benefits of the Town taking over the fields are immense. There will also be more sharing of equipment.

According to Mr. Ward, Public Works will need to receive approval from Board of Finance to hire more laborers to be able to keep up with the additional field maintenance. Chairman Crowley noted that it is imperative that field maintenance begins in the spring.

VIII. New Business

According to Mr. Ward, the Stonington Village Improvement Association reached out in regard to keeping the porta john available year-round. It is usually removed when the Farmer's Market closes for the season. They will pay for the expense. Mr. Ward contacted EZ Waste and confirmed that they can secure the porta john during the winter months. Mr. Ward will initially pay EZ Waste through Recreation's account with them, then Stonington Village Improvement Association will reimburse Recreation.

October 5th, 2019 is the date for the annual golf tournament. Julie Holland will be in next month to speak to the Recreation Commission about this event.

Commissioner Norcross commented that while she was running the ticket booth at the Thanksgiving Day game, she spoke with one dog owner in regard to the dog policy. It was a successful incident but she did note that the dog policy will be put to the test this spring.

IX. Meeting Adjourned

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Theodore at 6:56 P.M. Motion seconded by Commissioner Moore, all in favor, motion approved. Meeting adjourned.

Notes:

Next meeting: February 24, 2020 at 6:00 pm

Respectfully Submitted,



C. Michael Crowley, Chairman