

**MINUTES OF THE CHESHIRE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2017, AT 7:00 P.M. IN BARTLEM PARK
(following 5:30 p.m. picnic), SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE CT 06410**

Present

James Nankin, Chairman; Members: Karen Bartone, Dr. Patrick Duffy, Paul Fracasse, Dan Nowak, Michael O'Donnell, Steve Trifone
Staff: Sandra Petela, Acting Director; Liz Mayne, Program Supervisor; Sheila Adams, Pool Director.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Nankin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The clerk called the roll.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The group Pledged Allegiance to the Flag.

3. MINUTES OF JULY 5, 2017 MEETING

MOTION by Mr. Fracasse; seconded by Mr. Trifone.

MOVED to approve the July 5, 2017 Meeting subject to corrections, additions, deletions.

Correction: Mr. Trifone was present for the July 5, 2017 meeting; Ms. Bartone was absent.

VOTE The motion passed 5-1; Mr. Nowak abstained.

4. COUNCIL LIAISON – PETER TALBOT

No Report.

5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Communications – none

Meeting with Town Manager & Public Works Director

Mr. Fracasse stated the meeting was very informative, and it was good to hear from Town Manager Milone on the smooth transition of the Parks Division into the PW Department.

Dr. Duffy commented on everything sounding good, and now waiting to see if it all works.

Chairman Nankin noted Town Manager Milone discussed problems with use of pesticide free materials on public grounds. He said former Director Ceccolini was ahead of the game with use of pesticides. It is difficult to get the fields free from weeds, etc. without pesticides. Mr. Nankin said he is unsure if anyone in the PW Department has looked, in depth, into the use of organic materials and pesticides. He is torn about

going back to the use of pesticides. However, there is a new regime, new administration, and there will be some changes.

Ms. Petela informed the Commissioners that PW Director Noewatne has kept lines of communication open; PW has been responsive to the needs of the Parks & Rec Department; there is awareness that the Community Pool comes under the Parks and Rec Department.

Community Pool – Ms. Adams reported that PW staff has been very responsive to the needs of the pool. She needed a 12 foot ladder and other things at the pool, and their response was almost immediate. Communications between pool staff and PW staff is very good. The Commissioners were informed that Jackie Swift is the new Pool Coordinator.

Ms. Adams reported on the following pool issues or items.

- There are enough lifeguards for the pool, and there is a great reservoir of lifeguards and easy transition through Ms. Swift; positions are posted in-house.
- Fall Swim Class enrollment is down slightly; the brochure came out late; classes started on September 5th.
- Pool revenue at the end of FY 2016-17 was \$565,000; this is the largest revenue since the pool opened; due to cooler summer months revenue was slightly done this year.
- There is a proposal to enhance the pool facility and grounds with sand volleyball court, bocce court, 30 foot slide in the 4 foot pool area, and consideration of a splash pad, which is very costly. Insurance liability issues with these additions are unexpected. The PW Department crew can install these recreational items.
- The pool enhancements were discussed during the capital budget process; they are before the Town Council, but will not be discussed or decided until mid-November.
- Bleachers – CT Swimming holds two State meets at the Cheshire Pool; revenue is about \$20,000 per meet; the facility needs bleachers to host these meets.
- Starting Blocks – new starting blocks are needed within the year in order to host meets; current blocks have been resurfaced for now; 10 new blocks are required at a cost of about \$30,000.
- Total cost of new starting blocks and bleachers is \$100,000.

- The pool hosts two State meets/events each year; the pool is closed in July for these meets from Thursday to Sunday. The meets generate about \$20,000 in revenue per weekend; people stay in local hotels, utilize local restaurants, and shop in local stores. High School meets are held during the week. CTSwim wants Cheshire to host kids meets during the summer.
- New England Dive is no longer using the Cheshire pool; another dive shop has been using the pool; Mr. Nankin will check into the shop using the pool.

Cheshire High School Parking – when there are park events, students can park in spaces along the field facing the high school. CHS student parking passes indicate exclusion of two (2) weeks in the year for the spring and fall carnivals at Bartlem Park.

Ms. Petela will be speaking with the high school administration this week so students are further informed about “no parking” at Bartlem Park during these two carnival weeks. She will inform Ms. Adams about the outcome of these discussions.

Regarding a prior “sand volley ball” court, Mr. O’Donnell asked if sand got into the pool. Ms. Adams said there was some sand, but it was not an issue.

6. BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE

Mr. O’Donnell reported that PW Director Noewatne visited the meeting held this week. The committee will be planting Daffodils around the St. Peter’s parklet, 500 Daffodils around the Bartlem Park gazebo, and some trees on West Main Street.

7. DIRECTOR’S REPORT – SANDY PETELA

Fireworks - Ms. Petela read a communication from Town Manager Michael A. Milone to Fire Chief Casner into the record, and Chief Casner’s response. It is attached to these minutes. There is a Fall Festival meeting on September 7th, at 4 p.m.

Parks Update – conditions in the parks is very good; there are weekly meetings with the PW Department/staff to keep communications open; the parks are entering a busy season. Ms. Petela advised that the Parks Division crew members work the same hours each week, 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. For situations other than normal work hours, there is a call list; all park work now goes through a “work order” process, i.e. lining the fields.

Ms. Petela will be meeting with the different organizations about schedules, and will get information out to the Commission.

Mr. Trifone attended the meeting on September 5th, with Ms. Petela, about large events that use both the high school and Bartlem Park. He said better communication is needed between the two groups, as this will eliminate the problems with double bookings.

According to Ms. Petela there are the same issues with operating the pavilion, with people using it and causing parking issues. There will be adjustments made in the way the park and high school fields work along with more open communication.

Recreation Report – Liz Mayne highlighted the summer recreation programs.

The new tennis program was very successful; it ran for four weeks; generated \$5,300 in revenue; and due to great interest in the program, there is consideration of running the tennis program for more weeks next year.

Summer Camps – some camps did better than others. The camp at Mixville Park was closed for one week due to work at the park, and it caused a little disruption.

There was a brief discussion about posting recreation program information on Cheshire Forum.

Ms. Mayne advised that, per the direction of the Town Manager, there is no posting of town events, issues etc. on the forum page. Information can be posted on the Parks and Rec Facebook page. Ms. Mayne reported that last December there was an issue with the Cheshire Forum...it was inaccurately posted that the December basketball and winter programs were cancelled. She received many calls and questions about this posting.

Mr. Nankin said there have been comments and information about the Parks and Rec Department not subsidizing the BOE field work.

In response, Ms. Petela stated that this sometimes has to do with the bathrooms at the high school fields. It will not happen again. There is a new concession stand and restrooms. A policy will be implemented on use of the stand and restrooms...at an extra cost for events.

Ms. Petela reiterated the fact that Parks and Rec work must go through a work order process to the PW Department, not directly to a Parks employee.

Mr. Trifone commented on the excellent working relationship between the CHS Athletic Department and former Director Ceccolini, and the importance of continuing this relationship. With regard to BOE landscaping, he advised that this work is done by the BOE Maintenance and Ground crews.

During the summer, Parks and Rec grooms the BOE fields, and Ms. Petela stated the BOE mows the fields. The Parks and Rec crews help out when needed.

Use of the fields by the American Legion Baseball Teams will be an item for discussion at a future meeting. Mr. Nankin said there is a good relationship with the sports organizations; these programs must be kept going; and program use will be handled by the Parks Department.

Community Garden – Ms. Mayne reported the garden is being enjoyed by the gardeners; it has been a great year; there was a leak which PW repaired.

Fall Registrations – Ms. Mayne advised registrations are going well; tennis program starts up in a few weeks; remainder of programs start in October; basketball is the next big program starting the first week in December; brochures went out a little late this year; the new tennis courts (at Youth Center) have been getting lots of use; the Cheshire Park tennis courts have been pushed out a few years in the capital budget.

8. COMMISSIONER'S FORUM

Mr. O'Donnell expressed appreciation to everyone for the nice picnic. He said that Dave West, Crew Leader, Parks Division, would be a good speaker for the October meeting.

Ms. Petela will invite Mr. West to speak to the Commission at the October meeting.

Mr. Fracasse attended the last two concerts, which were very good, and people enjoyed all the concerts this year. He noted both companies handling the sound system were good, and there should be consideration of going with the less costly company.

It was noted by Mr. Nankin that this year the Commission was more involved with the selection of the concert performers.

Dr. Duffy said it is refreshing to hear that the Parks & Rec and PW communication is going well, and he hopes this continues.

Mr. Trifone thanked everyone for the good picnic and food. He enjoys working more closely with Ms. Petela and Ms. Mayne, and knows it will continue.

Ms. Bartone thanked Ms. Adams, Ms. Petela, Ms. Mayne for their hard work and insuring everything comes together for the Parks and Rec Department.

Chairman Nankin commented on the picnic meeting being a good one, and the year off to a good start. Things are going in the right direction, communication is very good, and vital to the success or failure of the Commission's work...and he does not envision a failure.

9. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Dr. Duffy; seconded by Ms. Bartone.

MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest:

Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk