

**MINUTES OF THE CHESHIRE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2017, AT 7:00 P.M. IN THE YOUTH
CENTER, SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE CT 06410**

Present

James Nankin, Chairman; Dr. Patrick Duffy, Vice Chairman; Paul Fracasse, Dan Nowak, Michael O'Donnell, Steve Trifone. Absent: Karen Bertoni.
Staff: Joshua Medeiros, Director; Elizabeth Mayne, Program Supervisor
Guests: Town Manager Michael A. Milone and Assistant Town Manager Arnett Talbot.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Nankin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The clerk called the roll, and a quorum was determined to be present.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The group Pledged Allegiance to the Flag.

3. MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 1, 2017 MEETING

MOTION by Dr. Duffy; seconded by Mr. Nowak.

MOVED to approve the November 1, 2017 Meeting subject to corrections, additions, deletions.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

4. COUNCIL LIAISON – PETER TALBOT

No Report.

5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – JAMES NANKIN

• **COMMUNICATIONS**

Chairman Nankin read a thank you letter to the Commission from Sandy Petela into the record.

Chairman Nankin read a letter from Kathy and Steve Delmonico requesting a memorial bench at Mixville Park, near the second pond, in memory of their son, David. In the letter they noted that their son liked to fish at this pond.

There is room at Mixville Park for benches, and Mr. Nankin recommended the Commission accommodate this request from Mr. and Mrs. Delmonico.

MOTION by Mr. O'Donnell; seconded by Mr. Trifone.

MOVED that the Parks and Recreation Commission approves and accepts the request from Kathy and Steve Delmonico for a memorial bench in honor of their son, David, at Mixville Park, near the second pond.

Discussion

Mr. Mederios stated he would contact the Delmonicos and inform them of the Commission's approval of their request for a memorial bench. He will inform them of the costs associated with purchase and installation of the bench, and report to the Commission next month.

- **FOOD TRUCKS/CONCESSION STAND SUBCOMMITTEE – Michael O'Donnell**

Mr. O'Donnell reported that the subcommittee is working on regulations for food trucks at Town parks. There will be more information and a committee report at the January meeting. He will also meet with Director Mederios on the food truck issues.

- **OUTDOOR ICE RINK**

The Commission was informed by Mr. Mederios that the ice rink has been installed by Public Works crew on the Youth Center Basketball Court.

Ms. Mayne explained that some pieces were taken out of the rink so it would fit; there is a fence around the rink to keep people off the rink until it is filled with water; and the basketball rims have been taken down. There is a meeting with Public Works staff on December 7th to further discuss completing installation and filling the rink.

Mr. Mederios stated there would be signage at the rink location which will inform people that skates must be removed to enter the Youth Center building for bathroom use. The sign will include information about hours of operation of the rink.

Town Manager Milone said there are logistics to be worked out about the ice rink, such as hours of operation, liability, access to the Youth Center building.

The rink will be shut down once the Youth Center lights are shut off at night.

- **PROPOSED 2018 MEETING DATES**

MOTION by Mr. Nankin; seconded by Mr. Trifone

MOVED that the Commission approves the meeting dates for 2018 as follows:

2018 – January 3, February 7, March 7, April 4, May 2, June 6, July 11, August 1, September 5, October 3, November 7, December 5.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

6. BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE – Michael O’Donnell

Mr. O’Donnell reported that the committee has decorated Town Hall and the Cheshire Public Library with wreaths and garland, and they did a beautiful job.

Town Manager Milone introduced Arnett Talbot, Assistant Town Manager to the Commission members.

7. DIRECTORS’ REPORT – Joshua Medeiros

Town Manager Milone highlighted Director Medeiros’ accomplishments, experience and background as a Recreation and Aquatics Director for many years. He commented on the important things which must be advanced and done in the department, and said Ms. Talbot will work closely with Mr. Medeiros.

Mr. Medeiros informed the Commission that he has 15 years of Parks and Recreation experience; 10 years in a leadership capacity; he is a certified Parks and Recreation professional; he is involved in the Connecticut Parks Association, serving on the State Executive Board; he is a water safety instructor and lifeguard, and has a long time background in aquatics. Mr. Medeiros looks forward to working with the Commission and Town Staff. He commented on the many great programs offered in Cheshire, and the years of growth and expansion of the Parks and Recreation Department.

• **BUDGET UPDATE**

Capital Budget – Mr. Milone advised the Commission that the Capital Expenditure Budget for 2017-2018 was approved by the Council three weeks ago. This budget includes appropriations for the Community Pool’s new starting blocks and bleachers, which is a long time need for the pool. This expenditure will be advanced as quickly as possible, and will enable generation of revenue with Cheshire hosting more swim meets.

State Budget/Impact on Cheshire – Mr. Milone reported that Cheshire received an additional \$980,000 revenue cut from the State budget. Every Town department must cut expenditures and increase revenue, and the Parks and Rec Department must cut \$25,000 from its operating budget expenditures, along with an increase in revenue.

Mr. Milone stated the priority is for the department to find more ways to generate revenue, as this is a Town Council priority. With Mr. Medeiros’ entrepreneurial experience, the department will start to implement market rates for programs, use of fields, etc. With his pool background and sponsorship experience, Mr. Medeiros will look for opportunities to get people to take advantage of sponsorships for the pool and all the Recreation programs. Mr. Milone told the Commissioners that the Sea Dogs Swim Team is paying for the blocks at the pool, and this is the first sponsorship. It was noted by Mr. Milone that Mr. Medeiros’ aquatics background and experience will take

some pressure of Ms. Adams with division of labor and some of the administrative responsibilities.

Regarding the community pool rates, Mr. Nankin cited his concern about increasing these rates. He said the Commission should not try to get everything done all at once, but to go gently and easier to make things work.

At this point with pool rates, Mr. Milone said they are not being considered for an increase, but taking a look at starting sponsorships. The rates on the parks side, recreation area, use of fields, programs, etc. are below market rates. There is under-utilization of the fields, and some duplication of efforts with other Town departments.

The Commission was told by Mr. Mederios that, in Bristol, he reached out to the businesses in town. He believes there are opportunities in Cheshire for concert and other planned events to have sponsorships, and said this is an un-tapped avenue for the department.

The issue of "naming of the community pool" was raised by Mr. Nankin who noted this has been discussed in the past. Any revenue would come into the pool enterprise fund.

Mr. Milone said revenue from the programs goes into the General Fund, but will be used for the Parks and Rec Department. The Council would be informed about other things that are needed and must be done in the recreation programming. The goal is for the department to be self-supporting. There is no limit to the contributions people can make to the department with money to be used just for Park and Rec use.

Mr. Milone said Mr. Mederios will be involved with the Commission on what happens with the Chapman Property and the future possibilities for this land. He noted this property will be a great addition to the Town.

- **PARKS UPDATE**

Mr. Mederios noted the rink has been installed, and plans are moving forward.

- **RECREATION UPDATE**

Mr. Mederios reported the following to the Commissioners. Fall Programs closed; winter registration is in January 2018. The winter brochure is out; plans are underway for the next session of programs. Basketball programs started last Saturday; the holiday tree lighting was held on Sunday, December 3rd; Ms. Mayne is doing a very good job with the programs; applications for summer positions and counselor in training program are underway; pavilion rentals are being taken for spring and summer.

Pool – there is capital funding for the new blocks and bleachers which will enable hosting of larger swim meets. USA Swim is interested in holding meets at the Town Pool during summer 2018, and this would generate a great amount of revenue.

Ms. Adams informed Mr. Mederios that the new Pool Coordinator and Head Lifeguard and both doing well in their new positions.

- **DOG PARK UPDATE** – no report
- **MEMORIAL BENCH UPDATE**

The one request from the Delmonico Family was discussed earlier in the meeting and approved by the Commission. Mr. Mederios will move forward with coordination of the purchase and installation of this bench.

Chairman Nankin discussed “memorial bench” purchases, and said it is not just the cost of the bench...the installation costs must be included in the purchase price. He suggested there be a close look at pricing and covering installation in the total price of a bench, and in all facets of what the Parks and Recreation Department does.

Mr. Mederios explained that a form is being prepared on administrative costs, installation costs, etc. for a memorial bench. The information on a policy and plan and locations for benches - where they are needed - will be shared with the Commission. It would then be up to the Town to decide where benches would be placed.

The Commission was told by Mr. Milone that this is on point with what the Council is suggesting. The Town can no longer make accommodations, and must cover all of its costs.

If an accommodation for a bench can be made, Mr. Nankin said the Parks and Recreation Commission must do so.

In that regard, Mr. Milone stated there should be a diagram of where benches can be placed in the parks and along the Linear Trail. This diagram could be shown to people requesting a bench, and special accommodations can be recognized.

Mr. Nowak suggested there be a marketing plan for memorial benches, i.e. in a newspaper ad to include pricing and locations.

Chairman Nankin said he and Mr. Mederios have talked about marketing approaches for many things, and discussions will continue over the next few months.

According to Mr. Milone, the new section of the Trail will need benches. He reported that this new section of the Trail is similar to a mini concrete highway, and it will be an impressive section of the Trail. There is money in the capital budget to purchase property near this section to build a parking lot, and the Town has a commitment to the State to supplement parking in this new section. This project is on schedule and should be ready by summer of 2018.

With regard to the department budget, Mr. Mederios will be meeting with Mr. Milone on the budget process.

There was a brief discussion on the need for a Program Coordinator, a 19 hour weekly position, which is a result of the department reorganization. The position is vacant at this time, but is needed to move programs forward efficiently and effectively.

Mr. Milone advised this position is funded in the department operating budget. However, due to the State budget crisis, positions have been frozen. Parks and Rec is under-staffed, but he will try, again, to get this position filled, as he wants to preserve this 19 hour a week position.

8. COMMISSIONERS' FORUM

Mr. Nowak extended a welcome to Mr. Mederios as the new Director. He noted that he and Ms. Bertoni were a subcommittee a while ago to put together a business plan for the pool. He will forward this information to Mr. Mederios. He wished everyone a happy holiday.

Dr. Duffy welcomed Mr. Mederios. He extended congratulations to Commissioner Steve Trifone on his honor of being inducted into the Cheshire Hall of Fame. Dr. Duffy wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Mr. Fracasse welcomed Mr. Mederios, and wished him good luck in his new position. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Mr. O'Donnell welcomed Mr. Mederios. He also extended congratulations to Mr. Trifone on being honored as a member of the Hall of Fame, and wished everyone a happy holiday.

Mr. Trifone welcomed Mr. Mederios. He extended an invitation to visit Cheshire High School, and looks forward to working with him. He wished everyone a happy holiday.

Chairman Nankin welcomed Mr. Mederios. He said he has a good feeling as to the way Parks and Rec Department will be going. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Mr. Nankin thanked Mr. Milone and Ms. Talbot for attending the meeting and their support of the department and commission.

9. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Dr. Duffy; seconded by Mr. O'Donnell.

MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.,

Attest:

MARILYN W. MILTON, CLERK