

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF CHESHIRE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4, 2018, AT 7:00 P.M. IN THE YOUTH
CENTER, 559 SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE CT 06410**

Present

James Nankin, Chairman; Dr. Patrick Duffy, Vice Chairman; Dan Nowak, Secretary.
Members: Paul Fracasse, Michael O'Donnell, Steve Trifone. Absent: Karen Bertoni.
Staff: Director Dr. Joshua Medeiros.
Guests: Cheshire Dog Park Representatives: Dawn Bruneau, Tracy Ford, Barbara McWhirter.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chairman Nankin called the meeting to order at 7:01 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. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Nankin moved agenda item #8c to current status on the agenda.

8. OLD BUSINESS

c. Food Trucks Concession Stand Subcommittee

Mr. O'Donnell reported on the committee's recommendation to the full Commission and submitted a copy of the draft "Food Truck Policy" for review and discussion. A copy of the draft policy is attached to these minutes.

The Commission members agreed that the draft policy was a good start. Mr. Nankin noted there is nothing in the policy about "insurance" for the food trucks and owners, and recommended this be included in the policy. He said the minimum acceptance would be a "Certificate of Insurance" to show the truck owner has liability insurance to cover liability of damage to anything or any person.

Director Medeiros stated the insurance statement could be incorporated as part of the application, i.e. each food truck owner must provide the Certificate of Insurance to meet the town's requirements. This insurance would be over and above the truck's motor vehicle insurance requirements (valid license, registration and truck insurance). He said Chesprocott is responsible for screening the food and supplies of food. With regard to the \$150 per truck fee paid to the Recreation Department, this would be handled by the event coordinators.

Councilor Peter Talbot noted that non-profit groups usually get a percentage of the profits from the food truck sales.

Chairman Nankin requested Commissioners to review the draft policy, make modifications or changes, and the matter will be discussed and action taken at the May 2nd meeting. Director Mederios will also review the policy and insure there are no conflicts with permitting.

It was pointed out by Mr. O'Donnell that the committee's main concern was safety, and the Director determining where the trucks would be parked on-site so people can get to the trucks safely.

The Commissioners thanked the committee for its work on this matter.

Mr. O'Donnell left the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

Chairman Nankin moved agenda item 6a to current status on the agenda.

a. Guest – Dog Park Grant Presentation

Ms. Bruneau, Ms. Ford and Ms. McWhirter represented the Dog Park Group.

Ms. Bruneau distributed copies of information for the Dog Park grant application, and reviewed the details with the Commission.

- The application is for a \$10,000 grant from PetSafe Park Maintenance; this company is committed to helping communities become better places to live for people and dogs.
- Grant funds would be used to maintain and improve the existing Dog Park.
- The Commission is requested to approve the group applying for the grant, which requires written approval and support of the Commission and Town Council. There are no fees attached to submission of the grant application.
- The submission included a map of PetSafe award recipients to date (25).
- Proposed improvements to the Dog Park would be for the gate entry system (entry and exit); grading to eliminate water collection at the park entrance; grass improvements/additional topsoil/reseeding of select area; parking lot paving; upgrades to meet ADA compliance and standards.
- The Dog Park Group will research the costs involved with the proposed improvements and provide this information to the Commission and Town Council.

Chairman Nankin thanked the representatives for the informative presentation. The request must have Commission approval, and then come before the Town Council at its May 8th meeting for legislative approval to go forward with the grant application.

Councilor Talbot recommended the group talk to people, get prices on some of the improvement costs, with the assistance of Dr. Mederios. He suggested informing Assistant Town Manager Arnett Talbot about the grant application and request the matter be on the May 8th Town Council agenda.

Ms. McWhirter stated that their group purchases supplies for the dog park needs, and PW Department crews perform the work at the park. She noted that the Director runs the parks and the PW department performs the work. The dog park group will collaborate all their efforts with town departments.

Dr. Mederios talked about the group being a 501(c)3 organization which would endorse and support the project.

Ms. McWhirter reported that there was a 501(c)3 organization that is currently not in full operation, and the existing Dog Park Group supports and endorses this project.

With respect to past grant applications, Chairman Nankin reported that many years ago, three mothers came to the Commission and Director about a playscape project at Bartlem Park. The project was approved by the Commission and Town Council, and completed, and in recent years was updated to the new playscape at the park. There was also a request for a "trail" in town. Mr. Nankin supports the grant application for enhancements to the dog park, which will be another recreation type project at no cost to the town.

Dr. Mederios offered his full cooperation and support to the Dog Park Group for this grant application process.

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

MOVED that the Parks and Recreation Commission approve the request by the Dog Park Group for submission of a \$10,000 grant application to PetSafe Park Maintenance to make improvements to and enhance the Cheshire Dog Park; and forwards the grant application request to the Cheshire Town Council for approval at its May 8, 2018 Meeting.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

4. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES, MARCH 14, 2018

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

MOVED to approve and accept the minutes of March 14, 2018 subject to corrections, additions, deletions.

VOTE The motion passed 4-0-1; Mr. Nowak abstained.

5. COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT

Councilor Talbot informed the Commission that the budget process is underway, and Director Mederios gave a very good budget presentation for the Recreation Department on March 29th. All town departments have submitted personnel requests, and he said this will be a big decision for the Council. The Department of Education presented its budget on April 3rd, and this budget is 2/3rd of the entire operating budget. The Council deliberations have not yet started, and the date for budget adoption is April 30th.

During the Recreation Department budget presentation, the Council discussed the starting blocks for the pool. There was sponsorship for the blocks by the Sea Dogs Organization, and the YMCA has stepped in wanting the Y logo on the blocks. The Council was not in favor of this request, and is awaiting the final decision from the Sea Dogs and YMCA for sponsorship to be recognized on a plaque in the pool lobby.

Mr. Nankin stated that the Commission did not approve the Y logo...it approved the Sea Dogs logo on the starting blocks.

Dr. Mederios reported that the Sea Dogs and YMCA approved a plaque in the pool lobby for sponsorships, and the Y is cutting the check (funds raised by Sea Dogs) to move the project forward.

With the state budget in limbo, Mr. Nankin asked the status at this time.

According to Mr. Talbot the state can reduce funding at any time, and the town budget is going forward based on current state funding. The state passed a biennial budget with municipal funding, but there are no guarantees.

The issue of the part-time, 19 hour per week Program Coordinator position was raised by Mr. Nankin. He said this person must have experience, and someone may not want part-time, or there could be a lot of turnover with a 19 hours a week job. The department wants a "worker" for these 19 hours, and the salary is about \$20,000 annually.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

- a. **Guest – Dog Park Grant Presentation (moved to earlier in the agenda)**

7. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

8. OLD BUSINESS

a. Community Survey

Dr. Mederios reported the survey closes on April 6th; to date there have been 383 responses; he will compile the information with a presentation to the Commission at the May 2nd meeting.

b. Field/Special Event Policies

Dr. Mederios has put together policies for field usage and special events, and they have been implemented. Things are more organized, calendars have been generated, and there is more management of events. The fee schedule has been submitted to the Town Council for approval.

A meeting was held with the Board of Education, focusing on the process for field work. There are lots of user groups and staff is working to figure out schedules for parks and fields usage.

c. Food Trucks Concession Stand Subcommittee (earlier in the agenda)

9. NEW BUSINESS

a. Budget Presentation Outcomes

Dr. Mederios presented the department budget to the Council with many requests, including unfreezing the Program Coordinator part-time position. He is looking at new software options; rec-track is used now, and it is not good for public use; he is checking other software that is more user friendly and less expensive. The software must interface with the Finance Department MUNIS software.

Concert Series – The Commissioners and Dr. Mederios discussed the summer concert series. Dr. Mederios reported on securing some sponsorships for the concerts. He discussed with the Council the town investing in a stage which could also be used for other town events. The cost of the concert series is about \$22,000 for stage, lights and audio. He will be meeting with Town Manager Milone this week to discuss options for the concert series. Power Station usually gets the bid award for the concerts (\$5,300 per concert) and their costs are very high. Last year another vendor, BlueWave, was awarded the staging/audio for half the concerts, at half the cost of Power Station...and then Power Station matched the BlueWave lower price. With regard to “lighting”, Dr. Mederios stated this cost could be reduced or eliminated with concerts starting earlier in the evening...6:30 to 8 p.m.

Councilor Talbot agreed to discuss the concert series issue with Mr. Milone, and noted the “staging” etc. would be a capital budget item.

b. Mixville Park Passes

The Commission was told by Dr. Mederios that people come to the Parks and Rec Department to purchase passes...three vehicles per pass. Feedback on the current process has been negative. It is recommended that there be “stickers” for car windshields for use of the park; three (3) stickers per household with a pass purchase.

The pool and Mixville Park have cross passes when there are problems or issues with the pool facility.

c. Project Updates – Park Bathrooms, Basketball Courts

Dr. Mederios outlined the proposed projects.

Park Bathrooms

- Park bathrooms at Mixville, Lock 12, Cheshire Park, MacNamara Field and Quinnipiac Field will be expanded and updated.
- All bathrooms will be ADA compliant; interior space upgrades will meet code; new fixtures installed.
- Exteriors of buildings will be upgraded.
- Septic systems requirements will be addressed.
- High humidity issues will be addressed.

These projects will go out to bid in the spring; time line is to award the contract at the end of the summer; construction would take place September to November.

Basketball Courts at MacNamara Field, Cheshire Park and Youth Center.

- Resurfacing all of the basketball courts.
- Repair structural issues at Cheshire Park and MacNamara Field.

These projects will go out to bid soon; work time line is summer and fall; work upgrades will be staggered.

10. DIRECTOR'S DEPARTMENT REPORT

Dr. Mederios submitted his report to the Commission (and Town Manager). A copy of the report is attached to these minutes.

Town Parks Tour – The Commissioners and Dr. Mederios agreed to conduct a tour of the town parks to be scheduled in May on a Saturday morning. There was agreement to also conduct a tour of the Linear Trail. It was recommended that a van from Human Services Department be scheduled for the parks tour.

- Registration is underway for spring programs and activities.
- Bleachers are being installed at the pool, with work completed by April 5th; about 250 person seating capacity which will enable the pool to host larger swim meets.

- Concert series sponsorships are at \$4,500, with another \$800 coming forward; other groups are still considering a concert sponsorship.
- Recommendation to have a concert in conjunction with the community pool.
- Aquatic revenue is down \$60,000 from last year; this is the result of lower summer pool memberships; work is ongoing to close this revenue gap; suggestions have been made to have a climbing wall and inflatable features for the pool, outside volleyball courts, bocce court, and make the facility a country club atmosphere.

Mr. Nankin stated there should a food vendor so there is food available at the pool for patrons.

11. ADJOURNMENT

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

MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest:

Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk