

MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF CHESHIRE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2016, AT 7:00 P.M. IN YOUTH
CENTER, CHESHIRE CT 06410

Present

James Nankin, Chairman; Patrick Duffy, Vice Chairman; Karen Bertoni, Dan Nowak,
Michael O'Donnell, Steve Trifone.

Absent: Paul Fracasse

Guests: John DiGorgi, Recreation Person of the Year and DiGorgi Family.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Nankin opened the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

The clerk called the roll and a quorum was determined to be present.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The group Pledged Allegiance to the Flag.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - JANUARY 6, 2016 MEETING

MOTION by Dr. Duffy; seconded by Mr. Trifone

MOVED that the minutes of January 6, 2016 be approved subject to corrections,
additions, deletions.

Correction: Page 5 - "gridiron club" should read "swim parents club".

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

5. REC PERSON OF THE YEAR - JOHN DiGORGI.

Chairman Nankin commented on the Commission recognizing a person of value to the
Parks and Rec Department; someone who offers the extra help for the entire community
and users of the Park and Rec Department; someone who helps out, does extra over
and over again. In some years there is no one recognized, but this year there was not
much discussion and the Commission is pleased to honor John DiGorgi of All Star
Electric. Mr. Nankin read the plaque wording into the record.

Mr. DiGorgo was presented with a recognition plaque as Rec Person of the Year 2015
by Chairman Nankin. Mr. DiGorgi said it was an unexpected honor to receive this
recognition from the Commission and expressed his appreciation for the award.

Director Ceccolini stated it is special to have someone to count on as a volunteer, who
is always there to provide services to the community. He cited the volunteer work of
Mr. DiGorgi for the tree lighting and other electrical projects and events for the
department. The efforts of Mr. DiGorgi are greatly appreciated, and Mr. Ceccolini said

Cheshire would be a better place with more people like him around. The work of Mr. DiGorgi deserves this special honor.

6. COUNCIL LIAISON - PETER TALBOT

Mr. Talbot informed the Commission that the Council has been invited to the opening of the new pool facility on Sunday, February 7th at Noon, and six (6) Councilors have indicated they will be attending. He reported on the Town's purchase of the streetlights and testing of new LED streetlights on Cornwall Avenue. Commissioners were asked to drive the street and provide recommendations and input to the Council on the streetlights.

7. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

- Pool Discussion

Mr. Nankin reported on his visit to the pool facility this week; staff is working hard to get everything finished for the grand opening on February 7th; and the Town awaits remarks from the public about the new pool facility. He said the new facility is something to see, looks bigger and better, and the locker rooms are awesome.

The Commission was informed by Mr. Ceccolini that considerable landscaping will be done in the spring. The company owes some landscaping; new grass seed will be installed; and department crews will water and maintain the landscaping. He advised that Ms. Adams reported the workmen on site are very cooperative and getting the work done. The grand opening is being advertised on the electronic sign at the Youth Center.

Mr. Ceccolini talked about the concrete wall inside the pool building, and discussions being held about elementary schools having a section of the wall for a mural, to be changed every five (5) years. There will be rules in place regarding murals on the wall. He noted the front of the building does not identify that it is the community pool. The Commission should give some thought to signage on the front of the building which conforms to the Town's sign regulations. Mr. Ceccolini also discussed a contest in the schools for a pool logo. The idea of "banners" from each school is a possibility...they could be painted and adhered to the wall surface...and now is the time to make decisions on what can be placed on the wall.

Score Board - there has been discussion about sponsorship for the score board. In order to have sponsorships, the Town Council must endorse a policy, and Mr. Ceccolini believes there will be Council and community support for sponsorships. In the past there was discussion about having sponsorships for the parks and baseball fences, and this is another consideration. He noted that panels at the pool can be moved, taken off, and added for sponsorships.

According to Mr. Ceccolini, everything went well with snow removal during the last 10 inch powdery snowfall. There is "milling" around the path now, which will be graded and paved in the spring time. Crews are working on what will be best to clean snow from the milling on the path. At the end of the building there will be a gate on the fence

in order to push snow out of the path area. A John Deere tractor was used for recent snow removal; some shoveling is required; and options are being looked at for a snow blower for the tractor.

Mr. Ceccolini informed the Commission that Ms. Adams called the New England Patriots facility which has the same building, only three times larger, and they have six (6) guys for snow removal work. The pool building can withstand wind and snow, and the biggest issue is dealing with snow the day after a storm. The Parks and Rec crews will work on snow removal process, with two (2) guys handling the job. If more men are needed they will be called into work.

The community pool building has a temporary C.O., and was inspected on February 3rd. The 15 garage doors are in, with the company doing the fabric and finishing touches. One exit door is having hinges repaired today. The pool has been filled with water, which is at the correct temperature, the p.h. is balanced, and all equipment is working. The new energy system is being worked out with some modifications for the energy conservation program. There will be lots of money saved on energy, but the exact amount is unknown at this time. The energy program will have to go through one (1) full year before actual costs are known. The LED/reflective lights meet all of the regulations necessary for vision and swimming, but are not as bright as the light that came through the bubble.

Pool Public Relations - Mr. Nowak reported that the p.r. and marketing has been updated. Ms. Adams will be on George DeMao's radio program, 6:30 a.m. on Saturday to discuss the new pool facility. The Waterbury Republican had a large article about the pool in its Sunday edition.

Mr. Ceccolini advised that Connecticut Swimming is talking with Ms. Adams about major meets at the Cheshire Pool. The facility is now open 52 weeks a year, 7 days a week. During thunder and lightening storms the pool must be closed.

Pool Rates - the existing rates will remain in place; a rate increase is not being suggested at this time but is a consideration in the future; rental rates include use of the score board.

Swim Lessons and Passes are being requested for the new pool facility. Tracy Koslowski is the new person working full time at the reception desk. New, part time attendants will be trained; part time lifeguards and instructors are being advertised in local newspapers and the swim community, and they will be trained by Ms. Adams.

Commissioners were invited and encouraged to attend the grand opening on Sunday, February 7th, at Noon.

Mixville Park - the same setup as last year is planned for this park; passes will be sold at the gate; lifeguards will be staffed at the park; the budget for the park is \$20,000 for

the summer, with about \$6,000 in revenue realized. There is a bridge over the dam, and people can walk around the park.

Summer Camps - the camps will go back to their former locations.

- Communications

Mr. Ceccolini reported on a letter received from the Joseph Gilgallon Family for a bench on the northern most part of the linear trail where construction is starting...at the Jarvis Street and Southington border. The bench would be paid for and in the name of the Gilgallon Family.

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

MOVED that the Parks and Recreation Commission approves the installation of a bench to be paid for and in the name of "The Gilgallon Family" at the northern part of the Linear Trail, Jarvis Street and Southington border.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

- Tobacco-Free Parks

A copy of the proposed tobacco-free parks policy was distributed to Commissioners for review and discussion. Mr. Nankin commented on this issue becoming a popular cause in many parks, with some parks having a designated area (in the woods, out of site, away from people) for smokers so people are not bothered by the smoke. The majority of the Commission was pro-active on this policy, with Ms. Bertoni stating she does not support a no-smoking policy. She suggested having designated smoking areas with disposable units at the parks.

It was noted by Chairman Nankin that a few years ago, Dr. Brewer from Yale, visited the Commission and recommended no smoking in parks or within 15 yards of a park. However, this cannot be enforced because of private property issues.

Mr. O'Donnell said with an emphasis on "parks and recreation" smoking does not go along with these types of activities.

There have been confrontations at the parks regarding smoking and Mr. Ceccolini said second hand smoke is also an issue and dangerous.

The Commission discussed the process for institution of "tobacco-free parks". Councilor Talbot explained that the recommendation for an ordinance is sent by the Commission to the Town Council, forwarded to the Ordinance Review Committee for approval, and then back to the Council for adoption of an ordinance.

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

MOVED that the Parks and Recreation Commission recommends a "Tobacco-Free Parks Policy" to the Town Council for review and consideration, and for adoption as a Town Ordinance.

Discussion

Mr. Nowak thought all parks were already non-smoking sites, and noted there are areas in the parks where people do smoke. He commented on the difficulty of enforcement, and possibility of conflicts on the issue.

Mr. Trifone understands the parks are outside facilities, but said the question or concern is having designated smoking areas in the parks. He believes there should be zero tolerance; it should be an all or none decision; and he supports a tobacco-free environment.

VOTE The motion passed 5 - 1; Bertoni opposed.

8. BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE

Mr. O'Donnell reported on the February 3rd meeting, and the committee's recommendation for ornamental green plants, rather than perennials, for the flower beds in front of Town Hall. These plants require no maintenance and can be cut down at the end of the year.

9. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Dog Park

Mr. Ceccolini reported on the success of the dog park, and its being busy at all times of the day and throughout the year. It could be the busiest park in Town.

- Parks Update

At this time of the year, the department crews along with Public Work crews blitz the Town buildings (Arts Place, Fire Department, Youth Center) with painting and minor repair work. The crews are also working at the pool, and have trimmed the entire hedge around Cheshire Park.

- Recreation Update

Spring Brochures are being put together; the basketball program (high school level) is very successful with 24 teams playing for 12 Saturdays; when a game is cancelled there is \$6,000 savings in salaries.

- Budget Update

Mr. Ceccolini informed the Commissioners that the department budget will be a "bare bones budget"; the only request is for an additional "Maintainer" position. This request is a result of the two new sections of the Linear Trail with bathrooms, parking lots, 6 miles of trail, and the fields, that must be maintained by the Parks and Rec Department. He noted the department has been working for 15 years without adding a Maintainer. There is now open space available to the public which is also maintained by the

department crews who do all the work. The "gator" from CFD was recently used for the DeDominicus property and clearing of one mile went quickly and organized.

10. COMMISSIONER'S FORUM

Mr. O'Donnell informed the Commissioners on the CHS Wrestling Team quad match on Saturday, February 6th, 10 A.M.

Mr. Trifone is looking forward to the opening of the community pool, and swim teams using the facility once again. He thanked Mr. Nowak for all his work on the publicity for the community pool.

Dr. Duffy also thanked Mr. Nowak and Ms. Bertoni for their work on publicity for the pool.

Mr. Nowak reported that WTIC radio will be making announcements between now and Sunday, getting word out on the opening of the community pool. He expects there will be more than 300 people at the opening on February 7th. Mr. Nowak also commented on the West Main Street Linear Trail area looking like its done, and suggested the Commission meet, walk the trail, and look at the progress being made.

This could be a field trip, and Mr. Nankin suggested it be considered for the spring time.

Ms. Bertoni thanked Mr. Nowak for his enthusiasm with the public relations, marketing, and great ideas for the pool. She commented on fund raising to sustain the pool and use of the concession stand at Bartlem Park for events.

Chairman Nankin expressed appreciation to Mr. Nowak for his work on the pool publicity, and stated his hope that all goes well with the new pool facility.

11. ADJOURNMENT

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

MOVED that the meeting adjourn at 8:40 p.m.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest:

Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk