

Parks and Recreation Commission
7:00 PM Wednesday, January 14, 2015
Groton Senior Center
Meeting Minutes

I. Call to Order – 7 pm

II. Roll Call

Commissioners: Jim Kamercia, June Evered, Phil Butta, Jeff Zuliani

Staff: Mark Berry, Kate Bradley

Guest: Rita Schmidt, Mayor, arrived at 7:30 pm.

III. Approval of Minutes: December 10, 2014

The minutes were approved unanimously as amended.

IV. Citizens Petitions and Comments - None

V. Town Council Referrals - None

VI. Correspondence/Communications

A. Commissioners

Phil – The Day endorsed the Middle School Plan. A new roller hockey score board will be installed. This is paid for by proceeds from leagues that they held. The steel beams were donated by Hillery. The cost of the score board was \$7,000. This is another example of user groups caring for the facilities that they use. Phil commends all these groups for this care.

Jim attended the Town Council/Board of Ed meeting on the Merritt property. Jim felt that the presentation was nice to know but that it was relevant to any site, not just the Merritt. The intent for the Merritt land is questionable in Jim's opinion as there is a recreation clause. The school board are intending to swap that portion of the Merritt property site that is legally restricted by deed for recreation and open space for a parcel of land in another part of town. Jim says that Parks and Recreation went to the effort to have a study done. That study states that \$800,000 income would be brought into the town by the tournaments. Jim felt that the Town Manager was blaming the Town Council unfairly in that they didn't sell the original schools plan well. Some discussion ensued on the financial benefits that sports tournaments would bring to the town.

New London Sharks - Jim met a semi-pro football coach for the New London Sharks who wishes to rent Groton's fields for games.

B. Director of Parks & Recreation

Information on improvements made on the 11th green at Shennecossett. Mark contacted Scandia Engineering to do a water flow analysis. They are making an assessment on whether the removal of the trees will cause flooding in the homes across the street.

VII. Reports

A. Director of Parks & Recreation

Mark has more info on the Merritt property. Chad and he met with the Town Manager after the presentation on the property. The Town Manager felt that it would be advantageous for them to meet with the architect. Mark says that if they are taking 38 acres of open space and putting

a school building on there, we need to find another open space property appropriate for sports fields. One alternative is the Birch Plain Golf Course. This is on the other side of town and not easily accessible but it could still hold the driving range and sports fields. It would also protect Birch Plain Creek. The owners are asking \$5 million. Fields there could also accommodate tournaments.

B. Monthly Reports – Parks & Recreation

Kate Bradley distributed her December Report. She is working on the new issue of Discover. She is also developing a 2014 Annual Report, which will highlight the Department's year achievements. Kate elaborated on the Senior Center's Souper Bowl Saturday.

Partnerships and Media Engagement. The Department held a summer jobs fair. The jobs are suitable for teenagers and college students. Attendance was excellent.

Mark added that the Discover brochure takes a lot of Kate's time.

Mark added that the Groton Senior Center was written up in the Active Aging magazine. Kate had interviewed Mary Jo Riley, the Senior Center Supervisor, for the magazine. The senior center has applied for a grant for a program "Walk With Ease.

Mark added that Amby Burfoot will be offering a half marathon training (13.1 miles) in the spring.

C. Golf Course Report / GAB – Jim

Jim said that they are looking into having Grasso Tech students build a comfort station between holes. They are also looking into applying for a grant for solar panels for the comfort station.

Mayor Schmidt asked about the sales tax number for the golf course. Mark said that perhaps this is for the shop which is run by the golf pro. This tax number should not show up on the town's financials. Mark will look into that.

D. Boating Advisory Board (BAB) Update – Phil

No meeting. Next meeting in March. The old dock will be replaced soon. The new dock is longer and wider than the old dock. 95% of the cost of the new dock was raised by fees paid for storing boats. Rita is impressed by the adaptations made for handicapped people. Mention was made that Groton is the only town in this area that makes these adaptations available.

E. Trails Coordinating Task Force – June

No meeting yet this year.

VIII. Old Business

A. Merritt Update

See previous discussions during meeting.

IX. New Business

A. Commissioner contact information

Mark suggested that info on contacting the Commissioners should be included in Discover brochure. It was agreed that the Commissioners' E-mail addresses will be supplied.

B. Mark submitted budget to Town Manager today, will meet with him for discussion in two weeks. The budget provides level services. Mark will provide more information after his meeting with the Town Manager.

X. Next Meeting Date: Wednesday, February 11, 2015 - 7:00 PM at Groton Senior Center

XI. Adjournment

Phil made motion and Jeff seconded, adjourned at 8:40pm.

Minutes have been approved and accepted.

Signature



Date

2/11/2015