

**Parks and Recreation Commission**  
**7:00 pm, Wednesday, February 11, 2015**  
**Groton Senior Center**  
**Meeting Minutes**

**I. Call to Order**

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm

**II. Roll Call**

Commissioners: Jim Kamercia, Jeff Zuliani, June Evered.

Absent: Phil Butta

Staff: Mark Berry, Eric Morrison, Todd Goodhue

Guests in Attendance: Mike Doyle

**III. Approval of Minutes – January 14, 2015**

Motion to approve made by Jeff Zuliani , seconded by June Evered.

Approved unanimously.

Motion to approve revised December 10, 2014 minutes made by Jeff Zuliani, seconded by June Evered. Approved unanimously.

**IV. Citizens Petitions and Comments**

Mike is disappointed that we may have wasted time and energy on drafting a plan for the Merritt Property. We did succeed in getting a need's assessment for playing fields completed. On January 22, the Schools Facilities Initiative Task Force (SFITF) endorsed building a middle school on the Merritt Property. Mike had several questions about the plans for the playing fields that are proposed for the site as part of this new middle school.

Mark replied that the Town bought the Merritt Property with a grant from the State of CT. But this grant specified that the area should be used for open space only. Because of this limitation, the Town is asking the State to trade other open space in town for playing fields. The Town has 734 acres of open space right now.

What is frustrating to Jim is that the proposal for the Merritt Property being used for a school comes only after Parks and Recreation had already been approved for using it for playing fields. \$50,000 in funds has already been spent on a playing fields study. Mike added that people are saying that in the long term fields can be built on schools that will be closed. Mark replied that only one more field can be built at Claude Chester. As two of the fields are presently in use, the Claude Chester space will only accommodate one more field. Parks and Recreation's need is for multipurpose fields, not baseball fields.

**V. Town Council Referrals**

None

**VI. Correspondence/Communications**

**A. Commissioners**

Jim said that the people living in a house on First and Cushman Streets, along the 11<sup>th</sup> fairway, are asking that the golf course build a barrier against the snow from the course drifting down to their house. They say that the golf course would do this in previous years. Mark will consider this for next year.

**B. Director of Parks and Recreation – Mark**

1. Groton Rotary asked for a discounted rate to hold a tournament on the golf course. Mark had to refuse as the only tournaments allowed at special rates are Fitch and the Special Olympics.
2. Mark was approached by an RTM member for permission for a Boy Scout group to camp in one of Groton's parks overnight. Mark thought perhaps the Copp property might work. There are currently rules and regulations that don't permit this. However, Mark suggested that he look into it a little further.
3. Mark received a request for more space for Pickle Ball. Indoor space is at a premium, but Mary Jo solved this problem by making more time for this game available at the Senior Center.

**VII. Reports.**

**A. Director of Parks and Recreation - Mark Berry**

1. Parks and Recreation are working on making improvements to Woods Walk Park, an area never officially turned over to the Town. It is a small parcel with a playground. The play equipment was not secure so the park was closed immediately. They are considering moving the playground to another location. Mark needs to obtain permission from the Town.
2. Mark and Kate are working on projects plans.
3. Regarding the golf course drainage situation. Mark is working with Scandia Engineering. They feel no impact with moving the trees. The project is moving ahead.
4. Marketing – Kate has been working on the spring brochure.
5. The Souper Bowl event at the Senior Center was highly successful and raised \$1.400 for the Senior Center. There were great deals on items for sale.

6. Kate received confirmation from TVCCA –they will give a \$5,000 sponsorship.
7. Job Fair.
8. Working with the Hartford Marathon Foundation to offer marathon training,
9. Working on Regional Adventure Challenge and Expedition (RACE)
10. Senior Center – we did not get the NRPA grant but we may do the program regardless. We will look for L&M or doctors to sponsor.
11. Parks – just shoveling snow. Just opened the dog park today.
12. An application for the vacant position on P&R Commission was received.

**B. Monthly Reports – Parks and Recreation**

Mark asked if the group liked the new reports format. Yes, we do.

**C. Golf Course Report/GAB – Jim**

This discussion was covered in Section IX A.

**D. Boating Advisory Board (BAB) Update – Phil.**

No report.

**E. Trails Coordinating Task Force**

Mark reported that the group discussed doing a special event inviting different trail organizations and outdoor businesses. This would be an information affair that would encourage people to exercise. This would not be this spring, probably next spring.

**VIII. Old Business.**

**A. Budget Summary**

Mark said that the FYE2016 budget mandate is to provide level services equal to current demand. This does not mean that the services stay the same. There is an ebb and flow. Some services may change and new ones may be added, according to demand. The Senior Center profited in part in 2015 by the elimination of the Meals On Wheels program due to lack of interest, attributed to the increase of store to home delivery programs such as PeaPod.

- B.** Mark may be faced with either a Budget 0% increase which would require no cuts or a 5% budget decrease, possibly affecting customer service. Regardless, the numbers change from now until the budget is finalized.

**IX. New Business**

**A. Proposed Golf Rates**

Todd distributed copies of the 2015 proposed rates and also the Shennecossett Golf course regulations. He discussed youth golf rates. Todd is suggesting that certain categories of membership be allowed to play starting at 1 pm at weekends. This is a small change to policies and procedures. Cart fees are increasing a little. They did not increase last year due to the poor condition of the carts themselves. Membership only changed minimally over two years. Todd suggested doing a promotion for trial youths to promote their playing. Todd has the ability to suggest other promotions if other opportunities suggest themselves. A 3% rates increase was approved. This rate is pending approval by the Town Council.

One of the regulation changes was clarification of the Womens' Club title in place of Ladies' Club. Also, a clarification of play start times. Shennecossett golf is open all year conditions permitting. Most other courses shut down. So Jim stated that our membership is basically all year compared to other courses' fewer months. Also, individuals riding rented carts shall be responsible for all damages and injuries. Proper physician documentation must be provided with all requests for refunds due to health conditions. Life memberships cannot be transferred to any other person.

A motion that the suggested changes are accepted was made by Jeff Zuliani, seconded by June Evered, approved unanimously.

**B. Camping within Parks. See B.2.**

**X. Next Meeting Date**

Wednesday, March 11, 2015, 7 pm. Groton Senior Center.

**XI. Adjournment.**

Motion to adjourn made by Jim Kamercia, seconded by Jeff Zuliani . Approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Minutes have been approved and accepted.

Signature



Date

3/11/15