

Parks and Recreation Commission
7:00 pm, Wednesday, June 10, 2015
Groton Senior Center
Meeting Minutes

I. Call to Order. Jim Kamercia, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:08 pm.

II. Roll Call.

Commissioners: Jim Kamercia, Phil Butta, June Evered, Jonathan Grossman, Jeff Zuliani.
(Jim arrived at 7.07).

Staff: Mark Berry, Kate Bradley.

Guests in Attendance: Mike Buonano.

III. Approval of Minutes – May 13, 2015.

Approval proposed by Phil Butta, seconded by Jeff Zuliani. After discussion, Phil Butta's statement in Section VI.A is changed to:

"Phil spoke with a lacrosse coach whose team's game at Poquonnock Plains Park was canceled by Parks because it deemed the field unplayable as a result of bad weather. The coach drove by the field during the time his team was to use it and saw a pickup soccer game and Frisbee being played on the same field. He said he supports public use of town fields but felt that when a field reservation is canceled because of bad weather, it should be unavailable for use by the public during that time period".

The minutes as amended were then approved unanimously.

IV. Citizens Petitions and Comments. None.

V. Town Council Referrals. None.

VI. Correspondence/Communications - Commissioners.

Phil. Phil had sent an E-mail to all Commissioners referring to an article in The Day newspaper, written by Amby Burfoot, a well-known local runner. Phil commented that this was an excellent article on the fence raised by the Mumford Cove Association to separate their property from the Town trail that runs parallel to it. Phil attended Small Boats Day and also Learn to Row Day. Both events were successful and really good days.

VII. Reports.

A. Director of Parks and Recreation - Mark Berry.

1. Mark met with a group of teachers and students from Ella Grasso Tech to discuss developing a landscaping plan for the golf course clubhouse. 5 to 6 students are now putting a proposal together. The plan needs to be approved by the City of Groton. Mark is hoping to obtain materials through donations from local merchants. An acknowledgement plaque would then be placed when the improvements are completed.

2. Mark is reviewing proposals resulting from RFQs (Request for Quotes) to design a bike path from Depot Road to Thompson Drive.
3. The Pequot Woods Board forwarded Mark a letter from an individual suggesting exploring the possibility of returning the John Mason statue to Groton. Committee members expressed approval. The present location of this statue is unknown.
4. Mark attended the Groton Parks Foundation meeting in May. He suggested that the Foundation establish a grant program using presently undesignated funds. This would increase public awareness of the foundation. The Foundation came up with guidelines and a proposed grant sum of \$2,000. Groton Recreation Departments could then apply to the Foundation for up to \$1,000 for items that are not provided for in the budget.
5. The Parks division is presently modifying equipment in various parks in part to meet ADA (American Disability Act) requirements.

B. Monthly Reports – Parks and Recreation.

Marketing. Kate Bradley.

Summer camp brochure. The 2015 issue has gone out. Jim said to send to private schools also. Kate said that she thinks that presently there is no funding for that. The brochures are dropped off to be distributed in classrooms. The department also had a summer camp open house at Balfour Beatty Navy Housing to answer questions about the camps. Attendance wasn't great but the people there did ask a lot of questions.

Tour de Noank. 83 runners preregistered, almost doubled in two years. A discount of \$25 is presently given for preregistration. Phil said that races for runners in pairs are becoming very popular. The competition for races has increased as more groups are now organizing races as fundraisers.

Facebook page. Kate ran an ad for Shennecosset golf course. Running ads on Facebook is not expensive whereas you can pay \$400 for a newspaper ad. The Shennecosset page was very successful - viewed by 280 people. Kate said that the page's fans increased by 40% over the month. Mark added that on Facebook you can target your recipients by a huge range of preferences as it can be viewed by a wide age group. Jim suggested that some golfers might pay a bit more to play with PGA seasoned golfers. On a question from June, Mark replied that Shennecosset co-hosts tournaments with the PGA so decisions must be acceptable to both parties.

Recreation. Mark Berry.

Races. Kick-off day for the multi-town RACE is Saturday, June 13. Also the Tour de Noank race. The number of sponsors for the races has increased but has declined for the concerts.

Summer Camps. The price has increased. There have been more scholarship requests this year. In the past, summer camps were subsidized but not now. Phil asked if

requests for scholarships are based on the increase in fees or change in the family financial situation. Answer - financial situation.

Senior Center. The Center is offering OAT (Outdoor Adventure Travel) to engage younger seniors. The Center held an Intergenerational program with Claude Chester school. They try to do something like this every year and they get a grant almost every year. Club 55 presented awards to three high school seniors. The Center holds a number of events to raise funds. They try to raise \$6,000 every year. In July, they are holding an antiques fair with appraisers coming in, \$5 for each item.

Parks Division. Sam Popinchalk has a serious medical situation. Other staff are filling in.

Golf Course – up \$44,480 up from last year. We had a great May. The course is up 14 memberships and being really proactive in sending out tee specials to fill in empty times. Jim asked how the CIP project on the 11th green is proceeding. The space will be filled to look like a dune.

C. Golf Course Report/GAB - Jim. See above.

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

1. Small boat day was held on May 30. About 100 people took a ride on a kayak. Volunteers from the rowing club were there. Phil said that just having them there added a lot of energy to the event. Several people over the age of 70 tried out the paddleboards. There was a child 3 years old riding a paddleboard with her dad.

The beach venue is a good spot to get people out on the water. Next meeting of the board is Sept 17. Ribbon cutting for the new dock will be held early on fireworks day, possibly July 11. The Town Council, RTM and others will be invited.

2. The Boating Board plans to have a brain storming session for the long term status.
3. The Noank Rowing Club is sponsoring a Learn to Row day at Spicer Park on Saturday, June 6 from 9 am to noon.

E. Trails Coordinating Task Force – June.

The Task Force met on May 28. Work on the Copp Property has been delayed as contractor's materials not yet received. A. Neil Brown promoted making dog leashing mandatory for the Copp trails because of damage that can be done by unleashed dogs. A motion that signs to this effect should be installed was made and approved. Sidney received approval for the bridge over Cowslip Brook and it was installed with help from 20 people from the Subase. The group approved the idea of holding an event to publicize Groton's trails. The task force is scheduled to expire on January 2016. Mark asked the group to consider if we have achieved our goals or if we should carry on. This will be discussed at our next meeting. Mark said that we still have priorities to review in August. A. Neil suggested that our next step may be to have quarterly meetings.

VIII. Unfinished Business. None.

IX. New Business.

- A. Marketing Plan Overview – Kate Bradley. Postponed until August. Mark distributed copies of the draft plan. We rely heavily on youth for income from our programs but there has been a 70% drop in that demographic. Mark says that we need to make adjustments for this in our planning.

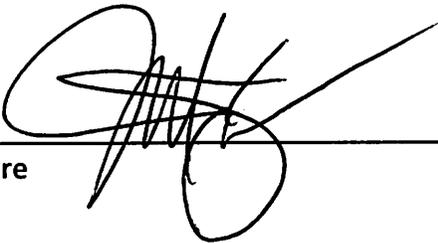
- B. Budget Update. Mark reported that the Town Council transferred \$100,000 from the special revenue fund to partially cover a loss in the education budget.

X. Next Meeting Date: Wednesday, August 12, 2015 - 7 00 PM at Groton Senior Center.

XI. Adjournment. Motion to adjourn made by Jonathan Grossman, seconded by Jeff Zuliani.
Approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:43 pm.

Submitted by June Evered.

Minutes have been approved and accepted.

Signature 

Date 8/12/15