

**Parks and Recreation Commission**  
**7:00 pm, Wednesday, August 12, 2015**  
**Groton Senior Center**  
**Meeting Minutes**

- I. **Call to Order** - Jim Kamercia, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
- II. **Roll Call**
  - Commissioners: Jim Kamercia, June Evered, and Jeff Zuliani
  - Absent: Phil Butta, Jonathan Grossman
  - Staff: Mark Berry
  - Guests in Attendance: None
- III. **Approval of Minutes – June 10, 2015**
  - Approval of the minutes' motion made by Jeff, seconded by Jim.
  - Approved unanimously.
- IV. **Citizens Petitions and Comments** - None
- V. **Town Council Referrals** - None
- VI. **Commissioners' Correspondence/Communications**

June reported that she heard that the Senior Center exercise classes are facing competition from a program named "Silver Sneakers". This program is sponsored by some healthcare plans and allows seniors to use commercial gyms, etc., at either no or small cost. June felt that this could be bad news for the Senior Center as the Center has been required to raise its own rates because of Town budget demands. Mark replied that the Center is aware that they have lost some seniors to these programs. The Center had applied for membership to Silver Sneakers but was denied. The "Silver Sneakers" program is offered through large concerns such as Cigna and Blue Cross/Blue Shield. There is another program, "Silver and Fit" which is similar in that insurance companies reimburse users. The Center has applied for membership in that.
- VII. **Reports.**
  - A. **Director of Parks and Recreation - Mark Berry**
    1. The Fall brochure is being printed at this time.
    2. The Summer Beach Concert series had great attendance this year. The final concert is tomorrow. The \$10 fee for parking helps to pay for the shows. The groups "Sugar" and Will Evans are both very popular.

3. Shennecossett Golf Course has been recognized as the best course in the area with the best hole. June revenue numbers were very strong.
4. More than 200 runners participated in the Tour de Noank.
5. 16 people participated in the National Learn to Row Day.
6. The Senior Center's new adventure program has offered hikes and events attracting younger seniors.
7. Sam Popinchalk, the parks foreman, has been out sick all summer. He is returning to work this week.
8. In July, Mark worked with a family wishing to place a memorial bench for their son at Esker Point Beach
9. Work is ongoing at the Copp Property. The bridge is being installed. The money for all this work is coming from the State.
10. The Antique Appraisal Fair held by the Senior Center grossed \$1,000.
11. People are still showing up to register on the first day of summer camp, even though that the publicized final day for registration was the preceding Monday.
12. The new dock has been installed at Spicer Park. This new dock is three times as wide as the former dock allowing more space for multiple boats to dock. It also has a nice launch for kayaks. This new dock was financed by fees for boat storage. There has been an increase in activity since the new dock was installed.
13. Our Parks staff has been busy maintaining all these different facilities.

**B. Monthly Reports – Parks and Recreation - See above**

**C. Golf Course Report/GAB**

Mark reported that the course is doing very well. Todd, the Pro, has been active in promoting play at slower times and in encouraging new players. When he sees holes in the schedule, he sends out special offers. He is also offering additional clinics and writing a monthly blog. The course is also selling 20 9-hole play cards for \$300. This is a good thing as it locks people into playing at Shennecossett. So far they have sold about 30 cards at \$300 each, grossing around \$9000. The CT. Senior Open and summer tournaments were all successful.

Unfortunately, the course was informed that their use of rangers was against Federal labor laws. Previously, the rangers volunteered their services in exchange for playing time. Now, they must all be on the payroll. Also, when the rangers played, they would bring paying customers in to play with them. Unfortunately, that benefit may end.

Jim asked about the possibility of <sup>showing</sup> putting a movie camera on the green. This was considered a possibility. <sup>e</sup>

**D. Boating Advisory Board (BAB) – No report (Phil absent)**

**E. Trails Coordinating Task Force**

June reported on the TriTown Trail. There was an article in The Day newspaper stating that Ledyard Town Council authorized Mayor Rodolico to start land easement negotiation with home owners. The advantage is that the easement property is free of taxes. The TriTown Committee was authorized to use \$45,000 from the town's open space fund for easements. The trail actually now has a physical presence in Preston – just a few steps but it is a start.

"The Day" had reported on a proposed \$10 million grant for the East Coast Greenway. Groton was not one of the towns mentioned in this article.

**VIII. Unfinished Business**

**A. Marketing Plan Overview – Mark**

Mark's goal is to have the department collect customer information to develop a customer profile to compare with the community demographic profile. The goal is to identify underserved communities and look at programming and marketing changes to reach those groups \$13,000 in scholarships was given out last year. Jim cautioned that we should be careful in handing out scholarships. Mark replied that the scholarships are not for the full amount of the program cost, ranging up to 65%. The marketing plan revealed that a significant percent of the department's income comes from a few types of programs (sports) and a small age group (6-14). Future programming and marketing will look to diversify programming types and age groups.

**IX. New Business**

**A. Proposed FYE'2017 CIP.** Mark stated that his department is waiting for the study on the economic impact of playing fields on the Merritt property.

**MOTION.** Jim proposed that a new agenda item IX.B Sports Complex be added to New Business. Motion to approve made by Jeff, seconded by June. Approved unanimously.

**B. Sports Complex.** Jim reported that the town does not need approval to move on the Merritt property. The State is still requiring the Town to match this loss of open space, possibly Birch Plain Creek. Jim foresees the possibility of our building a sports complex similar to Pinnacle's Dream Sports Complex in Shoemakersville, PA.

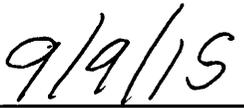
X. **Next Meeting Date: Wednesday, September 9, 2015 - 7 00 PM at Groton Senior Center.**

XI. **Adjournment.** Motion to adjourn made by Jeff, seconded by June. Approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Submitted by June Evered.

Minutes have been approved and accepted.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date