



Town of Simsbury

933 HOPMEADOW STREET

SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

Board of Selectmen
Parks and Recreation Special Revenue Fund Analysis Work Group
Tuesday, October 6, 2020
5:30 p.m.

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES – Approved

Members Present: Sean Askham, Chris Peterson, Linda Schofield, Art House, Dave Bush, Gerry Wetjen

Staff Present: Maria Capriola, Town Manager; Melissa Appleby, Deputy Town Manager; Amy Meriwether, Finance Director; Tom Tyburski, Director of Culture, Parks and Recreation

The meeting was called to order at 5:35pm.

1) Public Audience

None

2) Minutes of September 30, 2020

The minutes of September 30, 2020 were approved by consensus.

3) Parks and Recreation Special Revenue Fund Analysis – Discussion and Review of Staff Recommendations

Mr. Askham summarized where the group left off after the last meeting, and reviewed the survey assignment that members worked on in between the meetings. Ms. Capriola walked through the results of the survey, which illustrated the members' opinions regarding how the expenses and revenues for parks and recreation should be accounted for, and how to fund community use expenditures. There was consensus to not consider the following option: "Increase the general fund contribution to the Fund to equal 20-30% of the total Parks and Recreation Special Revenue Fund budget. Percentage to be determined after additional analysis and policy discussions."

Mr. Askham said that the group was close to consensus on moving the salaries and benefits for the director, administrative secretary, recreation supervisor, and utility and facility costs to the general fund. Ms. Schofield said that she is comfortable moving an amount of approximately \$266,000 to the general fund because that has been the historical loss, as long as that increase was feathered in over time and is offset by cuts elsewhere in the general fund. Mr. Askham noted that considering a fixed amount does not account for the increases to items over time, such as general wage increases and increases in utility costs.

Discussion ensued regarding the other factors that would impact the general fund, such as the increases to minimum wage and changes in pension assumptions. The group decided to add both of those items to the total amount to be covered by the general fund.

The group acknowledged the challenge presented by needing to fill a gap in the general fund of approximately \$342,000 in the first year. Options for ways to absorb this impact were discussed, including phasing it in over two or three years, increasing the tax collection rate assumption, and adjusting the department's fee schedule. Mr. Askham noted that there was general consensus regarding the dollar amount to be absorbed by the general fund in the first year, and that the question at hand is how to pay for it. He said that this is a discussion topic for the tri-board meeting and the FY22 budget process.

The group discussed the department's fee schedule; the members of the Culture, Parks and Recreation Commission and Mr. Tyburski agreed to take a look at the current fees to ensure that they are competitive with the market and take into account all fixed costs, including minimum wage increases.

4) Next Steps

Mr. Askham said that the group should firm up the figures that were added to the proposed funding scenario, and also take a critical look at the department's current fee structure. He said that the group should meet again in two weeks to vote on a proposal that can be presented to the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 6:47pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Melissa Appleby
Deputy Town Manager