

TOWN OF SIMSBURY – CULTURE, PARKS, AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Subject to Vote of Approval – Regular Meeting Minutes – **Thursday, February 25, 2021** – 2 pages

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. by David Bush, Chairman via Zoom video conference. Other commission members who were present included Kelly Kearney, Gerry Wetjen, Rachel Wellman, Lori Coppinger, Liz Keppel, and Danielle Celli. The C. P. & R. Director, Tom Tyburski and Board of Selectman Liaison, Chris Petersen were also in attendance.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

Ms. Coppinger made a motion to adopt the January 28, 2021 minutes with the modifications that Ms. Wellman was in attendance and correcting a grammatical error in “Chez Hospitality”. Mr. Wetjen seconded the motion. The motion passed with all in favor.

Public Session:

None.

New Business

Culture, Parks and Recreation Commission must elect a new Chair and Vice Chair- Mr. Wetjen made a motion to nominate Mr. Bush as Chair of the C.P.R. Commission. Ms. Keppel seconded the motion. Mr. Wetjen nominated Mr. Kearney to be Vice Chair of the C.P.R. Commission. Mr. Bush seconded the motion. The motions passed with all in favor.

Discussion regarding a no smoking policy in Town parks and recreation facilities- Mr. Tyburski shared that while there are some “No Smoking” signs posted on Town athletic fields, based on the latest news that the State could move forward with legalizing marijuana, he thought the Commission should consider creating a no smoking policy for all Town parks and open space facilities. Mr. Bush stated that he believes a policy needs to be in place that on park and open space land recreational use of marijuana is not permitted. Mr. Peterson suggests that this gets referred over to the Town’s attorney for guidance and insight as how other municipalities are handling it. Ms. Coppinger stated that if this does move forward there should be a meeting with the Simsbury Police Department as they will be the ones to enforce it. Mr. Kearney stated that he would like the Commission at some point to create a general position statement. Mr. Bush stated from a golf course economic standpoint, there are golfers that enjoy a cigar on the course, he believes there should be continued discussion on this. He would like to eventually have a thoughtful presentation of a policy to the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Peterson recommended the Commission put a letter together requesting that the Town Manager get advice from the Town’s attorney for how the park and recreation areas can be folded into the policy in place. Mr. Tyburski and Mr. Bush will put something together for the Town Manager to review.

FY22 Culture, Parks and Recreation Budget Development Update – Mr. Tyburski shared that they are in the process of putting together their presentation for the budget workshop on March 6th. He discussed the Capital Non-reoccurring Requests, playscapes refurbishments, park signs replacement and the ice rink chiller were discussed in further detail. Mr. Bush brought to the Commission’s attention that while the budget numbers exist in the outlying years, there’s no guarantee that it will actually occur. Mr. Peterson reminded the commission that they have the POCD and master plan as guideposts when making tough decisions regarding the budget. Mr. Tyburski stated that the budget items put forward were items that were identified in the master plan. Ms. Keppel stated she was part of the junior women’s collaboration with parks and recreation for the playground and inquired if there would be interest in a partnership with another group. Mr. Tyburski stated that they would be open to that and are always watching for any available grants. Mr. Tyburski discussed the capital improvement program and stated that the performing arts center parking improvements was one of the main issues identified in the master plan. The golf course irrigation system replacement was discussed. Mr. Kearney asked if it was

something that is potentially going to affect the quality of play and what the ramifications would be pushing it out another year. Mr. Tyburski shared that a lot of the equipment has been in the ground 25 years or more and it's certainly a risk that one of the main lines could break. Mr. Kearney asked if the irrigation system replacement tied back to a specific item in the masterplan. Mr. Tyburski stated that the golf course was not part of the master plan. Mr. Kearney requested that the record reflect that there is a level of risk to the Town concerning the golf course irrigation system. The service improvement requests that the Town Manager is putting forward in her budget were discussed. Mr. Kearney asked what Mr. Tyburski feels are the high priority items. Mr. Tyburski shared his sentiments regarding the importance of the facility maintenance tech position and staff training and professional development. Mr. Bush stated that he would appreciate any email that commission members could send to the Board of Selectmen about the technician position and staff training and development.

Old Business

Simsbury Farms Golf Restaurant Update – Mr. Tyburski stated that Chez Hospitality are doing their second interviews for staffing today and also had their initial health inspection. They also have the liquor license process under way. They will also be doing a shared google calendar with the golf professional staff for better communication. They will be running a naming contest for the restaurant on social media.

Simsbury Farms Lighting Project Update – Mr. Tyburski shared that they expect to resume construction meetings in two weeks and from mid-March to the end of April there will be a lot of workers up there trying to complete the project.

'20-'21 Rink Season COVID Update – Mr. Tyburski stated that youth hockey is wrapping up its season in the next week or so, the plan is to stay open to the third week of March. Mr. Bush thanked Mr. Thibeault and his staff for their flexibility and creativity as it relates to the rink operation.

Basketball Court Lighting Update – Mr. Tyburski shared that the Friends of Simsbury Farms has voted to fund the lighting project \$36,000, with hopes that the town will fund the additional \$12,000 needed to complete the project this spring. At the Board of Selectmen meeting next week, they will push forward a request to accept the donation from the Friends of Simsbury Farms. If the Board of Selectmen is supportive it will move to the Board of Finance for their approval.

Parks and Open Space Master Plan Update- Mr. Tyburski shared that one item that came up in the master plan was the trail signage. He has been approached by an eagle scout who is looking to do a project at Onion Mountain Park and Mr. Tyburski will be meeting with him soon regarding some trail marking up there and potentially some trail clean up. Mr. Tyburski re-iterated that this year's budget was set up with an eye on the master plan.

Adjourn

Ms. Coppinger made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Kearny seconded the motion. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:27p.m.

Next Meeting

The next Regular Meeting of the C. P. & R. Commission will be March 25, 2021 at 6 p.m. via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Taylor,
Commission Clerk