

## TOWN OF SIMSBURY – CULTURE, PARKS, AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Subject to Vote of Approval – Regular Meeting Minutes – **Thursday, May 28, 2020** – 2 pages

### **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by David Bush, Chairman via Zoom video conference. Other commission members who were present included Kelly Kearney, Gerry Wetjen, Rachel Wellman, Sarah Cramer, Lori Coppinger, Gina Morgan, Danielle Celli, and Liz Keppel, The C. P. & R. Director, Tom Tyburski, and Board of Selectman Liaison, Chris Petersen, Recreation Supervisor John Thibeault, Parks Superintendent Orlando Casiano, and Golf Professional John Verrengia were also in attendance.

### **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

No changes were made to the February 27, 2020, Regular Meeting Minutes. Mr. Bush declared the minutes approved and requested that they be put on record. Mr. Kearney requested that the December 5, 2019 minutes be amended to reflect the adopted vision for the restaurant at Simsbury Farms golf course. The amendment should include the following: Simsbury Culture, Parks and Recreation believes that offering a full service, full entrée available restaurant is paramount to the future well-being of the Simsbury Farms golf course. In order for a restaurant to be able to maximize its income potential, the restaurant needs to add and/ or improve the following amenities, which we as a Commission endorse: 1) full service bar, 2) larger kitchen, 3) larger dining area, 4) larger outdoor dining area with outdoor grilling area 5) fire code adjustments as needed and 6) permanent outdoor event pavilion where existing structure sits. Mr. Bush asked the minutes be placed on the record as amended.

### **Public Session:**

None.

### **New Business**

*Simsbury Farms Golf Course Update-* Mr. Verrengia shared with the Commission that May has been an unbelievable month for them. In May of 2019, greens fees were at 63K, right now they are at 91K, which could be the biggest month revenue-wise. The total from January through May 2019 was 94K, right now they are at 135K, the 135K doesn't include the 59K from the season special promotion from August through December last year. In 2019, memberships were 119K, right now they are at 132K, if including the pre-season pass from last year. Overall, the course has done well with social distancing, some socializing in the parking lot but it has calmed down now that the restaurant is open. Mr. Bush commended Mr. Verrengia and his staff for posting signs early on marking the ground, loves that credit reader is outside the building, and the efforts toward sanitizing the carts, etc. Mr. Verrengia shared the guidelines that the course has implemented due to COVID-19.

*Parks and Facilities COVID-19 Update-* Mr. Casiano shared an overview of the work they have been doing during COVID-19. He stated that while athletic fields are not open for play, they are open for the casual user. While they are still maintaining the fields, they are not lining the fields like they usually do this time of year for play, so they have been able to focus on other projects. The parks and trails have been heavily impacted as mowing has been difficult due to increased traffic early in the morning and late in the evenings, the mowing schedule has had to be changed. June 20<sup>th</sup> pools are expected to open, it typically takes about 6 weeks to get them ready, and this year they will have 4 weeks. Fencing and re-paving have been done at Meadow Pond Park. Mr. Petersen encouraged the commission to highlight Mr. Casiano's accomplishments during an upcoming Board of Selectmen meeting.

*Summer 2020 Camps & Aquatics Program COVID-19 Modifications Update-* Mr. Tyburski reported that camps will open at Central School and Memorial Park at 2/3 capacity. On or about June 20<sup>th</sup> pools will be able to open, they have been working with health district representatives on guidelines. While a fee reduction was proposed

to the Board of Selectmen, since the season is about 3 weeks shorter, it did not pass. The rates that were recommended to the BOS in January will be what is going forward. If a season pass was purchased, it will allow you to reserve a space in a swim session online the day before the session starts.

Mr. Thibeault reported that it will be a challenging summer for camp and pool staff. The main focus is safety and being very detailed regarding what the responsibilities and challenges are. Camp at Memorial Field, will have 60 kids in it (6 cohorts with 10 kids), however there will be no group to group interaction. In the event of a rain out, the whole program will move to Simsbury Farms where the ice rink and team rooms can be used. There is an actual lesson plan for every minute of every day, it will be very structured. While the camps will be different from previous years, it will still give kids the opportunity to be kids. There will be an additional pool director in charge of social distancing and also a “clean team” to clean the pool deck, railings, etc. Mr. Thibeault reported that he is hoping to find out more tomorrow regarding the social distancing guidelines. They have had to cancel swim readiness, level one and level two, the only levels that seem to fit into what the Red Cross is asking is level three and above. Memorial Pool will just be open to the camp with one public session at the end of the day.

Mr. Tyburski reported that while it will be more difficult to get into the pool than in the past due to the reduced capacity, online registration is only open to residents (other than the few non-resident families who bought their pass in April).

Mr. Wetjen inquired about swim teams using the pool. Mr. Thibeault said that it looks like it will be a go, however the ratios are still unclear and there won't be any in-person meets.

*Summer Events Update-* Mr. Tyburski reported that most town events have been cancelled including the Talcott Music Festival Series. The grand re-opening of the flower bridge was scheduled for June 6, 2020, however it is re-scheduled and will be held at the same time as Burgers on the Bridge, September 16.

*Simsbury 350 Update-* Mr. Tyburski reported that the celebration was planned to begin in May, however, they are now looking at July, with the possibility of small events coming out early in the fall. River Day has been postponed until June next year. Simsbury Celebrates is still on the agenda for November and some 350 events could be incorporated into that event.

## **Old Business**

*Simsbury Farms Sign Project Update.* Mr. Tyburski reported that although they did have to tweak the initial plan and design, Diana Ahern worked with the Commission and the town boards and in mid-April the signs were installed at Simsbury farms. Mr. Casiano mulched around the signs and at some point flowers will be planted. Mr. Tyburski thanked the Friends at Simsbury Farms for the signs.

*Update on Parks and Open Space Master Plan Process.* Mr. Tyburski shared that COVID-19 has slowed down the parks and open space master plan process. At the committee meeting back in April, a rough draft was provided that was much cleaner than the presentation seen in January. There were a few items that the committee thought needed to be adjusted and clarified. Their team is currently working on a pre-final draft which they hope to receive back in mid-June with presentation to the Board of Selectman in mid-July.

Mr. Bush stated they would like to re-schedule the next C.P.R. meeting from June 25 to June 18. Ms. Keppel made a motion to move the next meeting to June 18, Ms. Coppinger seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed.

## **Adjourn**

Mr. Wetjen made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Keppel seconded the motion. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

**Next Meeting**

The next Regular Meeting of the C. P. & R. Commission will be June 18, 2020 at 6 p.m. at Simsbury Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,  
Heather Taylor, Commission Clerk

DRAFT