

From: SimsburyCT Postings 2/29/12 11:48:13 AM
Subject: Parks & Recreation Commission Minutes 02/23/2012
To: SimsburyCT_ParkRecMin
Cc:

Culture, Parks, and Recreation Committee

Regular Meeting: Thursday, February 23, 2012 at 7:30 p.m.

MINUTES

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 p.m. by Chairman David Bush. Present commission members included Frank Salls, Harry Ryan, Bill Mullen, Barbara Koff, and John Pendergast. Others present included: Gerry Toner, C., P. & R. director. Linda Johnson, Janet Calabro, and Carol Brown from the Simsbury Celebrates Committee. John Verrengia, the head golf professional at Simsbury Farms, and Sean Askham, selectman, was also in attendance.

On behalf of the entire C., P. & R Commission, Mr. Bush thanked John Pendergast for his 14 years of service and offered him a certificate of appreciation. Mr. Pendergast is resigning from his term as a C., P. & R commission member.

II. Minutes

Ms. Koff made a motion to approve the June 2011 C, P, & R Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mullen, garnered no discussion, and was unanimously passed.

Mr. Salls made a motion to approve the July 2011 C, P, & R Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Koff, garnered no discussion, and was unanimously passed.

Mr. Mullen made a motion to approve the September 2011 C, P, & R Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ryan, garnered no discussion, and was unanimously passed.

Mr. Salls made a motion to amend the agenda to include approval of the January 2012 C, P, & R Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ryan, garnered no discussion, and was unanimously passed.

Mr. Bush made a motion to approve the January 2012 C, P, & R Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mullen, garnered no discussion, and was unanimously passed.

III. 2011 Simsbury Celebrates Report

Linda Johnson, Janet Calabro, and Carol Brown reported that the Simsbury Celebrates event was a resounding success! They estimated that 18,000 + people came out in the beautiful 50 degree weather. This was the largest turnout in the ten-year history of this annual community event. They especially wanted to thank Taryn Rea, the recreation supervisor, and the Simsbury Celebrates Committee for their invaluable help. New additions to the 2011 event were based on evaluation form comments. They were well-received and included food vendors, a roaming railroad, more outside activities, and better lighting.

Going forward, Ms. Johnson, Ms. Calabro, and Ms. Brown want to: 1. Keep this annual event free, 2. Book more acts in advance, 3. Provide more lighting and signage, 4. Enlist new and younger volunteers for the 15-member Simsbury Celebrates Committee, 5. Encourage more civic groups and building tenants to advertise the performers they will host to their own membership and to the local newspapers, and 5. Have a standing representative from the C., P. & R Commission receive emails and attend monthly Simsbury Celebrates committee meetings. Ms. Koff agreed to be the representative from the C., P. & R Commission. This year, they hope to keep things interesting for people who have been regular attendees. The parade and the fireworks will be kept in the same time slots, but acts will be moved to different venues. All children's events will be held in Palmer Hall (FCC) to make it easier for parents. More buildings and outdoor sites along Hopmeadow Street will be used for performance venues. The Simsbury Celebrates Committee would like to have brackets and hangers installed on the 19 new light posts in downtown Simsbury. This would allow them to add more event banners.

As of this month, \$7,000 of the total \$26,000 for the event has been raised. Ms. Calabro noted that local businesses and civic groups provide generous support, and that everything is paid in full before or at the event. If not enough money is raised, performances will be dropped.

IV. 2012 Golf Course & Swimming Pool Fees

Mr. Bush noted that he and Mr. Toner met with the golf course staff to discuss the 2012 Golf Fee Schedule. They made changes and recommendations. The most notable change was a reduction in the cost of Junior season passes. In order to increase participation by juniors, all felt that the

season pass fee should go down from \$470 to \$400 for resident juniors and from \$615 to \$495 for non-resident juniors. After this discussion Mr. Bush made a motion to approve the proposed 2012 Golf Course Fees, as illustrated in the 2-page fee schedule attachment. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mullen and was unanimously passed.

Mr. Toner discussed how the construction process on the Simsbury Farms main building should be completed by the time pool season begins. However, it may not be fully functional if construction is delayed. Daily fees and season pass prices for residents will be modestly increased. Season pass holders will pay a lower price for swim lessons, and daily fees for non-residents will go up. After this discussion, Mr. Mullen made a motion to adopt the 2012 Swim / Pool Fees, as illustrated in the 1 page attachment. The motion was seconded by Mr. Salls, and was unanimously passed.

V. Proposed 2012/13 Budget

The C., P. & R operating budget with non-recurring capital improvements (presented last month) will go as-is through the municipal budgetary process. On Tuesday evening, February 28, it will be discussed at the Board of Finance's Special Meeting.

VI. 2012 Golf Course Season

John Verrengia, the head golf professional at Simsbury Farms, spoke about the plans for opening, cleaning-up and marketing the Simsbury Farms Golf Course (SFGC). The idea to open the golf course early this year was thoroughly researched and analyzed. Mr. Toner and Mr. Verrengia consulted with other golf courses and industry personnel before making the decision to keep the season opening the same as previous years. The SFGC staff takes pride in offering a pristine course. While opening earlier may bring in extra revenue, it would also result in extra grounds maintenance hours.

Clean-up of the course is going well. More limbs than trees had fallen in the October storm. Most of these have been cleared and need to be chipped.

Mr. Verrengia reported that a different company was hired to create a new web site for the SFGC. The old web site is still up, but the new one will replace it by mid-March. The new web site features a clean design and an online tee time sign-up system. The golf staff will now be able to edit the

web site in-house for time sensitive messages about golf outings, course closings, and special discounts for playing during slow periods. All this will be integrated with an email blast system. Mr. Verrengia acknowledged Kelly Kearney, C., P. & R Commission member, for all his help.

There was much discussion about increasing the use of the golf course by children and junior golfers. Mr. Verrengia would like to have the golf course be a place for weekend family outings. New this year, Junior members will have free storage space for their clubs. On Saturday June 2, John Thibeault, the recreation supervisor would like to have a "Simsbury Farms Demo Day"

at the complex. There would be vendors, 3 night tournaments for families, young children and adults; a BBQ at Attilio's, and a showcase of the new complex and swim areas (only if construction is complete).

VII. New / Other Business.

Report on Simsbury Farms Complex Improvements

Mr. Toner reported that he meets bi-weekly with the contractor and architect. He is impressed with the contractor and is fairly confident that we'll meet our deadline. Mr. Mullen works on commercial construction projects, and suggested that he would be happy to help analyze the schedules and plans, if necessary.

Follow-Up on Simsbury Farms Complex Committee Discussion

Mr. Bush, Mr. Toner, Mr. Wetjen and Mr. Ryan met with the Simsbury Farms Complex Committee. The committee's work load will be lighter after the Complex renovations are completed. Mr. Bush noted that it was still a viable, talented and knowledgeable group that should continue. He suggested he would like a SFCC member or the SFCC chairman to fill the newly vacant position on the C, P, & R Commission. Mr. Ryan made a motion to: 1. Allow the Simsbury Farms Complex Committee to remain intact, and 2. Suggest to the Board of Selectmen that a Simsbury Farms Complex Committee member be added to the C, P, & R Commission. The motion was seconded by Mr. Salls and was unanimously passed. Discussion preceded the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorrie McElligott

Commission Clerk