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Cc:

CULTURE, PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES  
May 27, 2010  
REGULAR MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Culture, Parks & Recreation Commission was called to order at 7:37 p.m. in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices. Present were Commission members Linda Johnson, Barbara Koff, Kelly Kearney, Harry Ryan, and Director of Culture, Parks & Recreation Gerry Toner.

II. Minutes – February meeting

The minutes of February 25, 2010 were tabled until the next regularly scheduled meeting because of a lack of a quorum.

III. Simsbury Farms Golf Course – Marketing, Revenue Report

Regarding revenue, Mr. Toner stated that April's rounds were solid despite some mixed weather. March was also a good month. He stated that season pass sales are down from last year, which he feels is because of some other programs that were put into place including value cards and advantage cards.

Regarding marketing, Mr. Toner stated that they have tried to increase visibility. They have already done advertising in the Hartford Courant and other publications. As technology is changing, they also want to do direct emailing to people who have come to use the facility. They have already sent three direct emails inform golfers about upcoming events and new programs. Mr. Toner stated that the highest priority is attracting non-residents to play at the facility.

Ms. Koff suggested putting up directional signs along the street directing people to the golf course. Mr. Toner stated that there are signs up around Simsbury, although they can consider putting up more signs. Ms. Johnson suggested advertising with pictures of the golf course; the course is

beautiful.

Mr. Verrengia, Head Golf Professional at Simsbury Farms, stated that at the beginning of the season, the weather was excellent; towards the middle of April, the weather was not so great. He stated that the biggest thing is to try to get new people up to the facility. He stated that they put a bigger ad in the Hartford Courant this year to try and attract more people. Value cards are also a big hit with the residents and non-residents; people feel that this is a good deal for them. Mr. Verrengia stated that the advantage card is new this year that people are taking advantage of, although he feels that more people will purchase them next year once they are more familiar with them.

Mr. Verrengia stated that they will be starting a junior league in June. This will allow kids to meet players their own age. They will also be having a junior tournament this year.

Mr. Verrengia stated that they will also be having special outings this year at the facility. He stated that the golf course has been improved and Attilio is doing a great job with the restaurant. He believes that this will be a great year for the golf course; there are a lot of opportunities at the facility for the people of Simsbury and surrounding Towns.

Mr. Kearney questioned how the golf course goes about finding out where people are from when they use the facility. Mr. Verrengia stated that they do get people's email addresses and they have been getting a lot of calls from people from the ad in the Hartford Courant. He stated that email is their best source to knowing where people are coming from. Mr. Toner stated that they are also looking into an automated system for tee times; this will better track people to know where they are coming from.

#### IV. Summer Program Registration

Mr. Toner distributed a program report and stated that people are not signing up for summer programs until the last minute. Overall, they are doing well on the full day and regular camps. The pre-school camp is behind enrollment this year, which is usually a program that has been full in previous years. He stated that the one week camps are half day camps, which are also not fully enrolled. He stated that pre camp care and after camp care has been very popular so far this year. He feels that a lot of this is economy driven. Overall, considering everything combined, Mr. Toner stated that they are about the same in terms of enrollment as last year.

#### V. Athletic Field Report

Mr. Toner stated that Mr. Kearney, Mr. Bush and Ms. Liljedahl served on the

athletic field subcommittee. The Board of Selectmen has asked them to address the short term and long term needs assessment for the athletic fields. A draft report was distributed, which looked at field inventory and getting input from field users in terms of their needs. He stated that soccer and lacrosse have both stated that they will be in need of more field space in the near future. Mr. Toner stated that these users will need to provide documentation as to what they need and why they need it.

Mr. Kearney stated that the subcommittee met several times with the lacrosse and soccer organizations. The initial reason for getting together was because of a dispute regarding field usage. Their message to both groups was that they need to have a strategic plan regarding what they need, regarding future growth, and how they will be doing fundraising in order to make this happen.

Mr. Toner stated that the Town is currently maintaining 35 fields. They have lost a full time employee last year. He stated that the fields need to be scheduled as efficiently as possible. The organizations looking for additional fields will also need to have a strategic plan.

Mr. Toner stated that if this Commission is comfortable with the way this report is written, it will go to the Board of Selectmen. There was a consensus by the Commission that they approve this report.

#### VI. Memorial Pool Schedule

Mr. Toner stated that at one point, the Memorial Pool was cut from the budget. He stated that this is a very important component for Camp Stuff-Ta-Doo, which is a very popular camp. He stated that the Selectmen have restored the pool to operate during the week; it will not be open on weekends. They will also be offering instructional programs during the week. He feels that this was a good compromise for this year.

Ms. Koff questioned if the pool would be open to the public during the week. Mr. Toner stated that the pool would be open to public swim during the weekday afternoons.

#### VII. Dog Park – Update

Ms. Johnson stated that they continue to move along with the dog park. Their biggest challenge is fundraising and also advertising. She stated that they have put posters up around Town and also distributed brochures. They also have donations jars throughout Town that are filling up; they have raised approximately \$3,000.

Ms. Johnson stated that they have just received the final site plan, which

they have been working on for several months. This allows them to start clearing the site, which the Town will start in August. She stated that Simscroft has volunteered to do the final clearing. A layer of dirt also needs to be put down, along with mulching and a fence.

Ms. Johnson stated that they will be marching in the Memorial Day parade; they will have a banner and will be marching with several dogs. She stated that they will also be jointing with the Simsbury Celebrates in their spring market and tag sale event.

Ms. Johnson stated that the Dog Park Committee wants to make Paw Meadow complementary to the surrounding area. Simscroft and the Town have been very helpful. She stated that she does not believe the dog park will be finished this year, unless something changes in the economy. The fencing will be very costly.

#### VIII. Simsbury Celebrates – Report

Ms. Johnson stated that each year they have a spring market and tag sale. As of yesterday, there were 61 tables reserved. She stated that she is hopeful that this event will raise about \$3,000. They have raised approximately \$10,000 for Simsbury Celebrates so far; their goal is to raise \$25,000.

Ms. Johnson stated that the gingerbread house contest was very popular last year. They will be doing this again next year, although it may not be a contest. She stated that Ski Sundown will also be returning next year, as well as the trampoline act.

#### IX. Park/Golf Maintenance Facility – Status

Mr. Toner stated that they are waiting for several items to be completed. The septic system still needs to be installed and a contractor has been selected to do the project. The building is coming along great and it will accommodate all of their needs.

#### X. Other Business

Mr. Kearney questioned if there was an update on the Pixel Network. Mr. Toner stated that the hardware is in place, which is currently used for informational purposes. He stated that there is a new owner in that company; they have not contacted the Town as of yet.

#### XI. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

27/2010