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Cc:

Culture, Parks & Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting – Minutes
June 25, 2009

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Culture, Parks & Recreation Commission was called to order at 7:40 p.m. at the Simsbury Farms Main Building – Pool Deck. The following members were present: Commission members Kelly Kearney, Barbara Koff, David Bush and Harry Ryan. Also in attendance was Gerry Toner, Director of Culture, Parks & Recreation.

II. MINUTES – April, May meetings

The minutes were tabled until the next meeting because of a lack of a quorum.

III. SKATEPARK – REPORT

Mr. Toner stated that a letter has been sent to the Board of Education regarding wanting to keep the skate park open as well as the issues with the park. Mr. Toner stated that he has received one response from a mother who is willing to help. He was surprised that he did not get more responses. The Town of Canton has had similar circumstances with their skate park; they are still deliberating regarding what to do. Mr. Toner believes that if there was a Parental Board from the beginning that took responsibility of the skate park, things would have been different. He feels that not having a Board may have lead to part of the problem.

Mr. Toner stated that they will still be watching the activity at the skate park, although there have not been any big problems lately. One of the biggest problems has been the kids parking at the cemetery mostly on the weekends.

Ms. Koff questioned how many children are currently using the skate park.

Mr. Toner stated that there is not a big crowd using the park; it may be on a downward spiral. Mr. Bush stated that the longer skateboards are becoming more popular; these boards are not used for tricks. Mr. Toner stated that rollerblades were very popular when the skate park opened, although they are not as popular now.

IV. SUMMER PROGRAMS – REPORT

Mr. Toner distributed the Summer Camp enrollment list. He stated that all of the programs are starting next week. Regarding day camps, he stated that Awesome Adventures is down the most from last year. He feels that this may be because it is more costly than the other camps, although the second session is already sold out. Last year, 147 children were enrolled. There are currently 37 spots still open.

Regarding Camp Stuff, Mr. Toner stated that this is also down a little, although Pre-camp and After-camp are both up. Koala Kids has the same enrollment as last year. The Squadron Line Playground Program is way off, although he is unsure why this is. There is no limit to this program, so Mr. Toner stated that he is hopeful that there may be a big walk-up at the start of the program. This program used to be in Tariffville; the location change may be part of why this program is not doing as well. Overall, Mr. Toner stated that these camps are down from last year.

Regarding the One-Week Camps, Mr. Toner stated that this is up \$5,000. They have seen good growth across the board from last year. The Lego Camp this year is very popular. Overall, given the economic climate, he feels that the registrations for the programs are similar to last year.

Mr. Bush suggested taking a survey of why people chose not to sign up for the Squadron Line Playground Program. Mr. Kearney suggested using Survey Monkey online. This site collects and analyzes the data; there is a link that gets sent to all of the parents. Mr. Toner stated that this would be considered. They usually give the parents forms at the end of all programs as a follow-up.

Mr. Bush questioned if the numbers of registrations would change now that school has ended. Mr. Toner stated they may change a little; people may be waiting until the last minutes because of the higher prices of some of the programs.

V. AQUATIC PROGRAM

Mr. Toner distributed the aquatic report to the Commission members. The two major concerns that were highlighted from the survey were cleanliness and comfort. Mr. Toner stated that they have added more shade and more

chairs because of these concerns. Heavy duty umbrellas on a base have been added for shade; this is a big issue for some people. Regarding cleanliness, a new guard rotation has been added to the former system.

Mr. Toner stated that the upper deck has been painted and the lower deck has been stained. They will be staining the lower deck again because it did not come out as well as expected. He stated that the locker rooms have also been painted and the floors are now adhesive.

Regarding revenue, Mr. Toner stated that the early pass sale with discounts worked very well. They are currently \$10,000 ahead of last year. He stated that swim lesson registration is level with last year's registration.

Regarding staffing, Mr. Toner stated that in this economic climate, many people are looking for jobs and also returning from last year. This is great for the Town. Mr. Bush stated that from a survey regarding staffing that was taken last year, it was very prominent in the survey that, "no fun was allowed". He asked how this was approached with the guards. Mr. Toner stated that gradually, over time, the guards have loosened up. They are told to use good sense, and most do. He stated that safety is most important; there needs to be a balance between safety and fun. Mr. Toner stated that they will be having Music Mondays and floatations to help create more of a fun place for the kids.

Mr. Bush stated that the pool has opened up 1-2 weeks earlier than last year. Mr. Toner stated that people were looking for the pool to be opened on Memorial Day, although the weather has not cooperated.

Mr. Kearney questioned if not having another diving board was a safety issue or cost issue. Mr. Toner stated that they could get another diving board; money is not the issue. He stated to offset not having two diving boards, they will have inflatables for the kids to jump off. He stated that they did consider getting a slide, although they are very expensive. He stated that they will wait to see what the interest is.

Mr. Toner stated that, overall, he is very happy with the summer programs. Pool passes are a good indication that people are staying close to home.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Bush stated his concern regarding not having a junior golf program/tournament for children. He stated that he was told that this program was not being held because there was not enough time to do this. Mr. Bush feels that there are enough employees to handle something like this. He would like to see 3-4 competitive events for the children over the course

of the summer. Mr. Toner stated that they have started a short course; the course was cut in half and cement markers were installed for the children's tees. He stated that the kids also play free with their parents on Sundays. Mr. Toner stated that this may be taking the place of the junior program.

Mr. Toner stated that Attilio has received the beer and wine permit. Attilio is looking to have leagues come in and utilize the facility. Mr. Bush stated that Attilio has installed a television into the dining area, which he feels was a great idea. The television is not obtrusive at all.

Mr. Ryan stated that he attended the Building Committee meeting. They were very disappointed that the Culture Parks and Recreation Commission was not in attendance to make a presentation for the Simsbury Farms Project. At the end of their meeting, they stated that they would be having a joint meeting with the CP&R Commission.

Mr. Toner stated that Chairman Johnson did write a letter to the Building Commission, but was not aware that they needed anything more than that. He stated that he will follow-up with this issue.

Mr. Toner stated that he will have the architect come to the September CP&R Commission meeting to discuss the plans for the Simsbury Farms Complex. The Building Commission could be invited. He stated that Mary Glassman has talked to the Department Heads regarding the 6-year Capital Plan. The architect has prepared estimates for this purpose.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.