

TOWN OF SIMSBURY – CULTURE, PARKS, AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Subject to Vote of Approval – Regular Meeting Minutes – **Thursday, October 22, 2020** – 3 pages

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 p.m. by David Bush, Chairman via Zoom video conference. Other commission members who were present included Kelly Kearney, Gerry Wetjen, Liz Keppel, Sarah Cramer, Lori Coppinger, and Danielle Celli. The C. P. & R. Director, Tom Tyburski, Board of Selectman Liaison, Chris Petersen and Recreation Supervisor, John Thibeault, were also in attendance.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

No changes were made to the September 24, 2020, Regular Meeting Minutes. Mr. Bush declared the minutes approved and requested that they be put on record.

Presentations

Evan Harris, an Eagle Scout Candidate, discussed his proposed project at West Mountain Park. He stated that his project is the restoration of the basketball court there, which would include weeding, filling in cracks with asphalt filler, resealing the entire court, painting, and creating a border. Mr. Bush inquired as to what fundraising efforts will be done and how volunteers will be obtained. Mr. Harris stated that his first step of action will be to ask local businesses for donations, he will also ask other scouts in his troop to volunteer. Mr. Harris stated he is currently working on getting his project approved, he is waiting on three signatures and Mr. Tyburski has already signed off on it. Mr. Bush requested that if the project goes forward that new nets are added to the project. Mr. Harris stated that he is hoping to get the project done soon, however due to fundraising efforts the project may have to wait until the spring. Ms. Celli made a motion to approve Mr. Harris' request for the project at West Mountain Park. Mr. Wetjen seconded the motion. The motion passed with all in favor.

Public Session:

None.

New Business

Summary of 2020-21- Winter 2020-21 ice rink programming and procedures- Mr. Thibeault reported that they had their first staff training today, although most of the staff worked for him this summer. They are scheduled to open next Saturday, however due to the upcoming forecast that does not seem likely. They will possibly open the middle of the following week. Mr. Thibeault reported that any long term group spots are booked, however, 8:30-9:30 Saturday nights are open to the public, other than that they are solidly booked. Mr. Thibeault stated that skating lessons sold out in three days. He is confident they can produce another quality skating lesson program with all the protocols they have to keep in place. Due to some instructors returning home from college, they will be able to offer some daytime skating lessons. Due to Covid-19, all programs will have pre-registration and there will be no walk ups allowed.

Endorsement of Danielle Celi to serve on Sustainable CT Committee as representative from Culture, Parks and Recreation Commission- Mr. Bush thanked Ms. Cramer for all of her time put into the Sustainable CT Committee and thanked Ms. Celli for stepping up to replace her. Mr. Wetjen made a motion to endorse Ms. Celli's candidacy to the Sustainable CT Committee as a representative from the Culture, Parks and Recreation Commission. Ms. Keppel seconded the motion. The motion passed all in favor. Mr. Tyburski stated that he will aim to bring in the Chairman of the Sustainable CT Committee for a brief presentation to the C.P.R. Commission in February.

Simsbury Celebrates 2020 Update- Mr. Tyburski reported that the Simsbury Celebrates Committee is moving forward with events on the Saturday after Thanksgiving. There will be a standing fire truck parade from 5-8 p.m. on Iron Horse, SCTV will assist in producing a program of 10 minute performances of local performers

that will be shown that evening as well as throughout the month of December. The annual gingerbread competition will now be a virtual tour. They are still working on a fireworks show. Fundraising letters went out last week and donations can be made at the Simsbury recreation website. There will be a decrease in the number of volunteers needed, as many events are not in-person.

Update on DEEP Forestry Work- Mr. Bush provided an update on the DEEP forestry work at Great Pond State Park. He shared that they had been cutting a great deal of the forest and leaving the wood, many citizens expressed concern that they were just clear cutting and there was no rhyme or reason as to what was going on. Kevin Witkos and John Hampton got involved and initially got the work stopped. Subsequent to that there was an email shared that the work has officially been cancelled.

Old Business

Review of Special Revenue Fund Subcommittee Discussion- Mr. Tyburski shared that as previously reported, the Special Revenue Fund subcommittee started meeting again in September. Three meetings have been held so far. The purpose of the discussion is how to resolve the issue of a constant perceived shortfall in the Parks and Recreation special revenue fund. It was successful for a number of years and turning a net profit, however, through circumstances with town budgeting, staff costs were added to that fund, as well as more of the overhead of utilities and employee benefits and it became a burden on the fund and started showing up as a loss for many years. The Town was then having to back-fund it through end of year funding. A survey was done and showed that other towns were funding theirs quite differently using general fund dollars. Discussion has been taking place on how to properly fund Parks and Recreation, outside of parks maintenance, which is currently tax funded. The idea is to tie up the discussion before the start of budget preparation season.

Simsbury Farms Golf Course Monthly Report- Mr. Tyburski reported that they have had a phenomenal year. They have also had great success with outings, many of the outings lost in May and June did reschedule for the fall and they are off to a great start to fiscal year 2021.

FOSF Golf Tournament: "A Tribute to Mike Wallace" recap- Mr. Kearney stated that on October 11th they honored Mike Wallace at the Friends of Simsbury Farms Golf Tournament – a good time was had by all and they raised a fair amount of money. Mr. Kearney shared that a common sentiment was that the irrigation system needs work. Mr. Wetjen stated that is in the budget for 2022. Mr. Bush commended the women's groups, stating they had more women participants at this tournament than any other golf tournament. Mr. Bush thanked Mr. Kearney for a great job putting together the event.

Golf Course Restaurant Lease/RFP Update- Mr. Tyburski shared that the RFP for the golf course restaurant lease is 95% done, as he just received some edits from Town administration yesterday. His goal is to make it live tomorrow or Monday, bids would be due back the 16th or 17th of November. The idea is to have someone under contract by January 1st.

Simsbury Farms Golf Professional- RFQ Status Update- Mr. Tyburski reported that they are very happy with the current Simsbury Farms golf professional, however, in prior five intervals this contract was just renewed or renegotiated, however the Town's new purchasing policies don't allow for this so an RFQ for the golf professional was created. Mr. Tyburski stated that he is currently waiting to hear back from the town attorney to put the final touches on this and ideally it goes out next week. He hopes to get it squared away by Thanksgiving, as they are trying to expedite it.

Simsbury Farms Parking, Roadway and Basketball Court Lighting Proposed Project Update- Mr. Tyburski reported that they received bids back, however those bids came back over budget. The town engineer has been working to get it to a number that may be doable and although no contract has been awarded. Mr. Tyburski stated that he is not sure if the project will be awarded or it will be re-structured. He believes the timeline for the

projects will be moved to next spring or summer. The clubhouse staining project did come back under bid and will be completed by next week.

Parks and Open Space Master Plan Presentation to BOS on Monday, October 26, 2020- Mr. Tyburski reported that a final draft of the Parks and Open Space Master Plan is available on the Town's website, it is still in draft form as it hasn't been approved yet by the Board of Selectmen yet.

Mr. Bush and the Commission thanked Mr. Tyburski for the great job he is doing.

Adjourn

Ms. Coppinger made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Wetjen seconded the motion. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:03p.m.

Next Meeting

The next Regular Meeting of the C. P. & R. Commission will be December 3, 2020 at 6 p.m. via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Taylor,
Commission Clerk