

TOWN OF SIMSBURY – CULTURE, PARKS, AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Subject to Vote of Approval – Regular Meeting Minutes – **Thursday, September 24, 2020** – 3 pages

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:06 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, Danielle Celli, and Liz Keppel, The C. P. & R. Director, Tom Tyburski, and Recreation Supervisor John Thibeault, were also in attendance.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

No changes were made to the July 23, 2020, Regular Meeting Minutes. Mr. Bush declared the minutes approved and requested that they be put on record.

Public Session:

None.

New Business

Review of 2020 Summer Aquatics Programming- Mr. Thibeault shared that this summer's aquatics programming was a challenge due to the strict protocols and thanked all the staff that worked for him. He especially thanked Mr. Grant Gritzmacher, the Simsbury Sprinters swim team coach, who put together an outstanding swim team program that brought in \$14,000. He also thanked Ann Carabillo, the crew team coach, who put on a very successful crew program. Mr. Thibeault stated he is very proud of the kids for the incredible job that they did this summer. Mr. Bush thanked Mr. Thibeault for providing the leadership, organization and support which allowed the staff to do an incredible job.

Golf Course Restaurant Lease/RFP Discussion- Mr. Tyburski shared that they are currently in a third draft of their RFP for the golf course restaurant vendor. A marketing brochure for the restaurant has been created to show potential vendors the opportunity that is there, those are getting distributed out in town. The Town Manager's office is looking over the RFP right now, they hope to get that out to the public in the beginning of October. They anticipate responses coming back by the end of November and then hopefully around December 1, they will be to the point where they are negotiating with a vendor on a contract. A survey has been put out to those on the Simsbury Farms and C.P.R. mailing list regarding what people's usage of the restaurant is, what they would like to see there, etc., as of this afternoon there were over 500 responses to the survey. The survey ends on September 28th, a link to the survey results will be sent to the Commission upon completion. Mr. Kearney stated that he is hopeful that the Town will have a sense of cooperation with whoever the vendor is that gets selected.

Simsbury Farms Golf Professional -RFQ Status Update- Mr. Tyburski stated that the Town has a golf professional who hires a staff at Simsbury Farms Golf Course, they have been there since 1999. His contract has consistently been renewed because of great performance over the years, however, the Town has implemented a new purchasing policy, cleaned up some of the language in the charter a couple years ago and as a result of that a lot of the long-term contacts now have to go through the formal process of review, and the golf pro contact is one of those. They are doing a request for qualifications, which is in its second draft. Mr. Tyburski expects that will also go out the first week of October, with proposals coming back early November and that by the end of the golf season the negotiations are far along on the next contract with the golf pro. Mr. Tyburski stated that they are hopeful that the current pro and his staff will submit an application.

Review of Special Revenue Fund Subcommittee Discussion- Mr. Bush reported that they have reformed the subcommittee with two representatives from the Board of Selectmen, two representatives from the Board of Finance and two from C.P.R. Mr. Bush stated that the first meeting was productive and there was good

dialogue. The goal is to fix some of the deficiencies that prior government acts caused to make our revenue fund appear to be a fund that loses money every year. Mr. Bush stated that if expenses are allocated like almost every other revenue fund in the state, we would appear to be in the black.

COVID-19's Impact on Fall Sports in Simsbury Update- Mr. Tyburski reported that the state has allowed a lot of youth sports organizations to resume practices and games in June. Anyone that uses the fields has to submit a COVID-19 plan which is reviewed by Mr. Tyburski and the health department. Youth football is the only organization which will not be proceeding, although they are attempting to do flag football for the younger kids in the organization. Mr. Tyburski reported that they have been doing outdoor basketball clinics, which have been a big hit. They are uncertain as to what is going to happen in the winter, however, as fall approaches they will re-assess what the state guidance is and a decision will be made from there. They are planning for a regular rink season, although the rink currently has a 50% capacity limit, there has been a lot more requests for rink time, as we have an advantage by having an outdoor rink. Mr. Kearney asked that the groups are reminded that they are obligated to make sure the artificial defibrillators are available and they know how to use them.

Simsbury 350 - Movies in the Park Update- Mr. Tyburski reported that the movie in the park had a crowd of just under 500 people in attendance. The 350 Committee gave out blue and green glow necklaces. They expect another great night this Saturday night for the next movie.

Simsbury Halloween Spooktacular with Chamber of Commerce and Simsbury Performing Arts Center- Mr. Tyburski shared that this is a pivot event from the usual chili cook-off. The event will take place in the northbound lane of Iron Horse Blvd, each 15 minute segment has a limit of 30 vehicles for that time slot, the cars will be stopping at local business' tents. The tents will be decorated for Halloween and they are encouraging participants to decorate their vehicles and to dress up. There will be food trucks, bands and entertainment for the kids at Simsbury Meadows afterwards. It will be a daylong event starting at 9:00 a.m. ending at 5:00 p.m.

Old Business

Update on Meadowood Potential Open Space Acquisition- Mr. Tyburski shared that the Board of Selectmen had an additional presentation on the potential Meadowood Open Space Acquisition in July and the Board of Finance had a presentation last week, the project is still alive and moving forward but at a slow pace. There has not been a formal vote on the project yet, however, there is a possible referendum vote on this late winter/early spring.

Update on Status of Open Space on Holcomb Street Disposition and Purchase of Bike Trail Easement- Mr. Tyburski reported that the Antonio family has asked the town to sell them a piece of open space property that is to the rear of their property on Holcomb Street. This matter has gone before the Board of Finance, Board of Selectmen, and Open Space Committee. The Board of Selectmen, at their last meeting, did authorize the Town Manager to enter into sales discussion with the Antonio family. At the same time, the Town has been planning a bike trail extension from the Route 10 intersection with 315 up to Tariffville Park and down to Tariffville and then connecting to the Bloomfield trail. One of the things that's needed to make the trail happen is an easement in front of Old Well Tavern, the Town has been negotiating with the Antonios to get the rights to that easement.

Simsbury Farms Golf Course Monthly Report- Mr. Tyburski reported that the level of play they have had this year has been great, many of the spring outings that were cancelled have resumed. Last year was the best fiscal year the course has had. The early fall has also been very good, they will get the final numbers back next week for September. Mr. Bush stated his appreciation regarding the work Mike, John and their staff have done to make the golf course a very welcoming place during a very challenging time.

FOSF Golf Tournament: A Tribute to Mike Wallace" being held Friday, October 2 – Mr. Kearney requested that if any Commission members are available, they attend the 11:00 a.m. ceremony to honor Mike Wallace on October 2nd. In reference to the Friends of Simsbury Farms, Mr. Toner has asked two things, any assistance anyone can provide on October 2nd would be appreciated, the second request is that anyone that would like to join the group, give it some thought as they would welcome a new perspective. A proclamation for Mike Wallace was discussed.

Simsbury Farms Parking, Roadway and Basketball Court Lighting Proposed Project Update –Mr. Tyburski shared that the project did go out to bid about a few weeks ago, the bids came back high, the Town is exploring what options there may be. The basketball court lighting, although donor funded, will only be able to happen if the lighting project happens, hopefully by next month they will know more.

Parks and Open Space Master Plan Current Draft- Mr. Tyburski shared that he has received the final draft of the report, it is posted on the C.P.R. page. It will be sent out to the Open Space Committee in advance of their meeting next week. There will be a special meeting of the Board of Selectmen on October 26th. At that point, the consultant will make their presentation of the final report.

Mr. Bush spoke regarding Ms. Cramer's participation in the Sustainability Committee. He requested that one of the newer members consider taking over this position as Ms. Cramer has her hands in numerous groups.

Adjourn

Ms. Keppel made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Kearney seconded the motion. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

Next Meeting

The next Regular Meeting of the C. P. & R. Commission will be October 23, 2020 at 6 p.m. via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Taylor,
Commission Clerk