

**COVENTRY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11TH, 2017**

The Coventry Parks & Recreation Commission held a regular meeting on Wednesday, January 11th, 2017 in Town Hall Conference Room B. Sean Butler called the meeting to order at 7:07. Jillian Miner was seated for regular member Todd Messier.

Members Present: Sean Butler, Marie Gallo-Hall, Jennifer Rodgers and Jillian Miner.

Members Absent: Todd Messier and Antonia Conti.

Others Present: Wendy Rubin, Director of Parks & Recreation and Caterina Merriam, Recreation Supervisor.

Audience of Citizens: None.

Acceptance of Minutes:

Marie Gallo-Hall moved to accept the November 2nd, 2016 regular meeting minutes. Jennifer Rodgers seconded. Motion voted in the affirmative by Sean Butler, Jennifer Rodgers, Jillian Miner and Marie Gallo-Hall. Motion carried.

Correspondence:

- Letter from Debbie Zeppa, Lake Advisory Committee re: Hydrilla Treatment:
 - Ms. Zeppa responded to correspondence from Ms. Rubin re: the Commission's concerns about DEEP's communication with residents regarding last year's treatment. Ms. Zeppa agreed that it could have been better, and that if treatment is done again next year, she will bring our concerns to the Committee and DEEP.
- Memo from State of CT re: LOCIP Funding:
 - 2017 funding is on hold due to State budget constraints, and no new project requests will be accepted at this time.
- Letter from Graham Stevens, DEEP, re: Creaser Park Lease:
 - DEEP Staff is in the process of reviewing the lease, which expires in October 2017. They are now requesting an A2 map, which is quite expensive to obtain, so staff is meeting to discuss the process and what else can be done.
- Letter from Lions Club re: Sponsorship of second train at Polar Express, 2016:
 - The Commission requested that a Thank you note/letter be sent to the group for their contribution.

Staff Report:

A written Staff Report was distributed to the Commission for their review. Ms. Rubin went on to discuss a few noteworthy items:

- Wrestling:
 - Ms. Rubin contacted both the Insurance Company and Town Manager regarding their proposal. It was determined that we would be setting a precedent, and that the liability is too great.

- The Wrestling board did provide their budget, per the Commission's request. It was evident that they are "breaking even" and are not at risk of going under.
 - Mr. Gibson, Wrestling Coach responded well, but still asked to meet with staff regarding other collaborative efforts and partnerships.
 - Ms. Rubin also received a request from the Baseball League, asking that Parks & Recreation financially support their program. Ms. Rubin responded similarly, denying their request.
- Patriots Park Vandalism:
 - Doors to both the EO Smith & UCONN Women's boathouses were damaged. EO Smith is missing 3 motors that were stolen as a result. DPW and UCONN Staff have worked to secure the doors and/or replace them, as well as the locks.
- Basketball:
 - Several postponements of games have occurred recently, due to inclement weather. Many complaints from parents and coaches have been received; Ms. Rubin is working on rescheduling games with representatives from the other Towns in the league.
- Caretaker House:
 - Ms. Rubin will provide copies of the inspection reports to the membership for their review. There are some structural issues in the basement, as well as a new roof and plumbing repairs required. We are looking at an estimate of \$30-\$40,000 to make the renovations needed for occupation. As a result, the Commission must discuss the options, as to whether to renovate, or begin the feasibility study regarding building a new Community Center.
 - The Arts Guild has re-approached Parks & Rec regarding the Guild's potential usage of the Caretaker House. Mr. Elsesser requested that the Commission consider the Arts Guild's request for usage of the House. The Guild is considering starting a GoFundMe campaign to raise the necessary funding to make the repairs, and Parks & Rec could support them with grant writing opportunities. Ms. Rubin noted that there is a lot of funding out there right now for the Arts.
 - Ms. Gallo-Hall requested additional information; how would this work? Ms. Rubin noted that Arts groups applying for grant funding must be in partnership with an agency like us, to qualify. Additionally, Ms. Rubin noted that the Parks & Rec Commission is also the Town's Arts Commission, so this kind of support is in line with our mission. Parks & Rec would also help facilitate and be involved with the many programs and events the Guild would hold, in that facility.

Sean Butler moved to support further research regarding Arts Guild use of the Caretaker House, to include the potential for other users to utilize the space. Jennifer Rodgers seconded. Motion voted in the affirmative by Sean Butler, Marie Gallo-Hall, Jennifer Rodgers and Jillian Miner. Motion carried.

Old Business:

- FY 2016-2017 Budget & Capital Improvement Plan:
 - Staff is meeting with the Finance Director and Town Manager this month, to review our Budget proposal. Ms. Rubin explained that raising fees in 2016 has made a big impact in our bottom line.

New Business:

- 2017 Meeting Schedule:

Sean Butler moved to accept the proposed Meeting Schedule for 2017. Jennifer Rodgers seconded. Motion voted in the affirmative by Sean Butler, Jennifer Rodgers, Marie Gallo-Hall and Jillian Miner. Motion carried.

- Elections: Call for Nominations:
 - **Marie Gallo-Hall moves to nominate Todd Messier. Sean Butler seconded.**
 - **Marie Gallo-Hall moved to nominate Sean Butler for the position of Vice-Chair. Jennifer Rodgers seconded.**
 - **Sean Butler moves to nominate Jennifer Rodgers for the position of Secretary. Jillian Miner seconded.**

- Travel Basketball:
 - Ms. Rubin explained that the Travel Basketball program is becoming more and more challenging, and several complaints have been received (both within the league and from members of the Rec. League). The program is barely breaking even between revenue and expenses, and the program serves a very small number of kids (27 kids on 3 teams). Ms. Rubin is hoping to research the options, to see what else is out there for these kids.
 - Ms. Rodgers explained that next year may be different, depending on the skill level of the kids coming up through the rec program. She added that speaking with the coaches first would be beneficial.
 - Ms. Rubin noted that Wins 4 Life was considered last year, to take over the Travel program, however she would like to see what else is out there. She went on to say that the process of assigning & appointing coaches should be re-evaluated and updated. Ms. Rubin explained that she would like to determine a plan involving an application process, including references and interviews (Commission members would serve on the interview panel). Ms. Rubin also suggested implementing a “Secret shopper-type” evaluation process for coaches. The Commission agreed on all points.
 - Ms. Rubin noted that a major complaint is to do with gym time and practices. She would like to see the Travel Program only practice once a week instead of twice, as that limits what’s available for the Rec. Program, which serves 240 kids (9 times the number of kids playing travel).

Adjournment: With no other business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 8:29pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Caterina Merriam,
Recreation Supervisor

Please note: These minutes are not official until approved by the Parks & Recreation Commission at the next Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting. Please see the next Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes for approval or changes to these minutes.