

**SUFFIELD PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
MONTHLY MEETING  
May 6, 2015**

The Suffield Parks & Recreation Commission held its regular meeting on Wednesday, May 6, 2015 in the upper level conference room, Town Hall, 83 Mountain Rd., Suffield, CT.

ATTENDANCE: .....Lou Casinghino, Chairman  
.....Cindy Nicholson, Vice Chairman  
.....Kerri Milne, Clerk  
.....Leeayn Burke  
.....Brian Casinghino  
.....Bill Clark  
.....David Rusnock

ABSENT:.....Amy Egan

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:.....Wendy J. LaMontagne, Director

Lou called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**PUBLIC INPUT:** None.

**MINUTES:** Brian made a motion to accept the minutes with the following amendment to Program Reports concerning bike lanes in the town: “the commission supported the idea of establishing a bike route on main roads, Mountain Road, Rt. 168, to connect the town and create a separate bike lane as we see in many other neighboring towns and as has become popular regionally and think we can set our sight on as an issue”. Cindy seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous to accept the minutes with the amendment.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Wendy said she was notified by the Friends of Suffield that the department will be receiving a grant. Wendy wrote a grant for a Concert on the Green. Wendy will be attending a ceremony on Tuesday to see what the grant award is. Wendy has been working with the Around Town Singers to do a concert on the green which will be July 22. The performance will be partially funded from the grant.

Lou and Wendy received a letter from Gerry Crane informing the commission that he is stepping down. Lou read Gerry’s letter. Lou said that he has talked with Gerry and let him know that anytime Babbs is discussed the commission would welcome his attendance and comments. Cindy said she would like to request something formal from the 1<sup>st</sup> Selectman’s office thanking Gerry for his years of service. The commission agreed. Wendy said that she will send a letter from the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Two weeks ago was Earth Day and the department received good press, as Wendy coordinated a donation of \$500 worth of trees and landscaping that were planted at Sunrise Park. Tom Drakeley, Park Superintendent, was very involved with the location of the planting of the trees. Wendy said the donation came from Paxair and we thank them. We are on their calendar for next year. The goal is replacement of trees at the dam project at Sunrise Park.

**PROGRAM REPORTS:** The commission discussed the program enrollment and factors that affect enrollment numbers, along with on-line registration and emails that are sent to program participants.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Bridge Street School - update:** Lou said that Beth Chafetz wrote an excellent article on funding of the community center. Wendy said the 2<sup>nd</sup> public form was held on April 11 with a small attendance but with very good questions and comments. The commission discussed the Finance Board meeting at which the Board sent the bonding issue back to the Selectmen. Lou said that he felt the commission should make a motion to request the Selectmen to act on the Bridge Street School project. Brian made a motion that based upon the extensive studies conducted, the workings of the ad hoc committee, the thorough business plan that was concluded and made available to all town officials and residents as well as multiple public hearings on the subject, that we as a commission support the Board of Selectmen acting on the issue to move it forward to the Board of Finance. Leeyan seconded and the vote was unanimous.

The commission discussed the public forums, the comments from residents both for and against, the cost and funding, support from the Town, the use of the proposed building, how best to gain support for the project, the Finance Board meetings, etc.

**Sports programs – sub committee update:** Cindy said that she will be meeting with Dan Ledger on Friday at Sunrise Park to discuss the upcoming soccer season.

Kerri read comments, that are on a public social media site, the comments were regarding our soccer program in regard to how the program is conducted and how they feel the program could better be conducted. Kerri discussed conversations she has had with parents regarding the soccer program and their feelings on this issue. The commission discussed the comments from the social media site and also the comments that Kerri has received from residents.

Brian and Dave discussed conversations that they have had with parents regarding experiences and changes to the soccer and basketball programs. They also brought up comments regarding staff and parents who feel this has caused discord.

The commission discussed the changes that have been requested, Wendy said that changes are being implemented and may not all be done at once. The commission also

discussed this aspect of both the basketball and soccer program and what can be done to improve upon.

Cindy said that her meeting on Friday will be to discuss the changes that will be implemented for the coming soccer program and the fact that Parks and Recreation is going to do what they can to make the changes suggested.

Cindy said that the commission should vote on changes to the basketball and soccer programs and this will then be followed.

The commission discussed having more of a presence in the town, at these programs, the Board of Finance meetings, etc.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Summer programs:** Wendy passed out the summer brochure. Wendy reviewed some of the new programs along with returning programs.

Wendy said that registrations are coming in and if a parent is having trouble with the on-line registration, they are helped either over the phone or they come into the office and they are offered assistance.

Wendy said that elections are usually held at the May meeting but because it was not on the agenda, Wendy wanted to know if we should do them in June. Lou said yes.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Brian made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Leeyan seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Scheitlin, recording secretary for  
Kerri Milne, Clerk