

SUFFIELD PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
MONTHLY MEETING
March 9, 2016

The Suffield Parks & Recreation Commission held its regular meeting on Wednesday, March 9, 2016 in the lower 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
.....Amy Egan
.....David Rusnock
.....Scott Tobey

ABSENT:Jay Bombard

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:Wendy J. LaMontagne, Director

Lou called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

PUBLIC INPUT: None.

MINUTES: Cindy made a motion to accept the minutes. Dave seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous to accept the minutes.

CORRESPONDENCE: Wendy passed out the Spring brochure which has the staple and new programs. Wendy thanked the staff for their work and said that they are now working on the summer brochure.

Wendy said that an individual has approached the selectman's office in regard to purchasing and removing the playscape at Bridge Street School. The playscape was discussed along with the fact that a new one will probably be purchased once the community center is done. The commission discussed the use, ownership and if it has any value in keeping it and where the money will go if it is sold. Brian made a motion that the Parks & Recreation Commission support the sale of the existing playscape at Bridge Street School to a purchaser deemed appropriate by the Town of Suffield, Board of Selectmen and we are in favor of this action as soon as possible and the proceeds be used for the benefit of the Bridge Street Community Center. Scott seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

PROGRAM REPORTS: Wendy added that she has been appointed to the CRCOG Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning committee and attended the first meeting yesterday.

Wendy reviewed the meeting, who attended and recap of what the meeting was about. As a result of the meeting, the request for having a year round port-a-let at the Phelps Rd. parking lot has been granted and Public Works will arrange.

Wendy discussed a grant that Patrick McMahon (Economic Development Director) submitted for a pathway along Mountain Road that would connect McAlister School to Bruce Park and Spaulding School. The commission discussed this in detail. Another idea that is in the planning stage is to convert the unused rail spur that goes from Fflyer Place to Windsor Locks to an airline trail. The commission discussed the need for these paths.

OLD BUSINESS:

Bridge Street Community Center Update: The committee met last week and discussed programs that we want to do, the space that will be needed, what type of facility aspects can be used to make these rooms available for the use we want. Brian said that the committee is still working on what each room should be used for just as you would identify what each room your house would be used for. Brian said the gym was also discussed and elaborated on this. Wendy said that all this information is being gathered so that we can go to the architect and present what we would like to see in the building. Wendy said that next Monday night is another meeting at the Ambulance building and everyone is invited to attend. Kerri asked if anything has been done about abatement. Wendy said that they are testing and there should be a report in April.

Youth Basketball: Wendy said the program ended last Saturday and overall the comments have been good. Dave contacted Wendy in regard to a situation with a coach and they discussed it. Wendy followed up with an email reminding coaches of the guidelines of the program. Dave discussed a call he received after Wendy's email and it was a positive call.

Wendy said the evaluations have been sent out electronically and in paper form. So far only 1 evaluation has been sent back and it was positive.

Budget FY 2016/2017: Wendy thanked Leeayn for attending the finance board meeting last Monday and reviewed the cuts to the budget. Reinstatement of the administrative secretary position was removed and 4.5 hrs. was added to the registration clerk position. The other cuts were in office supplies, postage, bank fees, gas, etc.

The request for staff at Babbs beach was left in with a reduction in hours.

In regard to A.C.C.E. the currently approved \$25,000.00 that was allocated for septic and water lines in the upper part of Babb's, has now been redirected to lower portion of Babb's to help open up the beach. The push will be to have Babbs beach open this year after the new fiscal year which starts July 1. The beach most likely will not open until August due to work needed to prepare the beach and purchasing the shed and other equipment. The commission discussed different avenues to use for acquiring a shed or

having one built. Brian discussed the possibility of having Goodwin Tech build the shed as a teaching tool, and he will give Wendy the contact information. Kerri discussed the possibility of local residents volunteering to build this. The commission discussed these and other ideas.

NEW BUSINESS:

Field Scheduling: Wendy reviewed the fields meeting which was held last Friday. The meeting was attended by different athletic groups and the school. Lou said the meeting went very well and he praised Wendy and Cindy Fisher on the work they did preparing for this meeting. The highway has already started to work on the fields with the good weather.

Groups who did not attend the meeting submitted requests via email. The Travel Soccer club requested use of all our fields for their soccer tournament held on June 24, 25, & 26. They are also requesting the use of Packard Field daily and Saturday and Sunday through June. They also requested the inside field at the high school track. Wendy checked with the Athletic Director and the high school field is not available.

Fees and charging for field use was discussed. Organizations that provide summer athletic camps for the department are charged a flat fee. These fees have not changed since 1990 and discussion around a new fee schedule will be tabled until the next meeting. The Commission suggested to research what other towns charge for field use.

The commission went back to the Travel Soccer Club request and the donations that used to be received for use of the fields for their tournament. The commission also discussed charging fees to the other local organizations that use our fields. Also discussed was the way different sports affect the wear and tear of the fields.

The commission discussed the lease agreement that was made between the town and the Travel Soccer Club for exclusive use of the fields on Thompsonville Road, Babb's and the West Suffield fields only. Part of this agreement was that the Travel Soccer Club was responsible for maintaining the fields and would not need any other town fields except for the annual tournament. Cindy said that she lives in that area and the town is taking care of the fields. Dave said that he thought someone was hired to mow the Cervione field.

The commission discussed the use of the Packard Field, how it is affected by overuse, and the fact that it is no longer the premium field as the school has the turf field. Wendy and Lou explained how the field came about, who built it and the agreement that was developed by the Sports Council (now defunct). Lou also discussed the donations that the Travel Soccer Club used to give to the Parks and Recreation for use of the fields for their annual soccer tournament. Members of the Travel Soccer Club board should be invited to the next meeting to discuss this as the new membership may not be aware of the original agreement regarding the Packard Field and the annual soccer tournament.

Wendy asked if Leeayn and Cindy would be willing to work on the fall soccer subcommittee again this year and Wendy asked Dave to join the committee.

Confirmations of field use have to be sent out so Wendy asked the commission how they wanted to proceed. Having a special meeting with the president of the Travel Soccer Club and other members, to discuss the use of fields was discussed. Kerri suggested that we allow the travel soccer club to use Packard Field for spring and then we work on policy for the fall. The commission discussed different options in length. At the end of this discussion it was decided that latitude be given to Wendy and Dave to discuss the use of Packard Field with the travel soccer club, limiting use to 2 or 3 days. Club members will be invited to the April meeting to discuss donations and field use.

ADJOURNMENT: Cindy made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Brian seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Scheitlin, recording secretary for
Kerri Milne, Clerk