

Town of West Hartford Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

11/16/2020 5:30 – 6:30

Zoom Meeting

Meeting began at 5:35PM.

In attendance: Gregory Shimer, Brian Clifford, Terry Schmitt, Robin Collins, Kim Evans, Shawna Kitzman, Kate Eikel, John Minze

Missing: Tanja Low

Staff: Helen Rubino-Turco, Director
Andrea Ruggiero, Town Council Host

- Minutes of the last meeting were approved unanimously: John moved; Terry seconded.
- Old Business:
 - a. Facilities During Covid
 - i. Teen center is up and running at ECC
 - ii. Hybrid camp (program during school's hybrid learning operations) received positive feedback from attending families.
 - iii. Rules changed with the ice rink – limit to 25 people on ice; only one parent per participant at games.
 - iv. Cornerstone: both pools are open but access is limited; renovations on track to be completed in early February.
 - b. Review of field use guidelines were discussed. Businesses, such as gyms and personal trainers, have requested to use the parks. During Covid, Leisure Services developed a process to issue permits, similar to a field permit, for businesses to leverage public parks. Since it has been created no businesses have requested one. The review was tabled and will be reviewed in advance of spring. Use of parkland for a fee would be a change from existing guidelines.

Yoga in the park was a success. West Hartford Yoga ran free programs to support the Ten Minute Walk. They are looking to do potentially longer, fee-based versions next spring as a Leisure Services program.

- c. Capital Improvement (CIP) Update
 - i. Whiting Lane – post tension concrete tennis courts – concrete pour went well; painting will wait until spring when it is warmer.
 - ii. Whiting Lane – lower soccer field – irrigation will be installed; due to delays, sod will be installed instead of seed. Field of Dreams will provide the Town a check for \$70,000 towards the soccer fields. The organization has raised over \$700,000 for soccer fields in Town over the past 20 plus years.
 - iii. King Philip fields has been a bit delayed, and will be renovated in the spring.
 - iv. Westmoor Park: Front entrance to the Hunter House of needs to be renovated so it is nicer, code compliant and handicap accessible. The work has been funded.
- d. Kennedy Park:
 - i. The town will leverage community development block grant funds to renovate the park
 - ii. Peter Miniutti, who helped with outreach and design of Wolcott Park, is not available due to other commitments
 - iii. Leisure Services is reaching out to other universities for help. If they cannot find a program to help they will send out an RFP to landscaping firms.
- e. Discussed new appointments. Committee members should continue to serve until they are notified of being replaced.

- New Business
 - a. Structure of All Sports Council is being reviewed by Leisure Services and Town Corporation Counsel due to recent issues, one being the Football league does not have a separate non-profit entity with a formal board of directors. Leisure Services will keep the Parks & Rec Advisory Board notified of any proposed changes in the future.
 - b. 2021 operations:
 - i. They are planning on a print brochure for spring. Ongoing updates are planned due to the fluid environment Covid creates.
 - ii. The plan is summer camps is BAU
 - iii. Exploring having Cornerstone to run the outdoor pools next summer since they did an excellent job this past summer.
 - iv. Rockledge Operations
 - The grille at Rockledge contributed \$45,000 last year on top of rent to the golf course.
 - The Rockledge golf pro retired earlier this year, Sending out a RFP for a Golf Pro and golf cart leases.
 - Golf was up this year to 40,000 rounds even with being closed for 8 weeks. This is up from low thirties from previous years
 - Buena vista saw 50% increase in people golfing over the previous year
 - c. The committee reviewed the 2021 fee proposals, and supported the proposed changes
 - d. Cornerstone Aquatics Center ;
 - i. Diving club is talking about donating money for a higher board at Cornerstone.
 - ii. Potential executing the March meeting at Cornerstone to see the renovations
 - e. Ten Minute Walk Initiative
 - a. Reviewed programs so far
 - b. Ten minute walk initiative has been successful in bringing attention to parks
 - c. Potential collaboration with Arts Council to organize mini concerts for street musicians in parks.
- 2021 Dates were discussed and approved. Any new members would join at the next meeting.
- No public comment was held due to lack of participation.
- Meeting adjourned at 6:36
- Next meeting: Monday, January 25th @ 5:30pm, location virtual - Webex TBD