

**SUFFIELD PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION**  
**SPECIAL MEETING**  
**June 9, 2022**

The Suffield Parks & Recreation Commission held a special meeting on Thursday, June 9, 2022 in the conference room, Town Hall, 83 Mountain Rd., Suffield, CT. Zoom was also available for those who wished not to attend in person.

ATTENDANCE: .....Brian Casinghino, Chairman  
.....Bill Boucher, Vice Chairman  
.....Sam Lombardo  
.....Stephen Marchillo  
.....David Rusnock

ABSENT: .....Jay Bombard  
.....Stephanie Dolan  
.....Andrew Joly  
.....Anthony Migliozi

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: .....Peter Leclerc, Director  
.....Spencer Martindale, Summer Intern

Brian called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

**PUBLIC INPUT:** None.

Brian said that last month’s meeting was cancelled due to lack of quorum but there were several members of the public here in regard to the choosing of colors for the basketball courts. This will be discussed later in the meeting.

**MINUTES:** Sam made a motion to accept the March 1 special meeting minutes and the March 9 regular meeting minutes. Bill seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous to accept the minutes.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** None.

**PROGRAM REPORTS:** Peter thanked Steve for working with Dan on the flag football program which has been re-instituted. Overall, the program was good but after the program was finished Dan and Steve worked on improvements.

Peter read comments from the Tee Ball survey which is passed out to parents after the program finishes. One of the comments was “love to see this coach work with the kids again”. Peter reviewed how the model for the program was changed. Having Dan as the coach and parents being assistant coaches, the program has improved and the kids are learning.

The tennis program is again full. We have a new golf lesson program for youth and adult at Copperhill. We also have adult volleyball and basketball to give an opportunity for adults to have things to do.

Brian asked about the kickball tournament. Peter said a youth came to us and wanted to run a tournament. Dan worked with this youth and his mother to put it together. This is a student driven program.

Donna puts her heart and soul into the Bowling Buddies program and the End of Season Luau and Awards Banquet, which was held at Sunrise Park, was a huge success. Volunteers helped with the cooking and Kevin Landolina was the DJ again. Tom and Margo Burns helped with the BBQ.

There is a new ADA compliant access at the back of the pavilion so everyone was able to access the building. Brian Doyon did the construction work and it fits with the look of the park. There is talk about doing a path down to the beach. The Conservation Commission was very helpful.

Peter briefly reviewed Donna's adult and youth programs.

Both Dan and Donna are working on camp organization, ordering supplies and training for staff.

Another e-sports tournament was held using a different game. Brian asked if there was a lot of new participants. Peter said the gaming community is pretty set in their ways and most only play one specific game. They don't branch off to play different games.

Peter asked the commissioners to look at the last page of the reports which lists the programs we provide with the registration numbers. He reviewed the enrollment limits and the reasons for the limits.

The summer camp session sign-up has been changed. Sunrise and Tween camp can now be signed up for 1 week instead of the traditional 2 weeks. It has opened up more opportunities and made it easier for parents. Kids Korner and Morning Munchkins have been kept at 2-week sessions.

Bill asked where the pickleball was going to be played since the courts are going to be renovated. Peter said there is a pickleball court in the Senior Center and there have been new people signing up due to seeing the game played at the Senior Center.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

**Fishing Derby May 14th:** The Fishing Derby is a Conservation Commission event but they asked for our help and wanted us there. It was a big hit. We received many thanks from the people attending. There were over 100 registered for the event. The prizes for

the winners were great. The Conservation Commission handled the prizes. Food donations were received for the Suffield Community Aide. This was done in memory of Kerry O'Brien, the park superintendents' wife who has passed away.

**Babb's Beach and Bridge Street Park:** A quick update: there is a large grant from the State, 50% with no cap. A discussion on which project would fit the grant best and what project had the most chance of winning concluded that the Babb's Beach project is best for this grant. Bridge Street is not off the table but the big funding will go toward Babb's. Peter reviewed some of the specifications of the grant and the reasons why the Babb's project would fit best. The commission discussed what the major needs are at Babb's and what has been done. Matching 50% with no payback would enable a lot of work to be done at Babb's and it would not affect taxes.

Brian spoke about getting donors to work on Bridge Street. It will have to be incremental and once it gets going, we may get more donors and possibly some money from the town. A capitol campaign specialist could be hired to help get donations.

Bill asked where Bridge Street stands. Peter said he has talked to the Board of Selectmen and it is not off the table. Both projects won't be done at the same time. Peter suggested doing Bridge Street in phases and that was seemed to get more traction.

Bill asked about the Covid money that was received from the State. The portion of the Covid money that was set aside for Parks & Rec will be used for Babb's if we are awarded the State grant.

Brian spoke about his thoughts on how to get the Bridge Street project moving forward. Bill asked about the design work we had done. Peter said they are conceptual designs and not construction documents. To get construction documents you have to invest a percentage of the cost and we don't have the funding yet. Peter stated that it didn't make sense to spend money on construction documents, if we do not have a funding commitment.

Bill said the Bridge Street project was moving along and now it has stopped. Why did that happen. Brian said that he didn't know but felt that it probably had to do with finances. The commission discussed the Bridge Street project in regard to what we have done in the past, the importance it would have for the town, money for the project and that the grant that has come up has turned the focus to Babb's.

**Suffield Night at the Hartford Yard Goats:** Peter introduced Spencer Martindale, Parks & Rec summer intern, who is handling this event. Spencer is a Springfield College student and has filled one of our paid internships.

This year we will have 5 award recipients.

Louis Casinghino Service Award to Bernice Hollander  
Public Service Award to PeoplesBank

Youth Leadership Award to Madelynn Dunnigan  
Youth Sports Impact Award to Neil Altieri  
Military Family Award to David Tripp and Family

The recipients have been contacted by phone and will receive a letter with details next week.

The game will be July 16 and seating will be in Section 118. We have 250 tickets available and the cost is \$15.00. You can also purchase a t-shirt for \$12. By purchasing the tickets through the Parks & Rec website you will be in our section.

Spencer is looking for a singer to sing America the Beautiful and will contact the schools for referrals. He is also looking for someone for the first pitch and color guard participants.

Peter said that the line-up cards are a sponsored night by PeoplesBank. Peter spoke with the vice president about receiving the Public Service Award and they asked us to pick 2 people for the exchange of line-up cards. There will be a raffle to pick 2 youth (names taken from the purchased tickets) to do the line-up cards.

Peter reviewed how the pregame award ceremony will run. He also spoke on why each person was chosen to receive their award.

**Suffield Summer Fair VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:** Volunteers are needed for the Parks & Rec tent. There are also other areas that need volunteers. Sam is coordinating volunteer times. Peter will send a link to commission members so they can sign up. Volunteers get an orange with white logo t-shirt and the staff people have a yellow t-shirt.

The rides will be on the tennis courts with food vendors on the basketball courts. The fence will be taken down (for start of construction) and this will allow for easy access and safety. The fireworks will be on the track so this area will be fenced off. They are scheduled for Friday night with a rain date of Saturday. If the fireworks are on Friday this area will be available for use on Saturday.

Peter described where the vendors, music stage and parking will be located. The event will be Friday from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. with music and fireworks. Saturday from noon till 9 with rides, music and food. And Sunday is noon to 5 p.m.

**Other:** None.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

**Colors for Outdoor Basketball Courts & Update:** There were youth and parents here last month to unveil the basketball courts colors.

The project has been moved from this summer to October/November for demo and first layer of tar. The school will be able to use the area and it won't damage the surface. The project will be finished late May. Costs have been a problem due to oil prices. We have worked with the contractor to keep the price and the contracts are signed.

The summer tennis camps will be held at the high school tennis courts. The courts are relatively new but don't have lights. The middle school courts will not have a fence and they are cracked.

Bill asked what the color selection was. Peter said it is royal blue and the 3-point line is navy and borders are navy. In the middle there is a basketball in orange. The tennis courts will be US Open colors green and blue. The pickleball court will switch to blue and green. The fencing that is there is in good condition and it will be stored for reuse as a cost saving.

**Summer Concerts:** Wednesday nights starting in July will be our concert night. On June 25 there will be a car show, concert on the green, and the movie Grease will be shown on the Town Green. The schedule for the summer will be Mondays for the 5 K races, Wednesdays for concerts and Saturdays for movies.

Regarding the 5 K races, part of the money collected goes to Suffield Community Aide if you sign up onsite.

**Outdoor Movie Nights:** See above.

**Summer Internships:** The communications intern will start on Monday. Spencer has already been introduced.

**Parks & Recreation Podcast:** This is something new which will be done on a quarterly basis to try and reach people in a different way. The podcast will have information on topics related to the town, information topics and about upcoming events and people. The podcast will be about 15 to 20 minutes long and this will be handled by the communications intern. It will be linked through the town. The equipment has been purchased and we are working with a Suffield High School graduating senior, Jack Burke, who is a very talented person. The commission discussed what topics might be included in the podcast. We also have a YouTube channel so we can stream games and events. The commission members discussed how information about programs gets out to town residents.

Stephen said he didn't know about the registration for flag football and Windsor's program is already taking registrations. He would like a blast sent out to let parents know we have a program and when registration will start. He discussed the Windsor program as opposed to our program which he and Dan worked on. He would like to add a 3<sup>rd</sup> age group and a program for 4- and 5-year-olds. The little kids will do something similar to a clinic once a week.

**Road Race:** Registrations are coming in. The registrations go through a separate company, not RecWare. The winners from last year have been notified so they can put the date on their calendars.

We will have a new timing company. It was highly recommended by Fleet Feet and has done their races. The company is called I Run CT. The situation that occurred last year was discussed.

An inflatable arch has been purchased for the finish line. Parks & Rec and sponsors' names will be on it. It is made of the same material as a bounce house. The school superintendent will let us paint sponsors at the finish line but it needs to be removed at the end of the day. Stephen said that you need to be sure the arch is anchored down securely.

Brian asked about the 5K Run course. Peter said that it is certified but he won't change the course this year. The commission discussed in detail different routes with the pros and cons for each one. The commission members talked about events that have happened in the past and improvements for this year.

John Rusnock has been volunteering making shirts. He will be returning to finish the job. Dave said his son told him that he feels the department has improved from what it was.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Sam made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Stephen seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Scheitlin, recording secretary for  
Sam Lombardo, Clerk

These minutes are not official until accepted at subsequent meeting