

SUFFIELD PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
MONTHLY MEETING
October 12, 2022

The Suffield Parks & Recreation Commission held its regular meeting on Wednesday, October 12, 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 (Zoom)
.....Stephen Marchillo
.....David Rusnock

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

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:Daniel Leonard, Recreation and Sports
Programmer, attending for Peter Leclerc, Director

Brian called the meeting to order at 7:11 p.m.

Brian asked Dan to read the agenda into the minutes:

- A. Call to Order
- B. Public Input
- C. Review of Minutes
- D. Correspondence
- E. Program Reports
- F. Old Business
 - a. Fall Sports Update
 - b. Update basketball/tennis/pickleball project
 - c. Road Race Recap
 - d. Other
- G. New Business
 - a. Basketball Sign Ups
 - b. Suffield Alight & Tree Lighting December 2nd
 - c. Sub Committee Meeting dates
 - d. other

PUBLIC INPUT: None.

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

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

PROGRAM REPORTS: Dan gave a quick review of Donna's report. He commented on the Special Needs Bowling Buddies program which has been an ongoing program for many years. Donna is in contact with this group 3 to 4 times a week: including bowling, bowling banquet, holiday parties, arts and crafts and games.

Dan said fall soccer is in full swing and flag football has started. A pickleball league has started on Wednesday nights at the Senior Center. We are partnering with Kate Powers, Suffield Youth Center, on programs and will continue with this.

Brian commented on the great work both Donna and Dan are doing with the regular programming and developing new options for Suffield residents.

Brian read from Donna's report:

The Bowling Buddies Group officially started back to in person bowling on Tuesday, September 13 at Spare Time Lanes in Windsor Locks.

There has been a tremendous turnout so far and it is off to a great start. We have Ten Teams of Bowlers (40 bowlers and about an additional 10 participants that watch) each week.

Dan said that Donna has continued to do Zoom meetings with the special needs participants to do games and keep in contact. She started this during the pandemic and is continuing with it.

The commission and Dan commented on how lucky we are to have Donna.

Brian asked Dan about the pickleball league and Dan reviewed how it is set up, how the league works and where they play.

OLD BUSINESS:

Fall Sports update: Field hockey is doing great. We have a scrimmage with Glastonbury on October 23. The team will have an inhouse scrimmage on the turf under the lights at the high school October 24. Field hockey is growing. We have a few more coaches and practice is after school at McAlister, 3:30 to 4:30, so parents can pick them up after school and they seem happy with that.

Fall soccer has over 290 participants which is an increase from last year. There are definitely more kids this year and a lot of it depends on how many kids are in the age group for our program.

Flag football has been huge. Steve is conducting a future ballers program for kids 4 and 5. He explained how the program works and what the kids are taught. He also expanded on the program for the other age groups and how the teams are set up, what tools are used, and the skills and drills used to teach the kids how to play the game.

Brian asked how refs are recruited. Dan said that we ask for applications. We play with East Granby and they have refs. Dan said that he has been a referee and most are high school kids. We run it through NFL Flag, we use their rules and rule book. We buy the jerseys from them and you get a jersey and flag. Dan reviewed the size of the field and Steve reviewed the rules of the game and how it is played.

Steve said that his son plays soccer (1st/2nd grade) and the program is well run, the coaches are good and the kids are having fun.

It was Parks & Rec Night at the high school girls' varsity soccer game. Our kids formed a high 5 line that the high school team ran through and a Parks and Rec scrimmage was played at half time.

Update basketball/tennis/pickleball projects: The project is getting a late start and tar should be put down within the next few weeks. The lines will be painted in the spring.

Basketball, pickleball and tennis will be held on the new courts this spring. We are using the high school courts for our current tennis program while the project is being worked on. The high school does not have lights at the courts which makes it difficult. The commission discussed the advantages of having lights.

Road Race Recap: The race was held September 10. It went well, the sponsors were happy, good attendance, we had a lot more walkers, the volunteers were great and just a good day.

Dan asked for the opinions of those commissioners who attended. Brian said it was terrific, well run and he was driving the lead car and the north green was well monitored. Russell Avenue was also good.

The commission discussed the winner of the 10K, the number of runners wearing Run 169 t-shirts and the overall race.

Steve suggested using pull overs instead of t-shirts. It will be easier than the t-shirt and make registration will be smoother. He said that if runners want a t-shirt, they can buy them.

Steve also suggested starting the award ceremonies earlier. Bill agreed because the winners are usually gone by the time the ceremony starts.

Dan thanked the highway department for the work they did and said the timing company did a good job.

Other: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Basketball Sign Ups: Dan has been working on sign-ups and they start Friday. We learned from the past that some people with the younger age groups are disappointed because the sessions fill up so fast. We have been marketing to get the word out that sign-ups will start soon so people are aware. The commission discussed how to create more sessions for kindergarten and 1st & 2nd grade. We do sessions at the Senior Center and Spaulding for kindergarten. For 1st & 2nd they are at McAlister before the older grades start. Third grade and up is not an issue. Dan reviewed what the sessions entail for the younger players. It was suggested that for the younger kids they start at 8:30 a.m. instead of 9 a.m.

Dave said the basketball program has improved from what it was and thanked Dan for the work he has put into the program.

Suffield Alight & Tree Lighting December 2nd: We held this program last year and it was successful. The lighting will be December 2. Last year we had a trolley ride which we are 90% sure we will have again. There will be a Santa and Mrs. Claus and kids can take pictures with them in the gazebo. We will have other things going on to entertain adults and kids.

Sub Committee Meeting dates: Dan said that Peter has reached out to the subcommittees and asked for dates to meet. Brian said that he will contact the chairs and Peter. Brian asked Bill and Sam what committees they chaired.

Brian told Sam that he was thinking of Bridge Street Park and felt we should put a subcommittee together on this project in regard to fundraising and planning. Brian reviewed last month's meeting which was attended by 1st selectman Colin Moll to talk about Bridge Street Park. Bill asked if this subject was discussed at the last selectmen's meeting. Brian said he didn't know but would contact Colin about this.

Peter joined the meeting.

Bill discussed the on-line survey that was sent out to townspeople about a year ago and the response that was received. It was very positive for the park. The forum was also discussed.

Bill said the problem is that we get momentum going and then everything seems to disappear.

Brian reviewed the Bridge Street Park comments from tonight's meeting for Peter and said that Dan did a great job running the meeting.

Brian has done some research on fundraising consultants. Bill asked if the funding is still there from the money raised years ago for Bridge Street. Peter said he has received some information on this but needs to review it carefully.

Peter commended Dan, Donna and Pam on the fantastic jobs they are doing. He gave a recap of some of the programs he has stopped in to observe and they are doing a great job.

Other: None.

ADJOURNMENT: Bill made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dave seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Scheitlin, recording secretary for
Sam Lombardo, Clerk

These minutes are not official until accepted at subsequent meeting