

**SUFFIELD PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION**  
**MONTHLY MEETING**  
**December 13, 2023**

The Suffield Parks & Recreation Commission held its regular meeting on Wednesday, December 13, 2023 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  
.....Jackie Guzie  
.....Andrew Joly  
.....Stephen Marchillo  
.....Christopher Parker  
.....David Rusnock

ABSENT:.....Anthony Migliozi

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:.....Peter Leclerc, Director

Brian called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Brian asked Peter to read the agenda into the minutes:

- A. Call to Order
- B. Welcome New Members
- C. Public Input
- D. Review of Minutes
- E. Correspondence
- F. Program Reports
- G. Old Business
  - a. Bowling Buddies' Holiday Party
  - b. Suffield Alight!
  - c. Other
- H. New Business
  - a. Basketball Program
  - b. Program and Special Event Volunteers
  - c. Meeting Dates for 2024
- d. Other

**Welcome New Members:** Brian welcome the new members of the commission, Jackie Guzzie and Christopher Parker. He said we are looking forward to working with you.

**PUBLIC INPUT:** None.

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

**CORRESPONDENCE:** The Jay Bombard family holds a yearly 5 Father's Charity Golf Tournament. They donate \$500 each year to our basketball program. This year they donated \$1,000. It was a very nice surprise and always appreciated. Peter contacted Jay (a former commission member) and thanked him for the donation and told him it would be put to good use to help the basketball program. Brian said that Jay's father was very involved in our basketball program. The donation is in memory of Steve Bombard and Art Marrow. Art did a lot of work with Steve on the Parks and Rec basketball program.

The second item under correspondence is an email that was sent by one of the volunteer basketball coaches. At the coaches meeting he brought up some suggestions and then followed up with the email. He asked that it be brought before the commission. Brian said that he did respond to this coach stating that we would discuss it at the meeting. We always review the programs, review the parents' comments, and see if we can improve.

Peter provided the suggestions to the commission members for discussion. We have made many changes to the program over the past 5 years to ensure age level appropriate development, age-appropriate rules and always striving to be better. Some of the suggestions from the coach do not really align with the national governing body guidelines of the USA Basketball Youth Program, National Youth Sports, NBA Basketball Program. These guidelines are what we use to determining our policies.

The commission discussed zone defense which we do allow to be practiced at an earlier age but not part of the game for younger players. Peter reviewed how this is implemented in our 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> program – allowed to practice and for the last 4 games of the season it is allowed in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. The commission discussed the pros and cons of this and how we could implement it and if it should be changed.

Sam said he agreed with the suggestion of a shorter hoop, 8 ft. instead of 10 ft. He discussed his reasons for agreeing with the shorter hoop. Peter said that it is facility dependent. McAlister short court and Spaulding have adjustable hoop heights. The other court hoops are not adjustable. Andy said he is more concerned with the condition of the floors; to be sure the floors are clean and safe. The facilities, grade levels and how they would fit in the different gyms with 8 foot or 10-foot hoops was discussed.

The commission discussed the basketball program in detail, the work that has been done to improve the program and the development of players.

Peter said that he will contact the coach to review what was discussed.

**PROGRAM REPORTS:** Donna's report talks about our new instructor. He has done work for us in the past at summer camp and seasonal programs. He will be taking over the Fitness Afterschool program for grades 3 through 8. Stephanie Dolan (former

commission member) is doing a fitness program for us, a Fitness Boxing program that will run through this winter and spring.

Dan's report reviews the soccer program which wrapped up later than usual due to weather. The season was good.

The pre-season basketball clinics with Lou Roe were well received and attended. We are in talks about having a higher end basketball camp this summer along with our regular camp. Peter discussed the benefits of having clinics/camps with a professional running it.

Pickleball has wrapped up and Dan organized it like a league. It was very successful.

Peter reviewed the CRPA convention that the staff attended. The office was closed one day so that Pam could attend programs on customer service and software that we use. Peter presented at the Conference. It was a constructive event for the staff to attend.

Dave said that someone came up to him and complimented Dan on the great job he is doing.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

**Bowling Buddies' Holiday Party:** The party will have food and dancing. It will be held at the Senior Center next Tuesday and the parents and participants really appreciate it when commission members attend. Peter said that you do not have to stay long, it is just nice to stop by and let them know you are there.

**Suffield Alight!** We had to go to the rain date and lost a few food trucks because of the change of date but the turnout was good. It turned out well. Peter said he received a lot of positive comments. We had new lighting this year from High Street to the Green and the tree was decorated differently. The limbs were wrapped individually. Brian said the tree looks great and it is a nice addition to the center of town.

**Other:** None.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

**Basketball Program:** Discussed above. Games will start this coming weekend for older kids inhouse.

**Program and Special Event Volunteers:** Brian said this topic was discussed at the end of the November meeting. He would like to establish some sort of protocol for commission members to volunteer on an annual basis. This will allow all of us to spend time helping with programs or events that align with your interests. He and Peter talked about developing some type of a sign up area (that is private) on the Parks & Rec website. Volunteering allows us to meet new people and contribute to the department and town.

Sam had suggested making a motion on this at the last meeting. Bill said he felt it was a good idea to have the signup but questioned if it should be a motion. He did not think you could legally make it a requirement. Bill did suggest a calendar of events that volunteers would be needed for to help commission members decide which ones they could sign up for. Brian asked the commission members if they felt it was necessary for a signup sheet. Bill said a yearly calendar of events to sign up for would be helpful. The commission discussed volunteering and most commission members do volunteer.

**Meeting Dates for 2024:** Sam made a motion to hold our monthly meetings on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month for 2024 except for July – no meeting. Sam made an amendment to the motion to make the February meeting the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month to avoid the holiday. Dave seconded the motion and all voted yes.

**Other:** Brian complimented the department; Peter, Donna, Dan, and Pam on the great job they do and how it promotes the department to the towns people. We have a tremendous department, always coming up with new ideas, hardworking, positive, creative – never stagnant, always ahead of the curve.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Andy made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Stephen seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Scheitlin, recording secretary for  
Sam Lombardo, Clerk

These minutes are not official until accepted at subsequent meeting