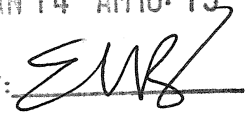


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**SUFFIELD PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
MONTHLY MEETING
January 8, 2025**

REC'D BY:



The Suffield Parks & Recreation Commission held its regular meeting on Wednesday, January 8, 2025 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:Jackie Guzie
.....Andrew Joly
.....Christopher Parker

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:Peter Leclerc, Director

Brian called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

Brian asked Peter 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. Bowling Buddies Party
 - b. Basketball Season Update
 - c. Dancers Recruitment for the "Dancing Stars of Suffield" fundraiser
- G. New Business
 - a. Pop Up Ice Skating Event at Sunrise Park
 - b. Summer Camps & Staff
 - c. Opening the Beach at Babb's Earlier
 - d. Other
- H. Adjournment

PUBLIC INPUT: None.

MINUTES: Bill made a motion to accept the minutes. Dave seconded the motion. Bill, Sam, Dave, and Stephen voted yes. Brian abstained.

Peter referenced last month's meeting (December) and wanted everyone who may not have attended to know that James Barrett was very appreciative of the award he received. He has been giving service to the P&R Department for over 20 years.

CORRESPONDENCE: We received a letter from Jay Bombard with a donation from the Five Fathers Charity Golf Tournament. It is in memory of Steve Bombard and Art Marrow. The Bombard family donate every year and this year we received \$750.00. They request that we use it for our basketball program.

The commission discussed the donation, the Bombard family, what it is used for and the number of years we have received it.

PROGRAM REPORTS: Donna's report is listed first. There was a trip to the Bright Lights at Forest Park in Springfield. This was open to anyone and the Bowling Buddies group was also involved.

Peter said that there were only about 2 days during December that we did not have something going on.

Dan and Matt were involved with Suffield Alight and it was a nice event. The basketball portion will be discussed in Old Business.

A program that we have been doing for a few years is Calls from the North Pole. We partner with the high school, National Honor Society, and other groups. The parents sign up on a Google form with information on their children. The volunteers call the children and talk with them. The commission discussed the program and what a hit it is. A feel-good program.

OLD BUSINESS:

Bowling Buddies Party: Peter thanked everyone that helped with the event. Kevin Landolina was the DJ; food was from Suffield Pizza and Costco. It is held at the Senior Center and that is their Super Bowl Party. Peter thanked Bill for attending the event and other events.

Basketball Season Update: The program is up and running. There was a little delay for the schedule for grades 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th since we have games with other towns and need coordination from them. The delay was from an error in reporting gym availability. Peter understands that parents do not want partial schedules but we did not want to send the wrong information.

Referees are scheduled, parents have the schedule and uniforms are out. The first games with other communities were last week.

Sam said he would like to see an adjustment so this will not happen again with the schedule. He asked if teams not playing other towns could get their schedule and not

have a delay. Peter said the information was correct, but it was through human error and he would like to make sure it does not happen again but we are reliant on scheduler in the other town.

The season ends at the end of February since the school changes their gym use. We have the March Madness program which fills the gap till spring sports start.

Stephen said that the day after New Years there was a practice at McAlister and there was a girls' team and 2 boys' teams. It was too crowded for the space. Stephen contacted Dan and Dan said it was a onetime thing. Luckily one of the parents was able to contact Suffield Academy and use their gym. It was not going to work if all the teams stayed. If this happens again it would be nice to have advance notice.

Peter said he was not aware of this and will investigate it and talk with Dan.

Stephen complimented the adult referee. He did a phenomenal job with the kids, stopping the game and explaining his calls, teaching the kids.

The commission discussed gym use and gym availability.

Sam asked about improving the McAlister gym floor. Peter said he will mention it to the school since they handle this.

We are going in with the Board of Education to repair the Middle School score board which is not working. Possibly Travel Basketball will also come on board to purchase either a new one or to repair the old one. The Board of Education is purchasing this.

Dancers Recruitment for the “Dancing Stars of Suffield” fundraiser: This was a great fundraiser last year. It was held at the Fred Astaire Dance Studio and the event was sold out.

Peter asked if anyone was interested in being a dancer. It entails raising some money; selling a table of 10. Ten dance lessons are provided and the instructors are very flexible and will fit it into your schedule. It would be nice if we could get someone from the commission. He is looking for a couple of dancers.

NEW BUSINESS:

Pop Up Ice Skating Event at Sunrise Park: It looks like the weather will cooperate and next weekend we will do a Pop Up Ice Skating Event at Sunrise Park. We will advertise starting next Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. The pavilion will be opened with a fire in the fireplace. We will have hot chocolate available. The Fire and Ambulance Departments will be notified. The ice will have to be thick enough to be safe.

Tom O'Brien, Park Superintendent, will be checking the ice and letting us know if it is safe.

When we had the rink at the basketball/tennis courts (before they were refurbished) and the weather was cold, we had people skating all the time.

Summer Camps & Staff: We have started interviewing returning staff and including the head lifeguard. Gate attendant staff interviews will start soon.

The commission discussed how many lifeguards will be needed and the fact that we need lifeguards with waterfront certification. The certification and age for this position was discussed. We hope to be able to provide the waterfront module to help with staffing. Wages, safety issues, giving swim lessons and changing the lifeguard/gate attendant work setup was discussed.

We are doing a digital brochure for summer camps and that is 75% done. Registration will start March 17.

Opening the Beach at Babb's Earlier: We usually open up Babbs after training of our staff but last year we had a problem in the spring on the weekends with people leaving trash. We have taken some steps to try and alleviate this with no parking signs and landscaping.

Peter talked with the 1st selectman and we will be able to open on weekends starting on Memorial Day weekend. We will have gate attendants and it will be posted that there are no lifeguards. Typically, lifeguards start the third weekend in June.

The commission discussed having an additional lifeguard and 1 less gate attendant. The effect on the budget (salaries) was discussed. By having a third lifeguard they can switch off from the beach to gate attendant.

The number of people at Sunrise Beach vs Babbs Beach during the week and on weekends was discussed.

Other: None.

ADJOURNMENT: Bill made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dave seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Scheitlin, recording secretary for
Sam Lombardo, Clerk

These minutes are not official until accepted at subsequent meeting