

PARKS AND RECREATION MEETING

January 18, 2007

Attending: C. Grillo; J. Gowac; M. Michalski; B. Parker; V. Parkus, E. Smith; T. Quinn

Brad Parker called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the November 16, 2006 meeting were reviewed.

MR. GOWAC MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE NOVEMBER MEETING MINUTES. MR. PARKUS SECONDED THE MOTION AND IT WAS CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Gowac reported that the Parks and Rec 2006 annual budget is \$138,242.00, that \$90,337.54 has been expended, leaving a balance of \$47,904.46. There were no questions regarding the report.

MR. PARKER MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE TREASURER'S REPORT AND MR. MICHALSKI SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Guest and Audience

There were no guests or audience at the meeting.

Correspondence

Mr. Parker noted that there are two vacancies on the Parks and Rec Commission and stated that the Town has received applications to fill the vacancies from Ron Snow, Margie Roberts, and Lance Lusignon. He briefly reviewed the backgrounds of the individuals and it was agreed to invite them to the next Commissioner meeting. Ms. Quinn agreed to extend the invitations.

Director's Report

Ms. Quinn provided the Director's report covering the following items:

- After a number a roadblocks, basketball is underway thanks to many helpful hands. In response to a question from Mr. Grillo, Ms. Quinn advised that, other than a few scheduling conflicts with the Park and Rec games, the travel teams were doing well. She advised that, as had been previously agreed, the conflicts were resolved by cancelling the travel team games. She also advised that there will be an all-star tournament with Marlborough for the 7th-8th grade boys' and girls' teams. She noted that Coaches Ricco and Vanderrest will pick the teams.

- Due to a lack of registrations, ski trips to Okemo were cancelled for this year.
- Many of the Parks and Rec programs, especially the pre-school programs, filled up quickly.
- Gym use is totally booked for the year. Due to the high demand for gym time, she had to increase the number of players on some of the basketball teams rather than create additional teams.
- Harvey Thomas of the Planning and Zoning Commission is updating the Town's Conservation and Development Plan and has asked for input from the Parks and Rec Commission regarding future needs for its programs. Mr. Parker provided some background on the Plan of Conservation and Development and noted that it is a State requirement for towns to update their Plans every 10 years. Ms. Quinn advised that she will meet with Mr. Thomas next week and stated she will draft an outline of a Parks and Rec report for the Commissioners' review.
- No date has been set for basketball's Final Buzzer because Ms. Quinn wanted to determine the Commissioners' availability. The Commissioners reviewed their calendars and agreed that they would be available on February 16th. Ms. Quinn stated she would check the availability of the space at the High School for that evening and advise the Commissioners. It was agreed to schedule the event for 7:00 p.m. and the Commissioners would arrive at 6:30 p.m.
- Winter Vacation Camp went well, however, registration was low. Ms. Quinn noted that she plans to offer the program for the February and April school vacations and then re-evaluate whether or not to offer it next year.
- The Hot Shot contest was cancelled due to lack of gym space. Mr. Parkus stated he would advise the gym teacher.
- Since it is time to draft the 2007/08 budget, she requested scheduling a budget sub-committee meeting. The Commissioners discussed the budget and Ms. Quinn noted that due to the increase in the minimum wage and a request by one of the camp directors for a salary increase, the main change will be in the salary line. There was a general discussion about salaries and Mr. Gowac recommended offering a compromise on the salary increase request. In response to a question, Mr. Parker advised that the Town is trying to keep its overall budget to an increase of less than a 5%. The budget sub-committee meeting was scheduled for January 25th at 8:00 p.m. Ms. Quinn agreed to provide the sub-committee members with a preliminary budget prior to the meeting.

MR. PARKER MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE DIRECTOR'S REPORT. MR. PARKUS SECONDED THE MOTION AND IT CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Committee Reports

There were no Committee Reports.

Old Business

Mr. Parker advised that Mr. Cahill had inquired whether or not the Commission had made a decision about the Soccer Club running the Town's soccer programs. He recapped some of the pertinent discussion from the November 16th meeting noting that the expectation was that the Commission would provide funding at the current budgetary level and the Soccer Club would be responsible for running all of the programs. Ms. Quinn noted that the Commission's current budget covers the cost of balls, nets, and referee expenses. There was a general discussion about the discrepancy in the fees for referees for in-town games vs. out-of-town games and the resulting impact on the Commission's budget.

Mr. Grillo noted that a number of other towns have successfully merged their soccer programs and he thought Mr. Cahill was going to provide some information on how those programs were structured and budgeted. In response to a question from Mr. Parker, Mr. Grillo advised that he coaches for the Soccer Club but is not presently on its Board.

Mr. Parker expressed concern about what would happen to players who can't make or don't want to play on the travel teams and all of the Commissioners agreed that they would have to be included in the program. Mr. Grillo stated that he thought the Town program and Soccer Club could be merged without changing either program and Ms. Quinn noted that that would be similar to the structure of this year's basketball program. The Commissioners' agreed that there were benefits to merging the two, but wanted to be clear on the roles and responsibilities of the Soccer Club and the Parks and Rec Commission. At Mr. Parker's request, Ms. Quinn and Mr. Grillo agreed to relay this information to Mr. Cahill and Steve Annino. Ms. Quinn also agreed to invite Mr. Cahill to the next Parks and Rec Commission meeting.

New Business

Mr. Parker advised that the referendum on the new Middle School is scheduled for January 25th between 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. and encouraged the Commissioners to vote. He noted that the Town has been reserving funds for the construction for the past three years and has also reduced the percentage of the undesignated budget line by almost 4% which should keep the Town's bond rating stable. He added that the cost of construction will be funded by an average annual increase in property taxes of \$92.50 per home owner for eleven years.

Mr. Parker reported that the East Haddam Stage Company would like to use to the Grange for their shows and rehearsals and has requested that the Parks and Rec Commission sponsor the program. There was a general discussion about potential scheduling conflicts and whether or not the Stage Company would cast East Haddam residents in their shows. Ms. Quinn advised that Parks and Rec used to sponsor a community theatre group and she was supportive of offering an alternative to the Commission's sports programs, but she believed the Stage Company would hold open auditions and there was no guarantee for Town residents.

MR. GOWAC MADE A MOTION THAT DUE TO SCHEDULING CONFLICTS WITH OTHER EVENTS AT THE GRANGE AND THE FACT THAT THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION IS COMMITTED TO SPONSORING PROGRAMS THAT ASSURE THE PARTICIPATION OF TOWN RESIDENTS IT SHOULD NOT GRANT THE EAST HADDAM STAGE COMPANY'S REQUEST. MR. GRILLO SECONDED THE MOTION AND IT WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Ms. Quinn advised the Commissioners that the next Parks and Rec Commission meeting would be held at the Middle School at its regularly scheduled time of 7:00 p.m.

There being no further business to discuss, MR. GRILLO MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MR. PARKUS AND APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon R. Wheeler
Recording Secretary