

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

APPROVED MINUTES

Tuesday May 27, 2014 @ 7:00 PM
Open Meeting at the Town Hall in the Council Chambers
4540 South County Trail
Charlestown, RI 02813

1. CALL TO ORDER

The May 27, 2014 Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.

2. ROLL CALL:

Present at the meeting were Commission members Tim Quillen, Cheryl Dowdell, Ed Vazquez, Jodi Frank, Keith DeMerchant, Richard Horstmann, Sunny Cummings, Donna Deyorio and David Currier. Commission member Julia Beasley arrived at 7:05 PM. Town Council Liaison Paula Andersen and Town Administrator Mark Stankiewicz were present at the meeting.

Not present at the meeting were Commission members Ryan Campbell, Susie Fehrmann and Tom Nowell.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes – April 24, 2014:

Richard Horstmann motioned to approve the minutes from the April 24, 2014 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting. The motion was seconded by Jodi Frank. Tim Quillen, Cheryl Dowdell, Ed Vazquez, Keith DeMerchant, Julia Beasley, Sunny Cummings, Donna Deyorio and David Currier were in favor.

Cheryl Dowdell abstained from the vote.

4. COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC:

There were no comments from the public at the time.

5. WELCOME NEW MEMBER – David E. Currier:

The Commission welcomed new member David Currier to the Parks and Recreation Commission.

6. TOWN COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT:

Town Council Liaison Paula Andersen reported that there was no report at the time.

7. NEW BUSINESS

a. Advisory Opinion Regarding Cody Clarkin's Flagpole Gardens Project at Ninigret Park:

Cody Clarkin presented a diagram of the Flagpole Gardens Project prepared by Oyster Works, LLC. He discussed his conceptual plan for the area.

Commission member Sunny Cummings motioned to recommend that the Flagpole Gardens Project be included with the revised Master Plan with the support from the Commission for the project.

Julia Beasley seconded the motion. Tim Quillen, Cheryl Dowdell, Ed Vazquez, Jodi Frank, Keith DeMerchant, Richard Horstmann, Donna Deyorio and David Currier approved the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Revised Master Plan Narrative:

Director of Parks and Recreation Jay Primiano introduced Michael Moonan of Weston and Sampson. Director Primiano cited some inaccuracies in the narrative of the Master Plan and asked that they be corrected before the plan is sent to the Town Council.

The Commission was given the opportunity to ask questions. Discussion amongst the Commission ensued.

Cheryl Dowdell mentioned the survey that was conducted and how in the past six (6) years the determination has been that the events area will allow other park areas to be utilized while the events take place. Also, that phase one of the plan is a revenue generating phase.

Director Primiano noted that the revised plan makes the park seem much more “park like,” functional and achievable.

Commission member Sunny Cummings questioned if a ball field could be included in the plan if needed down the road.

Michael Moonan of Weston and Samson replied that the open play field could be used as a ball field. A problem with lighting a ball field and remaining dark sky compliant was discussed.

Richard Horstmann requested that the Town’s Sound and Lighting Ordinances be included in the revised Master Plan.

Chairperson Tim Quillen opened the meeting up to public comments. Discussion ensued.

Tom MacDonald from Charlestown asked how much the Master Plan would cost and where the funding would come from.

The Commission responded that a bond was discussed, along with grants but that funding the phases would ultimately be determined by the Town Council.

Director Primiano mentioned that one reason for the revised plan was to reduce cost by utilizing current roads in the park and eliminate costly new roads.

Jim O’Keefe questioned how the Town would handle an event with 12,000 people, given the amount of people current events draw.

The Commission responded that it did not want to limit the amount of people, but that the events center is being designed to accommodate current events in the park while providing a safer, cleaner area for them that would allow for other parts of the park to be utilized at the same time.

Peter Mahony asked the Commission to describe the identity of who would be using the performing arts center. He questioned the effectiveness of the sound ordinance on current events and asked the Commission to look at other venues.

The Commission responded that it was up to promoters to bring forward groups/events, that the Police Chief was responsible for measuring the sound decibel and that the Commission was charged with being stewards of the sound and lighting ordinances.

Frank Glista spoke to the current park fees in correlation to the amenities provided in the park.

Maggie Whitmore asked if a survey of the revised Master Plan had been completed.

The Commission responded that the Town Council had found the previous survey was still valid and continued to represent what the public wants in the park.

Bonnie Van Slyke, speaking as a resident and not as a member of Frosty Drew questioned the festival campground area that was part of the Appendix in the Master Plan narrative.

Michael Moonan stated that it was in the previous Master Plan, and that it was designed as an area for overnight camping. That it is just space available for camping use, that the revisions are designed to make the area safer for patrons and users. That it will greatly reduce the amount of cords, portable lights and generators.

Bonnie Van Slyke asked if the events area would be used solely for events and not be open to the public for informal use.

The Commission stated that the area may be used for other uses by the public, and that currently the area is unused.

John Zoldak asked if there was any research or investigation into the roads outside the park.

Michael Moonan responded that VHB did a road study and their findings were that the current roads leading to the park were sufficient.

The Commission discussed the footing for the parking areas.

Dan Alves, from the Frosty Drew Nature Center cited some corrections to the Frosty Drew portion of the narrative.

Cheryl Dowdell motioned for acceptance of the revised Master Plan with corrections and additions, and for the Revised Master Plan to be forwarded to the Town Council for review and acceptance.

Julia Beasley seconded the motion. Tim Quillen, Ed Vazquez, Richard Horstmann, Jodi Frank, Keith DeMerchant, Sunny Cummings, Donna Deyorio and David Currier approved the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

c. Revisions to Draft Advisory Opinion of Ninigret Park Fees:

Commission member Cheryl Dowdell recommended that the Parks and Recreation Commission consider forwarding Commission member Ryan Campbell's advisory letter to the Town Council regarding fee structures in Ninigret Park.

Cheryl Dowdell motioned to accept and adopt Ryan Campbell's letter, ask that the Town Council postpone hiring a consultant and allow the Parks and Recreation Director to research venues.

Ed Vazquez seconded the motion. Tim Quillen, Julia Beasley, Sunny Cummings, Jodi Frank, Keith DeMerchant, Richard Horstmann, Donna Deyorio and David Currier approved the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

d. 2014 RIDEM Recreation Grant Award Discussion:

Director of Parks and Recreation Jay Primiano informed the Commission of the 2014 RIDEM Recreation Grant that was awarded to the Town of Charlestown. The grant is a matching grant with an award of \$180,000.00, matching funds of \$180,000.00 including a possible in-kind service of \$45,000.00. The funds would be from the Ninigret Park Fund.

Administrator Mark Stankiewicz recommended the Commission ask the Town Council to approve up to \$180,000.00 to be utilized from the Ninigret Park Fund to match the \$180,000.00 from the grant.

Sunny Cummings motioned to recommend the Town Council approve the use of up to \$180,000.00 from the Ninigret Park Fund for the 2014 RIDEM Recreation Grant.

The motion was seconded by Ed Vazquez. Tim Quillen, Julia Beasley, Cheryl Dowdell, Jodi Frank, Keith DeMerchant, Richard Horstmann, Donna Deyorio and David Currier approved the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

e. Memorial Discussion for Rev. Robert "Bob" Cummings:

Cheryl Dowdell motioned that a Subcommittee of three be created to discuss an appropriate memorial.

Julia Beasley seconded the motion. Tim Quillen, Ed Vazquez, Jodi Frank, Keith DeMerchant, Richard Horstmann, Donna Deyorio and David Currier approved the motion.

Sunny Cummings abstained from the voting.

8. COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED

a. Worship Jam Application – The Rock Productions/The Lighthouse Event Revised Date of Thursday August 28, 2014:

Rick Provost, the promoter for Worship Jam discussed his revised dates of August 22nd and 23rd. He stated his time requested was from 8:00 AM to 11:00 PM.

Mr. Provost mentioned that at the Town Council meeting he was not allowed to speak and that he felt it was his right to speak at a public meeting.

Mr. Provost discussed his arrangement with Chuck Wentworth, which includes working in conjunction with Mr. Wentworth and sharing stages and equipment with the Rhythm and Roots Festival.

Danny Alves, a member of the board of directors for Frosty Drew Observatory stated that he has no objection with the concert and that oftentimes concert goers are drawn to the Observatory.

Commission member Donna Deyorio motioned to forward the Worship Jam application to the Town Council for approval noting that a representative from Frosty Drew Observatory had no objection to the concert.

The motion was seconded by Sunny Cummings. Tim Quillen, Julia Beasley, Cheryl Dowdell, Jodi Frank, Keith DeMerchant, Richard Horstmann, Ed Vazquez and David Currier approved the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

b. RI Riptide Application for 5 Uses at Puchalski Field:

Jay Wilson and Anthony Alves of the RI Riptide Football Organization presented the application for five (5) games utilizing Puchalski Field.

Mr. Wilson mentioned that the organization was willing to donate time towards maintaining the field and would pay \$400.00 for each field use, totaling \$2,000.00.

Tom Russo, President of the Chariho Cowboys football organization said that the field was in a poor state and he had concerns that the field would not hold up for the already scheduled uses. He also had concerns over sharing the porta-jons and snack shed.

Cheryl Dowdell motioned to table the application. Ed Vazquez seconded the motion. Tim Quillen, Julia Beasley, Sunny Cummings, Jodi Frank, Keith DeMerchant, Richard Horstmann, Donna Deyorio and David Currier approved the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

c. Chariho High School Boys Soccer – Summer 2014 Games and Practices:

Richard Horstmann motioned to approve the application for the 2014 Chariho High School Boys Soccer Games and Practices. Ed Vazquez seconded the motion. Tim Quillen, Julia Beasley, Cheryl Dowdell, Jodi Frank, Keith DeMerchant, Sunny Cummings, Donna Deyorio and David Currier approved the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

d. Boy Scout Troop 1 Wakefield – End of Year Picnic – Fee Waived:

Sunny Cummings motioned to approve the End of Year Picnic for Boy Scout Troop 1. Cheryl Dowdell seconded the motion. Tim Quillen, Julia Beasley, Richard Horstmann, Ed Vazquez, Jodi Frank, Keith DeMerchant, Donna Deyorio and David Currier approved the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

e. Westerly Public Inclusion Program – Preschool Special Needs Fun Day – Fee Waived:

Sunny Cummings motioned to approve the application with the fee waived for the Westerly Public Inclusion Program’s Fun Day. Cheryl Dowdell seconded the motion. Tim Quillen, Julia Beasley, Ed Vazquez, Jodi Frank, Keith DeMerchant, Richard Horstmann, Donna Deyorio and David Currier approved the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

f. Northeasteners Chapter of FMCA Motor Coach – FMCA Camping Application:

The application was pulled prior to the Commission meeting by the applicant.

9. SPECIAL PROJECTS

a. Tree Steward’s Report:

Tree Steward Jodi Frank reported that all the spruce in the nursery were lost, the deciduous were ok and that there are five (5) pines and three (3) hemlocks left.

10. PARKS & RECREATION DIRECTOR REPORT

a. Director’s Report

Ed Vazquez motioned to approve the May Director’s Report. Julia Beasley seconded the motion. Tim Quillen, Cheryl Dowdell, Jodi Frank, Richard Horstmann, Keith DeMerchant, Sunny Cummings, Donna Deyorio and David Currier approved the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

11. PROGRAM MANAGER REPORT

a. Program Manager’s Report

Jodi Frank motioned to approve the May Program Manager’s Report. Sunny Cummings seconded the motion. Tim Quillen, Cheryl Dowdell, Ed Vazquez, Julia Beasley, Keith DeMerchant, Sunny Cummings, Donna Deyorio and David Currier approved the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

12. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

There were no Subcommittee reports.

13. COMMISSION COMMENTS:

Ed Vazquez mentioned the concerns of residential property owners with the revised Master Plan. Cheryl Dowdell spoke about her resignation from the Friends of Ninigret Park Subcommittee and how there is an opening on the Subcommittee that must be filled by a Parks and Recreation Commission member.

14. NEXT MEETING DATE – TUESDAY June 24, 2014 AT 7:00 PM at the Charlestown Police Station’s Community Room, 4901 Old Post Road, Charlestown, RI 02813

15. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was motioned to adjourn at 9:10 PM.

Respectfully Submitted by: Rebecca Crosby