

**SUFFIELD PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
MONTHLY MEETING  
JANUARY 14, 2015**

The Suffield Parks & Recreation Commission held its regular meeting on Wednesday, January 14, 2015, in the lower level conference room, Town Hall, 83 Mountain Rd., Suffield, CT.

ATTENDANCE: .....Lou Casinghino, Chairman  
.....Cindy Nicholson, Vice Chairman  
.....Leeayn Burke  
.....Brian Casinghino  
.....Amy Egan  
.....David Rusnock

ABSENT: .....Kerri Milne, Clerk  
..... Bill Clark  
..... Gerry Crane

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: .....Wendy J. LaMontagne, Director  
.....Krystal Holmes, Bridge St. School Ad Hoc  
Committee Member

Lou called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

**PUBLIC INPUT:** None.

**MINUTES:** Cindy made a motion to accept the minutes. Brian seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous to accept the minutes.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** None.

**PROGRAM REPORTS:** No comments.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Bridge Street School - update:** Wendy said that the committee is looking to finalize the plan with a full gym. Krystal Holmes, Ad Hoc Committee member, said that the architect will have the revised plan with costs on Friday. Krystal said the next committee meeting is scheduled for Monday and the proposal will be presented to the Board of Finance on February 9. Krystal hopes the proposal will educate the Finance Board on the need for this facility. Krystal reviewed what will be included in the presentation and why it was put in the presentation. Krystal also said that she is looking for letters of support from different groups in Suffield. Krystal asked the commission to review the draft proposal and get back to her with any comments, additions, deletions, etc. Krystal also said that she and Wendy would need to meet and review the entire presentation to be sure

that the information on programs, costs, needs, etc. is accurate. Cindy asked if anyone knew how many towns in the state have community centers. Krystal said she is calling and getting information on this.

The commission discussed why we need a community center with a gym and why it should be open 7 days a week. The commission discussed the different groups that could use the gym and when. The commission discussed what sports groups could provide support for the need for a gym. The commission suggested to Krystal that she contact the school regarding gym space/availability.

Krystal said it would be helpful if the commission members attended the Board of Finance meeting to show support. Krystal also said that she would like to have the presentation taped so that it could be shown to residents so they can see what this project entails and what it will provide to the community.

Cindy asked if the Bridge Street School building is viable to renovate. Krystal said building inspectors, multiple architects, public works department and local contractors have checked the building and it is structurally sound.

Wendy thanked Krystal for the tremendous job she has done. Cindy felt the commission should commend both Krystal and Wendy for the hard work they have done on this project.

**On-line Registration – update:** Wendy said that the program went live December 23 and Parks and Recreation is the first department online. It's a new system and there is a lot to learn but it is coming along. Ninety-five new accounts were set up, 86 transactions and 64 were credit card transactions. Wendy said that it is easy for the customer to set up the account. Wendy said that she is working with the Finance Department regarding the financial transactions and reconciling all the monies.

**Youth Basketball:** Wendy said the program has started and we have 278 children enrolled this year. Last winter there were 270. Cindy Nicolson will be working with the referees this weekend. Wendy thanked Cindy for doing the clinic and Cindy will also be checking in with the referees to see how they are doing. This year the time sheet for the refs will have a column for comments from the coach on how the referee is doing. If the ref needs help Cindy can then work with them.

Wendy said that she has been working with the Bombard family. The family donates money to us for the Steven Bombard Developmental Basketball program. This year the family decided that they would like part of the donation to be used for a developmental basketball clinic. Wendy said Basketball World will hold the clinic during the February school vacation week. Jay and Jen Bombard felt that the parents should pay for part of the fee. The parents will pay \$8 and the balance will be covered by the donation.

Wendy said a situation has occurred where a basketball coach changed the time of his team's practice. Gym time is assigned to our program by the school and as such we

cannot change this schedule. The commission discussed the situation, what should be done about it and how this reflects on our department.

The commission said that if the coach will not follow the time assignments given then he will be replaced by another coach.

Lou requested that a note be sent to the coaches to be sure children play equal time. Wendy and Cindy said that this is part of the rules. Lou asked that a reminder about this be sent out. Cindy asked that a note be added reminding coaches that referees are students and coaches can talk to them during the game to help them out.

**Sports programs – subcommittee update:** Cindy said no meeting yet but she will check in with the coaches on Saturday.

**Babb's Beach Park:** Wendy said the subcommittee met with the consultant, public works department, 1<sup>st</sup> Selectman, and Gerry (representing CRC and the commission) to re-work the original plan. The consultants are putting together real numbers. At another meeting consultants were asked why items cost a certain amount. The consultants explained the reasons why licensed contractors are required to do work, why certifications are needed, how codes affect the costs, etc. Ed McAnaney, 1<sup>st</sup> Selectman, wants to be sure that our A.C.C.E. request has a reasonable dollar amount attached to each fiscal year. Wendy asked for the commission's support at her presentation to A.C.C.E. on February 5.

Wendy said the first priority for Babb's is to get the rink open – getting water, electric and sewer installed. Patrick McMahon, Economic Development Department, is working to get the rink open as a sports training space. Once the rink is open the rest of the project should start falling into place.

**A.C.C.E.:** Wendy said once the Babbs piece is tweaked the other item to add to A.C.C.E. will be Bridge Street School.

**Budget:** Wendy passed out a copy of the 2015/2016 proposed operating budget which also has a column showing the present budget. A new item is contracted services (taking of minutes, preparation of brochures), which is presently on the Selectmen's budget but is being moved to our budget. There will be an increase in the rental fee of the copier. The copier is on a 5 year lease and the lease is up the end of June. There is a decrease in the software package line item (last year being the initial cost, this year maintenance costs). The balance of the budget is basically the same as last year.

Cindy asked about the copier contract. Wendy said the Town does have a State contract but each department head has to contact the copier rep to determine which copier is best suited to the needs of the department and also do the paperwork. Wendy said the Town does not have a central purchasing department.

Wendy said the second part of the budget is the camp budget. Minimum wage has been increased so payroll will be increased. Wendy would like to increase the wage of returning employees by 2.5% (the same as the union contract). Wendy said we have a lot of good staff that will be returning and feels it is important to give them an increase. Wendy reviewed the payroll wage range for summer staff.

The camp fees will be going up by 2 to 3% to cover payroll increases and on-line registration fees. Wendy said that even with the increases the cost of camp is very reasonable.

Leeayn said that she registered on-line and found the process very easy and she liked the fact that the credit card charge was included in the fee. Wendy said that when she was doing the RFP and gathering information from different towns, how the credit card fee was handled was one of her questions.

Brian asked about non-residents using our programs. Wendy said that for the children's programs there have been very few non-residents. Adult programs have more non-residents. The major youth sport programs are for residents only.

Cindy made a motion to accept the rates for summer staff. Lou seconded. Lou asked if there was any discussion – none. The vote was unanimous.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

No new business.

Wendy asked the commission members to look at the brochure. The brochure is very nicely done and the staff did a nice job with new programs.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Brian made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Leeayn seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Scheitlin, recording secretary for  
Kerri Milne, Clerk