Town of Ridgefield Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, December 12, 2023 at 6:30 pm  
Meeting held via Zoom  
APPROVED

PRESENT: P. Kearns, B. Dobbin, D, Shofi, E. Bottali, P. Nichols, D. DiPinto, B. Schneider, M. Knox, E. Cipolla, A. Platt

These minutes are a general summary of the meeting and are not intended to be a verbatim transcription. A recording of the meeting will be available for 45 days post:  
https://www.ridgefieldparksandrec.org/about-parks-recreation/commission

Meeting called to order by Chair at 6:33pm.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
Pete Nichols made a motion to approve the agenda. Seconded by Barbara Dobbin. Motion carried 4-0.

RECOGNITION OF GUESTS  
Keith Wolff

APPROVAL OF MINUTES  
Motion made by Pete Nichols to approve the November minutes. Seconded by Barbara Dobbin. Motion carried 4-0.

BUSINESS UPDATES  
Chairperson’s Report – Phil Kearns  
Report will be covered under the Budget & Policy Committee.

Director’s Report – Dennis DiPinto  
Project Updates:  
• Prospect Ridge Courts: Will be discussed in more detail under Old Business/Capital Budget review.  
• Rec Center Rooftop Units: Reached an agreement for design analysis with Southport Engineering.

Meeting Attendance:  
• Attended annual CRPA Conference  
• Met with the staff for our monthly Leadership team meeting; Reviewed new closures/delays flow chart ahead of any inclement weather  
• Continue to work with the Budget & Policy Committee to review monthly revenue reports & the 2024 Capital & Operating budgets.  
• RAC / Barlow Mountain Pool project discussions continue for Phase II of the project

Staff Updates:  
• Stephen Saxton was promoted to Member Services Coordinator at the Rec Center.

Financial Update – Eileen Cipolla  
Ms. Cipolla provided the monthly financial report. Revenue and expenses are on-target.
Assistant Director of Parks’ Report – Bob Schneider
• Scheduled to attend the Town’s Stormwater Management meeting later this week
• Security camera upgrades are planned at the Rec Center
• Snow removal plans / responsibilities will be discussed with the town ahead of winter
• Assisted the Garden Club with the placement of benches in Ballard Park
• Preparing outdoor equipment for the winter/snow removal
• Talking with Ridgefield Little League about the possibility of synthetic turf at Serefillipi Field
• Moved sand at Martin Park Beach for weed control
• Ed Gabbianelli has completed his first 6 months at the Rec Center
• Finished mowing all fields for the Conservation Commission

Assistant Director of Program Operations’ Report – Mary Knox
• Winter program guide is expected to mail in early January
• New preschool age programs will begin in January
• Working with the RHS Astronomy Club to offer a star gazing program
• Jingle Bell Zumba and Winter Solstice Yoga are scheduled for this month

COMMITTEE REPORTS
Marketing & Promotions – Evie Bottali
Nothing new to report.

Membership – Kim Hulber (absent)
Nothing new to report.

Aquatic & Programs – Barbara Dobbin
Nothing new to report.

Budget & Policy – Phil Kearns
Continue to meet monthly to review results and finalize the budget proposals for FY2024

Buildings & Grounds – David Shofi
Nothing new to report.

Special Services & Community Outreach – Pete Nichols
Nothing new to report.

New Business
1. Vote on FY2024 Operating Budget
   • Reviewed Operating Budget line items (Attachment A); Budget will be submitted to the First
     Selectman/BOS for approval.
   • Pete Nichols made a motion to approve the 2024-2025 Operating Budget as presented.
     Seconded by David Shofi. Motion carried 4-0.

2. 2024 Commission Meeting Schedule
   • Reviewed proposed meeting schedule and discussed modifications (Attachment B).
• Pete Nichols made a motion to approve 2024 meeting schedule as presented. Seconded by Barbara Dobbin. Motion carried 4-0.

Old Business

1. Vote on Final Amended FY2024-2025 Capital Request
   • Reviewed modifications since the Commission last reviewed in November. [Attachment C]
   • Barbara Dobbin made a motion to approve the revised 2024-2025 Capital Budget as presented. Seconded by David Shofi. Motion carried 4-0.

With no further business, Phil Kearns moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:33pm. Barbara Dobbin seconded the motion and the motion carried 4-0.

REMINDER: Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, January 16, 2024 at 6:30 pm via Zoom.
Proposed 2024-2025 Parks and Recreation Operating Budget Highlights

- **Overall Expenses:**
  - +4.32%/$229,213
  - Budget increases from $5,303,393 to $5,532,606

- **Overall Revenue:**
  - +6.59%/$238,120
  - Revenue increases from $3,613,827 to $3,841,947

- **Net Revenue to Expenses:**
  - Revenue increase exceed expense increases by $8,906.
  - The portion of budget not self-funded remains basically the same (-0.5%) at $1,680,659.

- **Town Funded Portion of budget:**
  - Recreation Center and recreation programs are basically covered by the department’s revenue.
  - Unfunded portion are non-revenue producing maintenance responsibilities including, but not limited to, maintenance of grounds at town facilities, maintenance of grounds at all schools, snow removal at same

- **Key Sources of revenue increase:**
  - Programs: +$127,500/+7.13%
  - Memberships: +$93,503/+11.89%
  - Aqua: +$10,000/+4.00%

- **Key drivers of expense increase:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expense Area</th>
<th>Increase</th>
<th>Overall Increase</th>
<th>Share of Increase</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>+$126,885</td>
<td>+2.39%</td>
<td>55.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs (tied to revenue increases)</td>
<td>+$42,056</td>
<td>+0.79%</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>+$34,742</td>
<td>+0.66%</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facility maintenance, ground and pool care supplies, uniforms</td>
<td>+$25,530</td>
<td>+0.48%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>+$229,213</strong></td>
<td><strong>+4.32%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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- **Salary Increases:**
  - 46% of the salary increases ($56,499) is mandated minimum wage increases
  - Additional portions is “catch up”. As minimum wage increases those above need to be adjusted
Town of Ridgefield Parks and Recreation Commission  
Approved Meeting Schedule  
January - December 2024  

Meetings take place on the 3rd Tuesday of the month and begin at 6:30 PM, unless otherwise noted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>January 16, 2024</th>
<th>July 16, 2024</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 27, 2024</td>
<td>August – No Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 19, 2024</td>
<td>September 17, 2024</td>
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<td>April 16, 2024</td>
<td>October 15, 2024</td>
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<td>May 21, 2024</td>
<td>November 19, 2024</td>
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<td>June 18, 2024</td>
<td>December 10, 2024</td>
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Proposed 2024-2025 Parks and Recreation Capital Budget Updates

At the November meeting, we voted on a provisional budget. There were three open areas summarized below. There were also some minor changes to the ADA Compliance expense and the Parks, Fields & Schools safety Improvements. These changes bring our total capital request to $1,602,500 versus our preliminary November vote of $1,362,851. An increase of $239,649.

1. **Martin Park Site Planning**: Final cost is $10,000. Was $60,000
2. **Spray Bay Flooring**: Final cost is $67,788. This after some changes to the cost (down from $117,966 in November to $89,788) and an offset from our ADA funds of $22,000.
3. **Pickleball Courts**: This was the most significant change. The very rough placeholder in November was $300,000. The cost included in our capital will now be $779,465 offset by grants of $146,777 for a final cost of $635,688. This is an increase of $335,688.