

MEETING MINUTES
Trumbull Parks and Recreation Commission
March 8, 2021
Via Zoom

In attendance:

Kevin Bellows, Chairman
Mike Travisano, Vice Chairman
Bill Brown
Brian LeClerc
Ken Martin
Ed Ritacco
Nancy Walsh

Also in attendance:

Dmitri Paris, Superintendent of Parks
Kathleen McGannon, Chief Administrative Officer
Bill Chin, Meeting Facilitator
Katie Dunn, Trumbull Community Television

Not in attendance:

Jon O'Brien

Guests:

Melissa McGarry, 27 Dogwood Lane Westport
Mary Isaac, 50 Skating Pond Road
Scot Kerr, 12 Lynnbrook Road
Lori Hayes-O'Brien, 11 Blackhawk Road
Felix Reyes, 5 Bailey Street, Velocity Softball

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Public Comment

Melissa McGarry, Project Director for TPAUD, addressed the commission about vaping in town parks. Mrs. McGarry presented data to the Commission regarding the health dangers of secondhand smoke/vape, as well as keeping children away from smoking and vaping when they are in the parks for activities. Mary Isaac, representing Sustainable Trumbull, discussed the environmental concerns of smoking and vaping, particularly the remnants of tobacco and vape products that are discarded on public property. Mr. Kerr and Mrs. Hayes-O'Brien also spoke in support of Mrs. McGarry and Mrs. Isaac's efforts.

Felix Reyes, of Velocity Softball, provided an introduction to the program. Velocity is a travel softball team formed in an effort to give more players a chance to compete. The program has submitted a

schedule request to Parks and Recreation, and is awaiting their 501(c) confirmation, which will complete their application.

MOTION to close Public Comment made by Mrs. Walsh, seconded by Mr. Ritacco. Motion carried by unanimous consent.

MOTION to accept February meeting minutes made by Mr. LeClerc, seconded by Mr. Ritacco. Motion carried by unanimous consent.

Old Business

Mr. Bellows asked about the Asplundh trucks in Unity Park, to which Mr. Paris replied that they are likely leaving by the end of the week, and are going to be parking at Cavalry Church.

Mr. Bellows also inquired as to the status of Mr. Geric's comedy series request. Mr. Paris will get in touch with him.

Mr. Brown reported that the Veterans' Memorial walkthrough has been postponed due to weather.

New Business

Mr. Paris provided the Commission with a Field Use Committee Update. The committee voted unanimously to add a tier for scheduling travel teams. The additional tier does not affect the fee schedule, but allows the Recreation Department to appropriately schedule various user groups.

Regarding Velocity softball, there is no action needed by the Commission at this time; Mr. Paris' department is in the process of putting field schedules together.

The Commission moved on to discuss Mrs. McGarry's proposal to ban vaping and smoking in town parks. Mrs. Walsh asked about existing policies regarding smoking in the parks. Both Mr. Bellows and Mr. Paris are not aware of anything that specifically prohibits smoking. Mr. Paris also pointed out that it may be a question of policy vs. ordinance. Mrs. McGannon noted that there is no smoking of any kind permitted on BOE properties, as well as that enforcing a ban could present a challenge. Mr. Martin spoke about the various health issues and fire safety issues concerning tobacco/vape use. He suggested placing signage to inform the public that it is not allowed in certain places.

The Commission unanimously voted to have Mrs. McGarry rejoin the meeting to address some of the Commission's comments. Mrs. McGarry pointed specifically to policy 15-9c, which prohibits smoking and vaping around pools, sprinkler pads, and permitted activities. She clarified that TPAUD would like to align a smoking/vaping policy with the alcohol policy that exists for town parks. TPAUD has drafted a proposal that and provided it to the town attorney for review. Mrs. McGannon will follow up at the town attorney meeting. The Commission agreed to table the discussion pending further guidance and information.

Superintendent's Report

Mr. Paris provided his report to the Commission, noting that outdoor activities are ramping up due to warmer weather and loosening of pandemic restrictions. His department is in the process of finalizing summer programming, although some of the details will depend on guidance from the state. Pool use will likely be a scheduled event again.

Mrs. Walsh inquired about the status of the program director. Mr. Paris is expecting another batch of candidates from Civil Service, and then will proceed to the interview process.

Mr. Martin asked if Dogwood Lake should be on the list of municipal spaces since it is now owned by the town. Mr. Paris was not able to answer to the specifics, but noted that the Town Council has to vote to designate it as park land. Mr. Martin pointed out that this particular lake has potential for recreational activities, such as ice skating. The Commission can request that the land be put under its purview. Mr. Travisano asked about access, to which Mr. Martin replied that there is a right of way that accesses the lake. Mrs. Walsh agreed that it would be interesting to see if the lake could be used for activities like skating, as there aren't many safe alternatives in town. Mr. Paris added that once the Unity project is complete, one of the areas will be designated for skating.

MOTION to adjourn made by Mr. Brown, seconded by Mr. Travisano. Motion carried by unanimous consent.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Submitted by Laura Shiel