

MEETING MINUTES  
Trumbull Parks and Recreation Commission  
Monday, May 10, 2021  
Via Zoom

In attendance:

Kevin Bellows, Chairman  
Mike Travisano  
Bill Brown  
Brian LeClerc  
Ken Martin  
Jon O'Brien  
Nancy Walsh

Also in attendance:

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

Not in attendance:

Ed Ritacco

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m.

MOTION to accept of April meeting minutes made by Mr. Brown, seconded by Mr. O'Brien. Motion carried by unanimous consent.

The Commission received two responses to the letter from Mr. Martin, which was posted as part of the meeting agenda. The responses are attached.

The Commission resumed discussion of the prohibition of tobacco and nicotine devices in town parks. Chief Ranger Chapman provided language incorporating the ban into the existing tobacco policy. Mr. Paris explained Rangers would enforce the policy in the usual way. Mr. Martin noted the need for notification of the public, for example signage within the parks. Mr. Paris noted that the existing rider panels at park entrances have space for additional policies.

Mr. O'Brien inquired about consequences for "repeat offenders," to which Mr. Paris replied that fortunately he has not encountered that situation; he added that most people respond to a reminder of the policy. If someone continues to violate a regulation, the Rangers have the ability to issue a fine.

Mr. Martin suggested providing specifics regarding locations at which the ban is being applied. Mr. Paris explained that there is a description at the beginning of the policy that details what is covered under the term "Parks system," so the revised tobacco policy would not need to include specifics of where the policy applies.

MOTION to adopt language recommended by Chief Ranger Chapman regarding the prohibition of smoking and nicotine delivery devices in town parks system made by Mrs. Walsh, seconded by Mr. Martin. Motion carried by unanimous consent.

The Commission then discussed placing signage in the parks system to notify the public of the updated policy.

MOTION to post appropriate signage in the parks system informing the public of the revised policy made by Mr. Martin, seconded by Mr. LeClerc.

Prior to the vote, Mr. Martin also suggested that a press release and other publicity be made available in advance the installation of the permanent signage. Mr. LeClerc asked if it is possible to place temporary signs (e.g., lawn signs) informing the public of the revision. Mr. Paris' concern is that those signs often end up removed from their locations. The issue of placement, design, and funding will be discussed at a future meeting. Mr. Martin reminded the Commission of the possibility of securing grant funds with the help of TPAUD.

VOTE: Motion carried by unanimous consent.

Mr. Martin reported on park pavilion rentals in other towns. He said that the issue would need to be discussed in more detail at a future meeting; however, the general information he found is that different towns have different fee structures, as well as different restrictions on number of attendees based on the type of gathering. Mr. Martin also noted that Trumbull's fee structure is comparable to other towns for events accommodating up to 200 attendees. Mr. Paris agreed that the Commission should discuss fee structures when it comes to larger groups.

Mr. Travisano asked whether it is possible to restrict large events to one particular park, rather than offering a choice of different venues. Mr. Paris noted that one of the criteria used to evaluate an event is how many cars need to be accommodated, which helps determine which space can be used. The Commission agreed to table the discussion to gather more information, and Mr. Martin agreed to lead the effort.

The Commission moved on to discuss the letter written by Mr. Matthews regarding the aesthetics of Beach Memorial Park buildings, as well as the responses to the letter.

Mr. Martin wondered whether it would be possible to enhance the buildings in a harmonious way with the surrounding landscape, perhaps not with paint but with natural materials like stone or timber. He also suggested the palette of pool area could reflect the activities that take place there.

Mr. Travisano pointed out that the Commission needs to take into consideration the work required of the Parks crew if/when buildings are vandalized. Anything that is placed there would have to be easily and quickly replaced or repaired. Mrs. Walsh agreed that the pool area could be updated within an appropriate color palette.

Mr. Paris explained that structures throughout the town are unfortunately vandalized on a regular basis. His recommendation would be to add functional structures (e.g., sails). These structures could add vibrancy and provide shaded areas.

Mrs. Walsh asked for an update on the program manager search. Mr. Paris answered that he completed the first round of interviews last week. There are four strong candidates, with a wide range of experience. He is now in the process of setting up a second round of interviews with the top candidates, which he expects to happen within the next 2 weeks. He noted that all the candidates are currently employed in other towns, so most likely the new hire would not start in Trumbull immediately. His hope is to have someone in place by the end of the summer.

Mrs. Walsh also asked if pools will be open without reservations this summer. Mr. Paris explained that the reservation system will still be in place, though maximum capacity guidelines have increased. The sprinkler park at Beaches will be closed due to the difficulty in controlling the number of patrons; the sprinkler park at Indian Ledge will likely be open. Mr. Bellows asked if the numbers guidelines come from the state or the town, to which Mr. Paris replied that he is following state guidelines, which calculate the maximum allowable number based on square footage of the pool deck. Reservations may be made via the website.

Mrs. Walsh asked if restrooms will be open, to which Mr. Paris replied that restrooms at the pools will be open, but restrooms at the parks will remain closed until at least summer, hopefully July. Portable restrooms will be available (some parks already have them). He also noted that there has been discussion internally about how to manage the restrooms once they are fully operational. Currently, restrooms are opened in the morning and then closed sometime in the evening. It's been suggested that for some locations, the restrooms should only be open when there is an event in the space.

The work on the tennis courts is being done by outside contractors. Some parts of the assembly have to be manufactured before work can be completed, then the vendor can schedule the milling and resurfacing of the courts, likely in mid-summer.

Mr. Martin asked about the correspondence from Mr. Iannazzo, regarding the incident with the men's softball league. The letter was sent to Mr. Bellows, who suggested Mr. Iannazzo address the Commission. Mr. Iannazzo declined to appear. Mr. Paris clarified that members of the league who were involved in the incident were disciplined, including some who were suspended from the program for the remainder of the season. He added that he believes the incident was handled correctly, and the renewed discussion is an attempt to overturn the original actions taken to enforce a zero-tolerance policy for violence.

MOTION to adjourn made by Mr. Martin, seconded by Mr. LeClerc. Motion carried by unanimous consent.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

Submitted by Laura Shiel