

Colchester and Parks Recreation

MINUTES
Colchester Parks & Recreation Commission
March 11, 2013
Special Meeting
Town Hall
Meeting Room 2
7:00 PM

NANCY A. BRAY
TOWN CLERK

Nancy A. Bray

2013 MAR 13 PM 2:50

RECEIVED
COLCHESTER, CT

Members Present: S. O'Leary, E. Kundahl, N. Kaplan, L. Stephenson, T. Loskant, D. O'Brien and M. Kennedy

Members Absent: L. Dimock, C. Ferrante and K. Moody

Others Present: Cheryl Hancin, G. Cordova, Civic Student and Citizen

1. **Call to Order**

Chairman O'Leary called the March 11, 2013 meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

2. **Citizen's Comments**

None

3. **Acceptance of Minutes: February 4, 2013**

N. Kaplan **MOTIONED** to approve the minutes of the February 4, 2013 meeting as written. **SECONDED** by T. Loskant. All members present voted in favor, **MOTION CARRIED.**

4. **Reading of Correspondence**

Chairman O'Leary stated he received a letter from Scoutmaster Troop 109 regarding "Fee changes to Town Parks and Non Profits (specifically Ruby Cohen Property)". (See attachment #1)

5. **Committee Reports**

- **Facilities** – none
- **Finance/Administration** – none
- **Programs** – none
- **BOS Liaison** – none
- **BOF Liaison** - none
- **BOE Liaison** – none

6. **Discussion and Possible Action on Boy Scout project – Troop 109 at Ruby Cohen**

R. Sosnoski stated his son is trying to get his boy scout camping merit badge with the requirement to complete a conservation service project and would like to hang 4 bird houses that he built this weekend at Ruby Cohen. Discussion was had. L. Stephenson **MOTIONED** to accept J. Sosnoski's Boy Scout project to place 4 bird houses at Ruby Cohen. **SECONDED** by N. Kaplan. S. O'Leary opposed. All others present voted in favor, **MOTION CARRIED.**

7. Discussion and Possible Action on Fee Structures for Town Facilities

Discussion was had regarding the fee structures for town facilities. The board members stated the existing policy for the Town Green and Ruby Cohen will remain as is. L. Stephenson **MOTIONED** to change the Rec Plex Special Events rental fees to \$50 per field for a full day or \$25 per field for the following blocks of time; 7am to 12pm, 12pm to 5pm or 5pm to closing. **SECONDED** by T. Loskant. All members voted in favor, **MOTION CARRIED.**

8. Recreation Supervisor's Report (Monthly)

C. Hancin presented the Recreation Supervisor's report and the Recreation Specialist's report (see attachment #2). N. Kaplan **MOTIONED** to accept the Recreation Supervisor's report and Recreation Specialist's report. **SECONDED** by M. Kennedy. All members voted in favor, **MOTION CARRIED.**

10. Recreation Manager's Report

C. Hancin read the Recreation Manager's Report which included the proposed 2013-2014 budget. C. Hancin stated the Administrative Assistant position will soon be posted, the Colchester Dog Park are getting ready for their March 23rd Easter Egg Hunt Fundraising Event, the Colchester Community Theater February show went great with great attendance, the Colchester Orchestra's spring show is on March 16th and the Spring Connections is out. E. Kundahl **MOTIONED** to accept the Recreation Manager's report. **SECONDED** by T. Loskant. All members voted in favor, **MOTION CARRIED.**

11. General Comments

None

12. Adjournment

E. Kundahl **MOTIONED** to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m. **SECONDED** by T. Loskant. All members present voted in favor, **MOTION CARRIED.**

Attachment

Correspondence from Boy Scouts, Troop 109 (attachment #1)

Recreations Supervisor and Recreation Specialist's Report (attachment #2)

Note: This meeting was recorded by a digital audio recording system and is available through the Colchester First Selectman's office in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gina Santos, Clerk

Park & Recreation Commission

127 Norwich Ave

Colchester CT 06415

Re: Fee changes to Town Parks and Non Profits (specifically Ruby Cohen Property)

Dear Commission Members,

2/28/2013

I am writing to you to express my concern over hearing that the Commission has possibly voted to change the rental fee of the town parks to \$50 per day. From the minutes of the last commission meeting on 2/4/2013 it was noted:

8. Discussion and Possible Action on Fees for Rain Dates, Set up and Break down days on the Town Green

Discussion was had regarding the event scheduling on the town green and the possibility of charging a fee for rain dates, set up and break down days. L. Dimock **MOTIONED** to set a \$50 fee for the reservation of the town green for any rain dates, setup or breakdown days. **SECONDED** by N. Kaplan. All members present voted in favor, **MOTION CARRIED**.

I am told that the Commissions intended vote was to make this \$50 per day for all town parks, even though the agenda and minutes do not reflect this, only noting the Town Green.

Boy Scout Troop 109 has previously rented Ruby Cohen Property for many occasions, at a fee of \$50 per event. A typical event for us lasts from Friday at 5:30 pm to Sunday at 10 am. While the Boy Scouts would camp, we would always do a service project, cleaning up the park of brush and garbage/debris, clearing trails etc. Basically we always leave it better then we found it. We have done this because it is the right thing to do and benefits the town community as a whole.

Our Troop has also completed 3 Eagle Scout projects on this property in recent history, all of which has helped beautify and maintain this property.

I know it goes without saying but Mr. Cohen was best known by the townspeople for opening his wildlife preserve for fishing derbies, Boy Scout campouts, picnics & weddings (as well as for Harrys)

He is remembered for his political savvy, his love of the outdoors and the environment, and his contributions to the Town of Colchester.

I would think that Mr. Cohen would want the land he bequeathed to the Town to continue to be used for Boy Scouts to enjoy.

If the town is to increase the fees to \$50 per day, could you please consider separate rates for Non-Profits, such as Boy Scouts? Or possibly tie the reduced fee to a requirement of a service project being completed as well during the event? As a Non-Profit, we find ourselves continually trying to utilize the money spent to the fullest extent.

This increase amount at \$50 per day, will surely force us and I would assume other Scout Troops to seek other facilities to use. Using this new policy would make State Parks a cheaper alternative for Youth Group Camping, driving your local citizens from your town.

We currently have a reservation for Ruby Cohen for March 15-17, paying a fee of \$100. Based though on the above recorded minutes, it appears that the commission did not vote to raise all parks and we may currently have overpaid by \$50.

Also, I would ask that all rate changes should be published in a way that all town employees in P&R know these fees, in this instance the new fees are not posted yet and not everyone was aware of them. A possible solution would be not enforcing the increased fees until publications can be made both in the offices and online.

Sincerely



Jeff Tassmer

2/28/13

Scoutmaster Troop 109

Colchester CT 06415

860-992-8193

Recreation Supervisor's Report
February 2013

Highlights

- Men's Pick Up Basketball on Monday nights continues to run with a volunteer gym supervisor.
- In February camp positions were posted & advertised as recommended.
- Interviews for Day Camp Director were conducted & a new Day Camp Director was hired! Welcome Cari Duigou!! Press release attached.
- February was even shorter than usual this year! The Blizzard and the snow days made make up dates a challenge.
- The BOE meetings which are usually in the CES café were rescheduled which created conflicts for our programs. We relocated our programs to the CES Gym which in turn bumped Colchester Youth Basketball out of the gym.
- Tennis Olympics Day on 2/12 at CES was cancelled due to low enrollment.
- We added High School Pick Up Soccer on Monday nights at WJJMS. Parents & players were looking for a High School aged soccer program. We had already cancelled men's basketball league which created available gym time for Thursday nights. A parent volunteers to supervise the program and between 8 – 11 High School kids attend each week. (When the gym time became available it was offered to CYB & they declined the additional time)

Respectfully Submitted,

Anita Pizzutiello

Recreation Specialist's Report
2/2013

Adult Programs:

- Many of the adult programs are doing very well. Enrollment for the second sessions of many classes has increased.
- The first sessions all have met their minimums and have exceeded expectations in regards to participation.
- Several positions were posted for the Spring/Summer for school vacation camp and summer employment. Received a fair number of applicants with positive results.
- Interviews for April vacation camp will be held within the next week. Director will be Cari Duigou (Day Camp Director)

Youth Programs:

- After school wrap-around programs continue to do as well as previous sessions. Enrollment varies little.
- Added youth rec volleyball with a volunteer instructor to assist participants. Positive feedback thus far.

Misc:

- Re-constructing the P&R website with the help of the IT Department so that it is easier to navigate.
- Also created many of the forms/documents PDF forms "fillable" for ease of use to the public on the website.



Colchester Parks & Recreation is delighted to announce Cari Duigou has accepted the position of Director for Colchester Day Camp! Many of you may already know Cari as she has been working with Parks & Recreation since 2000 in various capacities including Assistant Director of Kindercamp for over 6 years, Counselor in Training Leader, and continues to be a program instructor for our youth & preschool programs. She brings with her many years of experience with Waterford and Glastonbury YMCA's. Cari has been a Head Teacher for Kinder-RHAM-A Preschool for the past 8 years. As a result of her dedication and commitment to youth of all ages Cari received an award in 2010 in recognition of her positive work with youth from the Connecticut State Youth Services Bureaus. Cari is very excited to return to Day Camp as the Director and is looking forward to working with our Super Staff, Super CIT's and Super Campers this summer! "I am excited to lead this dynamic team of enthusiastic, creative and responsible Super Counselors, Specialists and CIT's in our goal to enrich the life of every super camper every day this summer." Along with all the laughing, playing and new friendships Cari is proud to continue our focus on positive character values to enrich the beautiful children of our community and the next generation.

This summer prepare to be dazzled with a dose of the unexpected, a dash of outrageous uniqueness and a splash of our traditional camp favorites. The summer of 2013 will blow you away!

Your child's experiences during their time at Colchester Parks & Recreation's Day Camp will help them transition into the next stage of development with confidence. Our Day Camp supports positive physical, intellectual, social and emotional development of our Super Campers! Daily activities are specifically designed to enhance their competence, connections, character, confidence and contribution to our community. Colchester Parks & Recreation Day Camp provides continuous opportunities for Super Campers to experiment in a safe environment and to develop positive social values, engaged in