

# *Park and Recreation Commission*

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## **Minutes**

(meeting taped)

Monthly meeting: Monday, January 10, 2011 in the City Hall.

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

By roll call, members present: Andrew Cota, Beverly Moran, James Benanto and Ronald Sill. David Mikos, Nick Serednitsky and Red Clynch were excused.

Parks and Recreation Director Dennis O'Connell was present. Athletic Director Joseph Orazetti was absent.

### **ELECTION OF A CHAIR:**

Motion was made by Beverly Moran and second by James Benanto. Move to nominate Andrew Cota as Chairman of the Parks & Recreation Commission. Motion carried with Mr. Cota abstaining.

No other nominations were received. The floor was closed. Members congratulated Mr. Cota and looked forward to his continuing efforts for recreation in the City.

### **ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA:**

The agenda was accepted as written.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

A motion was made Beverly Moran by and second by James Benanto. Move to accept the minutes of December 13, 2010, as written. Motion carried with Mr. Sill abstaining.

### **PUBLIC PORTION:**

No one from the public was present.

### **CORRESPONDENCES:**

No correspondence was presented.

### **DIRECTOR REPORTS:**

**Parks & Recreation Director's Report:** Mr. O'Connell reported that Youth Basketball is starting games this evening. They are playing at Irving School as well as the Derby Veteran's Community Center and Bradley School. The Middle School gymnasium is still under the control of the building committee and is not available. There is no word whether the gymnasium will become available but it was stressed that there is a shortage of gymnasium space for both recreation and athletic needs so members strongly encouraged the Board of Education to consider opening up the use of the school.

Babe Ruth will be registering within the next month. Little League will also be registering soon. Members discussed the registration fee of \$125.00 being charged by Little League. They were concerned that it would discourage participation. Mr. O'Connell will explore the costs further.

Mr. O'Connell stressed again this month that he is seeing a great decline in parents volunteering to coach and assist in the programs. He indicated that the recreation programs are successful due to the volunteers that come forward and he was hopeful that the trend will change.

Bids for the Derby Veteran's Community Center equipment have been advertised with a closing date of January 24<sup>th</sup>. This capital project will replace the existing universal machine. Mr. O'Connell questioned what he should do with the old universal machine that this equipment will replace. Members suggested that Mr. O'Connell should ask the school system if they would be interested.

Mr. O'Connell stated that he will be starting the process of developing the Parks and Recreation 2011-2012 budget. Members discussed reviewing the director's duties and the additional tasks that he has taken on in recent years. The position is part-time but certainly Mr. O'Connell puts in much more as he is overseeing the Derby Veteran's Community Center, the programs as well as coaching and administrating the programs when no volunteers are found. Members suggested exploring stipends for the directors of some of the programs. They suggested determining the time involvement and duties of each of the program directors to develop a clearer picture for the budget.

Looking at the current budget, things are going fairly well. The line item for the attendants reflects the supervision at the skate park. Mr. O'Connell noted that the State DOT has a bridge project slated for this spring and it is likely that the current area of the skate park will not be available. He will be speaking with Shelton on the future of the park.

Looking at the other items in the budget, the water expense is largely for the water of Ryan Field and the field house. Supplies goes for pool chemicals, field lining, fertilizers for the fields, paper products, cleaning products, etc. Members noted that much of the expense is for the maintenance of the fields. They discussed whether changing to an artificial turf surface could result in a reduction in these annual costs and whether the ability to increase the use of the field would greatly support the recreational needs.

Mr. Benanto questioned whether there were funds available to address the trees behind the bleachers. Many limbs hang over the bleachers and there is a safety concern that one could fall and injure someone. Some of the trees seem to be leaning dangerously on the slope. Last year a game was postponed due to high winds and concern for the limbs. Mr. O'Connell will explore the costs of having the trees inspected again and seeing what needs to be cleaned up. Mr. O'Connell noted that the light poles are another concern. They also should be inspected. Previously, there was a recommendation to have them painted but due to cost constraints he was unable to accomplish the job. He will look into both these concerns and develop cost prices for the upcoming budget.

**High School Athletic Director's Report:** Mr. Orazetti was absent.

**NEW or OTHER BUSINESS:**

A number of members noted that they would not be available for the February meeting. With this in mind it was decided to hold a special meeting on February 7<sup>th</sup>. Being that the budget was to be discussed next month they suggested an executive session be added to the agenda for the purpose of discussing salaries.

Motion was made by Beverly Moran and second by James Benanto. Move that the meeting adjourn at 8:25 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully prepared,  
Karen Kemmesies, secretary

*These minutes are subject to the Commission's approval at their next scheduled meeting.*