

**Town of Chester
Recreation Commission Meeting
Monday, February 12, 2024
Municipal Complex
Draft Minutes**

I. Preliminaries

1.1 Call to Order

Chairperson Dircks called the meeting to order for the Town of Chester Recreation Commission at 7:00 p.m.

1.2 Roll Call

Members present:

Kathryn Dircks, Chair
Marie Davies
Sandy Wright
Dana Theokas, Board of Selectmen Liaison

Members absent:

Mark Desiderio

Staff present:

Corinna Reishus, Recreation Director

II. Approval of Minutes

The Recreation Commission reviewed the minutes from the November 13, 2023, meeting. Ms. Theokas moved to accept the minutes as written. Ms. Wright seconded the motion. A vote was taken. All were in favor. The motion passed 4-0-0.

III. Reports

3.1 Recreation Financial Report

Director Reishus presented the Recreation Department budget to the Board of Selectmen, which was accepted as written, with an increase in the playground line to \$3,500 for mulch replacement. She will order the mulch to be delivered by July 1.

3.2 Spring Hill Farm Advisory Committee (SHFAC)

The Winter Festival will be held on Saturday, February 24, from 12 to 5 p.m. Director Reishus shared the schedule of events. Moosewood Ecological will be sponsoring nature walks throughout the year, with the first one occurring during the Festival.

She noted the SHF Trust is doing demo work in the farmhouse, with the intention of opening the house at some point.

3.3 Wason Pond Conservation and Recreation Commission (WPC&RC)

Director Reishus noted there is no winter usage of Wason Pond. She is waiting for spring usage from Youth Sports. Ms. Dircks said the last meeting of the Wason Pond Commission was short, as there is nothing going on.

IV. Old Business

4.1 Recreation Programming

Director Reishus updated the Commission on Recreation programming:

Basketball: Rec basketball is in full swing. The Commission congratulated the Chester Academy girls team for winning the championship.

Futsal: Youth futsal is ongoing. They are discussing offering an adult pickup session on Sundays.

Pickleball: Painting the pickleball lines was approved by the Board of Selectmen. The Commission discussed an appropriate color for the line.

4.2 Recreation Events

SHF Winter Festival: The Festival will be held on February 24th, as noted above.

4.3 CIP/Impact Fees

Director Reishus reported the Board of Selectmen approved the release of impact fees to repair drainage in the Town fields. This is a "quick fix" repair, not a total rehaul.

The next project for impact fees is either replacing the bleachers or purchasing tables and chairs, some with arms, for the MPR. The current tables and chairs would be transitioned to community use.

V. New Business

5.1 Upcoming Programming

Director Reishus noted that during school vacation week, she is teaming up with the Busche Academy ballplayers who are in the MPR three mornings a week. They are planning to play a game on Wednesday morning that the community would be welcome to attend. The players will do skills and drills with Chester students.

The next programming will be advertising for summer program staff. Director Reishus said she is losing a lot of counselors, as they are graduating from college. It needs to be determined if summer programming serves as daycare or offering activities. The weekly schedule needs to be set. A new program coordinator is needed. Director Reishus asked the Commission for input. Ms. Theokas suggested staff members could help Town Groundskeeping or Maintenance one day a week, which might make the position more attractive. They discussed offering

programming for a half-day on Fridays. They also discussed the Gearys offering ag work opportunities at Spring Hill Farm.

Ms. Dircks has contacted the Leighton Family Foundation regarding funding for the field drainage and they have requested information. Ms. Theokas suggested she contact the Athletic Director at Chester Academy for information about the need to bus students due to field conditions. Director Reishus will provide quotes submitted for the work.

Ms. Theokas asked about activities scheduled during school vacation week. Director Reishus will provide this information. Ms. Theokas said Chester Academy is willing to host an open gym for teams to practice.

5.2 Upcoming Events

Director Reishus noted the Town Fair committee is contemplating a different format for the Town Fair, possibly spreading events over a weekend. A company could be invited to offer a midway the entire weekend. Organizations could manage events Friday and Sunday for revenue. They are considering not having vendors, as this takes up most of the volunteer time and damages the field. Rec could be responsible for events on Saturday, with sponsorships covering the cost. The Commission discussed a variety of options and the lack of community support. They also considered ways to involve the community. Ms. Theokas expressed concern over the police budget, if they need to cover a three-day event. The next Town Fair committee meeting will be held the first of March.

The Wason Pond Wrangler is scheduled for May 11, 2024.

Ms. Theokas said the PTA is holding a 5K run around the time of the Wrangler.

VI. Adjournment

The next meeting is scheduled for April 22, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

Ms. Davies moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Theokas seconded the motion. A vote was taken. All were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Beth Hanggeli
Recording Secretary*