

TOWN OF HAMDEN

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

MEETING

5:30 PM
JULY 12, 2011

PARKS & RECREATION CONFERENCE ROOM
HAMDEN GOVERNMENT CENTER
2750 DIXWELL AVENUE
HAMDEN

Commissioners in Attendance: Tad Watson, Chairman
Rich Leonardo, Vice Chair
Michael McGarry
Sarah Morrill

Others in Attendance: Mimsie Coleman, Director of Arts, Recreation & Culture
Peggy Craft, Clerk of the Commission

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Watson called the meeting to order at 5:36 PM.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance was taken as noted above.

APPROVAL OF JUNE 14, 2011 MINUTES

Commissioner Morrill motioned to accept the Minutes of the June 14th meeting. Commissioner McGarry seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Chairman Watson welcomed Ms. Coleman to the meeting, and said he and his fellow Commissioners looked forward to working with her.

Ms. Coleman said she looks forward to getting to know the members of the Commission and working with them. She said she spent a great deal of time at Brooksvale Park in the late 80s. She added that her children attended Green Dragon Camps and her sons played baseball and basketball in the Hamden Fathers Leagues. She said when she was younger, athletics were more important to her than the arts. She said she lettered in all sports in her high school. She added that her high school had a population of 127.

Ms. Coleman said she would try to do right by the Department and the Commission, because it is important to her and she cares about the department and the programs that it oversees.

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COMMUNICATIONS

There were no Communication items.

COMMISSION CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chairman Watson discussed the mission and goals of the Commission.

He said that the Commission had discussions with CAO Curt Leng regarding the authority and direction of this Commission with regard to the changes that would be made by the Charter Revision Commission. He said this has caused some confusion, and has indirectly affected this Commission because many of the programs they oversee are held on the fields that are now under the direction of the Public Works Department. He added that Mr. Leng was informed that they would like to have the Parks Division brought back to this Commission.

Ms. Coleman said she does not know what the Charter Revision Commission has decided. She also said there is not a Commission that oversees Public Works.

Mr. Watson said this Commission is now only Recreation, not Parks and Recreation, adding that this has always been part of the Commission's realm. A letter was sent to the Charter Revision Commission regarding the concerns of the Commission. The clerk will send a copy of this letter to Ms. Coleman.

Next, Mr. Watson said he met with Recreation Supervisor Rick Gentile. Mr. Watson said there are many programs for children and young people but he is concerned that we have not done anything for senior citizens. He said there is finally a horseshoe pit at Brooksvale, and he would like to see a horseshoe tournament planned. He said he would also like to see a bocce, chess, and checker tournaments. He discussed creating programs geared toward middle age and senior citizens. He added that there are tables at Millrock Park that could have chess/checker board on them. He also said he would like to see horseshoe pits and bocce courts at DeNicola Park. He also felt that these programs should be well advertised.

Ms. Coleman said she thought these were excellent ideas, and suggested discussing this with the Director of Elderly Services and the Grants Coordinator. Mr. Watson asked that Ms. Coleman contact Mr. Gentile to discuss these ideas.

Ms. Coleman also discussed the Town Center Park activities.

OLD BUSINESS

Commissioner McGarry updated the Commissioners regarding the Hamden Soccer Association's Gift of Services to the Town for the reseeding of the two fields behind the Hamden Middle School. He said the final approval went through last Tuesday, and has been approved by the Council. There was a discussion regarding this project.

Commissioner McGarry also reported the U12 Boys Soccer Team and the U14 Girls Soccer Team won the tournament in Cheshire. It was also reported that the U19 Team won the State Title.

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Next, there was a discussion regarding the graffiti on Town park signs and the pavilion in Town Center Park.

Chairman Watson noted that the Commission still has one vacancy, and asked Ms. Coleman to speak to the Mayor's Administrative Assistant regarding this. Ms. Coleman agreed to contact the Mayor's office to see if there is anyone interested in serving on this Commission.

Mr. Watson also discussed having ID cards made for the Commissioners.

NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Morrill asked if this Commission would also oversee the Arts Commission activities. Ms. Coleman explained the duties of the Arts Commission. She said these are two separate departments. She added that they will collaborate, but will remain separate Commissions.

There was a short discussion regarding the Rectory Barn and the plans to make it a multi cultural museum. Debbie Chavoya of P.L.A.C.E is planning this.

Commissioner Leonardo discussed the problems with securing locations for the winter traveling basketball teams. He said this is because the Town buildings are shut down on Sundays. Mr. Leonardo said if possible, they would like to use the Hamden Middle School on Sundays. Ms. Coleman agreed to discuss this possibility with John Leonardo. She asked if the association would be willing to pay custodial fees. Mr. Leonardo said they would. He added that the organization does not have any fundraisers; they raise money for scholarships in Wayne Tolson's name with sales from their snack bars.

Commissioner McGarry noted that this is a small but mighty Commission.

ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business to come before the Commission, and Chairman Watson called for a motion to adjourn. **Commissioner Morrill motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Leonardo seconded the motion that passed unanimously.** Chairman Watson adjourned the meeting at 6:22 PM.

Submitted by:

Peggy Craft, Clerk of the Commission