

Middlebury Parks and Recreation Commission
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 14, 2024

Present: Betsy Anderson, Director
Carolanne Browne
Mike Roach
Robert Mastroianni
Harold Zinno III
Sharon Bosco

Absent: Ron Clark, Chairman

RECEIVED FOR FILING
April 5 2024 at 1:00 pm
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
MIDDLEBURY, CT
B. M. Bosco
TOWN CLERK

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Carolanne Browne called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

APPROVE MINUTES

Mike noted he provided Barbara with corrections to names under Public Comments, where Harold Zinno was incorrectly referenced instead of Mike Roach.

With these corrections, VOTED unanimously on a motion by Mike Roach and seconded by Harold Zinno to APPROVE the February 7, 2024, meeting minutes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Derrick Dumoulin and Mr. Fran Barton addressed the Commission regarding the Scouts not being allowed to use the MRA last June. They made the Commission aware there are three Eagle Scout Projects at the MRA: recycle bins, horseshoes, and bocci balls. It's tradition that they use the MRA. They were told they were denied based on size. They always have supervision and always walk through to do clean-up, even in areas not used, leaving it better than they found it. Troop 5 is a long-standing troop that now includes Troop 6 (females) and has 40 boys and 26 girls. Mr. Dumoulin requested to understand the definition of 'private' as it was used to describe the MRA as the Boy Scouts of America has very strict guidelines for Eagle Projects. Mr. Barton also said there are usually not more than 25 people at the event.

Discussion ensued. Carolanne Browne explained that they were told to expect 50 people, which is why the Commission offered Meadowview instead. She also clarified her use of the term 'private' in the email communication with Selectman Mahr describing the MRA. It was used to convey that the MRA is not open to the general public wishing to enter. It is for Middlebury residents with a paid pass, either daily or seasonal. All Middlebury residents are welcome. Carolanne Browne asked if there were reasons, other than tradition, that made the MRA more desirable than the offered Meadowview location. Mr. Dumoulin said they like to grill, and grills are available at the MRA but not Meadowview.

GREENWAY REPORT

Sharon Bosco shared a document with information they would like to share on the Greenway website. Carolanne Browne suggested adding something about winter maintenance. Bob Mastroianni asked if there were forms of payment, other than checks, accepted to donate to the Greenway Committee projects. No electronic payments at this time (credit). Sharon Bosco also said they are getting quotes to replace some of the historical signs.

BUDGET

Harold Zinno and Betsy Anderson will start meeting in advance of the Commission meeting to review the Budget, so any questions/comments may be brought to the meeting.

PERSONNEL

P&R is losing the weekend park maintainer. The person who works M-F does not want to work weekends. Need someone to open/close and clean the bathrooms. Also, meet anyone hosting a party and using the kitchen at Meadowview.

BUILDINGS AND PARKS

Mike Roach spoke with PYB and Smash. He made MOTION to re-open discussion on the baseball contract, SECONDED by Harold Zinno.

The Commission was presented with a draft agreement for PYB and Smash to use Quassy Field for the next year. PYB is interested in continuing with Smash. They requested a multi-year contract, but Mike Roach is proposing to keep it to a year-to-year agreement.

PYB sent pictures of the Quassy Fields to support the proposed work they feel is needed.

Carolanne Browne said she was concerned PYB was asking Middlebury to pay for anything. Would like to see Bullet 4 on Page 5 of the draft contract re-worded. Mike Roach asked the Commissioners to review the draft and share any edits by Tuesday, March 19, when he is meeting with the parties again to review the contract.

VOTED unanimously on a MOTION made by Mike Roach to extend the PYB and Smash contract for one year to use Quassy Field. SECONDED by Bob Mastroianni.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Carolanne Browne had nothing to add since Mr. Dumoulin and Mr. Barton attended the meeting to address BSA concerns over MRA use. Will address Summer Concerts during "Old Business".

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Betsy Anderson reported that Ryan Mulhern has been hired as the new Assistant Director of the MRA.

The Easter Egg Hunt is scheduled for March 23 at 1:00 pm.

They are finalizing Earth Day plans. Collaborating with Connect Physical Therapy – paint your own flowerpot kits (40) and herb plants.

Planning for the Memorial Day Parade is underway.

The Preschool Readiness Program is growing, and it is at capacity.

Summer camps are being planned.

Public Works will be doing playground repairs.

Public Works will be pressure washing and filling in cracks on the tennis courts. P&R needs to provide a lining scheme. Need to schedule park walk-thru.

MRA boat racks – the cost is ~ \$1200 for a new rack to hold 6 boats.

VOTED unanimously on a MOTION by Harold Zinno SECONDED by Bob Mastroianni to ACCEPT the Director's Report.

NEW BUSINESS

Summer Concerts: Carolanne Browne reported she has bands lined up for 4 of the 5 concert dates. She also has Youth Organizations arranged for most of the dates. She would like the Commission's thoughts on working with local restaurants on "Grab and Go" food options and promoting the event. Discussed getting 10-20 yard signs to put around town.

Ballfields – addressed during the Build and Parks Committee report.

OLD BUSINESS

Committee Assignments – not needed to discuss, Harold Zinno will take the open Budget Committee position.

2024 Plans for Parks and Recreation Commission – did not discuss given the late hour.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

ADJOURNMENT

VOTED unanimously on a motion by Harold Zinno and SECONDED by Bob Mastroianni to adjourn at 7:58 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
by Carolanne Browne

