

RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES –July 28, 2021

ATTENDING: Howard Raphaelson, Darren Cook, David Palmer, Anna Knuttel,
Anne Rash, Jim Raynor, Ed Baxter

STAFF: Jay O’Keefe, Acting Director of Parks and Recreation

- A. Call to Order -The meeting was called to order at 7:03p.m by Ed Baxter.
- B. Approval of Minutes – D. Palmer motioned and D. Cook seconded that the minutes from April 28, 2021 with noted corrections. The motion passed unanimously.
- C. Opportunity for the Public to Address the Committee – none
- D. Co-Sponsorship Update - J. O’Keefe noted that annual applications for MALL and MAPL will be reviewed at the October 27, 2021 meeting. Additionally, new school construction will continue to impact MALL until the fall of 2022/spring 2023. Some overuse of existing fields and relocation of batting cages have addressed by the town.
- E. Old Business –
 - 1. FY 2021 adjusted budget - J. O’Keefe updated RAC on the progress of the adjusted FY 2020-21 budget that took effect in November 2020 to decrease the projected 973K deficit to 770K at the end of the fiscal year. An end of FY financial report is anticipated for the Finance Department in August. J. O’Keefe noted that internal P&R reports indicate that the deficit will be better than estimated 10 months ago. He reminded RAC that significant staffing adjustments, MCC hours, discretionary spending and temporary vacancies of full time staff have helped to slow the deficit.
 - 2. American Rescue Plan Act Funds - J. O’Keefe reviewed handouts (town wide survey and parks and recreation proposed projects) on project and funding information. Further discussion about how final project funds are to be used will take place over the next several months by town staff and town council. It is anticipated that some relief to the parks and recreation deficit may be covered by the ARPA funds.
 - 3. Community Center Update - A MCC usage report summary was distributed. Community Center visits are about 70% less than this time last year, but showing an upward trend during what is usually a slow time of the year for MCC. Significant concerns remain on the impact of COVID-19 on MCC memberships and the ability to slow the deficit with major operational changes. Canceled and frozen memberships continue but have slowed in recent months. Staff continues to work closely with other town departments to assess and implement feasible

operational adjustments.

4. Park Updates- J. O'Keefe reported that he has engaged in correspondence with the Mansfield Schools Superintendent, Kelly Lyman about possible reuse of the Southeast Playground. He also reported on vandalism and mischief at BCP resulting in an arrest warrant this past week

F. Correspondence- J. O'Keefe updated RAC on pertinent information such as Town Manager reports and MLK mural project.

G. New Business

1. Summer Programs – J. O'Keefe noted that programs were positive with slightly higher than projected participation. About 30 qualifying families to date have taken advantage of the Summer Enrichment Grant offered for Camp Mansfield. Camp Mansfield experienced a norovirus outbreak in session #3, closing camp for one week. Staff worked over the weekend to clean, disinfect and follow State of CT. Public Health protocols and reopened for session #4.

2. Staff updates- P&R was operating at only 40% of its full time staff for a number of months. Two new Recreation Coordinators were hired this past week to fill vacancies.

3. Lenard Hall – is holding some in person programs and lessons. Virtual music lessons continue to be an option.

H. Future Agendas. D. Palmer requested more details on proposed Silver Sneaker/Senior options, monthly membership attendance and membership trends.

Having no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m.