

MINUTES

Cromwell Recreation Commission Regular Meeting

Thursday, March 7, 2019

Present: Commissioners Dan Brisson, Ruth Checko, Mike Holcomb and John Schmaltz,
Recreation Director Scott Kieras

Absent: Commissioner Jim Vinchetti

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 5:05 p.m.

2. Approve Minutes

a. December 13, 2018

Motion was made by Dan Brisson to approve the minutes of December 13, 2018. Motion seconded by Ruth Checko. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Program Report

a. Director

Recreation Director Scott Kieras advised the Commission that the reason for this meeting being held in the Senior Center was due to the renovation of the two activity rooms downstairs. Scott indicated that there is a new Youth Services Administrator who is looking to utilize one of the activity rooms for programs, meetings, etc. The activity rooms have already been painted and new furniture has been ordered. Currently Scott stated that they are waiting to obtain new flooring. Scott told the Commission that he had put \$5,000 in his budget for the flooring but the Town Manager has indicated that they will use funds from this fiscal year and maintenance will install the floor. The other activity room will be used for a new preschool program this summer as our preschool instructor's programs have become very popular. The department will be offering a preschool camp three days a week for 3 hours a day. It will be held onsite with no field trips, and Scott hopes for it to be a feeder system for the summer day camp.

With respect to the field use policy, Scott distributed to Commission members the Town of Avon's field use policy courtesy of Commissioner Ruth Checko. Scott indicated that he is looking to meet in April with the sports organizations along with the Town Manager, Public Works Director, Maintenance Supervisor and himself to revisit the current policy of closing all fields when there are weather related issues. Scott has offered to the Public Works Director that he would be willing to assist in walking the fields and determining which ones are playable and which ones need to be closed as he felt that this should be done on a field by field basis. There was considerable discussion on this between Scott and the Commission members.

Scott also addressed the issue of outside organizations that pay to use the fields and bring in additional funds for field maintenance. He reported that Under Armor will be bringing in a flag football program under the high school football coach and will be paying to use the football field.

Scott reported that this summer the department will be showing movies on the Pierson Park scoreboard on the Wednesday nights when there is not a summer concert. There will be four bands at Riverport Park and four movies at Pierson Park. Scott is looking for organizations who might be interested in manning the concession stand for the movie nights and keeping the proceeds from the sale of hamburgers, hot dogs, popcorn, and candy. The Commission members felt that it was difficult to get volunteers to do these types of things. Scott indicated that the new Shop Rite in Town is interested in sponsoring and attending some of these events.

Scott reported to the Commission on the budget hearing. The Recreation Department budget went up slightly due to the full time salaries.

Scott spoke on moving forward with special needs programs, which is a concern brought up by the Town Council. He noted that the department will be going in the direction of unified, inclusive programming rather than separate special needs programs. Ruth spoke in support of this and how it has worked in Avon. She noted that all programs including camp, basketball and soccer, could be inclusive. Any support needed would be paid for by the department. Scott will work on coming up with a special needs statement for the department. He confirmed that they will be offering TOPSoccer in the spring and hope to make the Fall Youth Soccer program an inclusive one.

Scott advised the Commission that a town wide study which was to include a senior/community center as well as review of field use needs has currently been cut from the budget.

There was further discussion on field usage, particularly baseball fields. Scott noted that there are not enough baseball fields for all of the groups that want to use them.

Scott confirmed that Vale Soccer is again looking to pay for field usage. They are looking for an 11v11 field. Mike Holcomb spoke on Cromwell Chill's need for two 11v11 fields but that they only have the use of one 11v11 field due to the spring lacrosse program at the high school. There was considerable discussion on this and the need for more fields and facilities in town.

There are also discussion on the maintenance of the fields and the need for additional training of the field maintenance staff for this. John Schmaltz spoke on different types of training options and gave some additional information to Scott regarding this. The Commission felt that there was a need to come up with a maintenance schedule for all of the fields.

Scott confirmed that a meeting will be set up in April with the town sports organizations regarding addressing field closures and open to discussion regarding moving forward in the future. Mike Holcomb requested that the Commission's wish list for the fields be brought to this meeting as well.

b. Parks: Discussion under the Director's report.

4. Old Business: None

5. New Business

a. Flooring for Activity Room

Reported on under Director's Report.

6. Commissioners Comments

Scott noted that Frank Emanuele, the Town Council liaison to the Recreation Commission, was unable to attend this meeting. Samantha Slade is also interested in attending the Recreation Commission meetings but the Town Council had budget hearings all this week.

The Spring and Summer Brochure will be coming out soon. Scott noted that they have added a bio page for the instructors. Upon questioning, Scott confirmed that background checks are done on all volunteers and instructors.

There was some discussion on the proposed new public works department garage and the opportunity for additional parking and expansion of Pierson Park if this facility is relocated. There was discussion on the need for a turf field, possibly at Pierson Park if the public works department garage is relocated.

7. Adjournment

Motion was made by John Schmaltz to adjourn the meeting at 6:00 p.m. Motion seconded by Mike Holcomb. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rosanne Krajewski