MIDDLEBURY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, May 9, 2024

Present: Betsy Anderson, Director
         Carolanne Browne
         Mike Roach
         Robert Mastroianni

Also Present: Liana St. Germain, Recording Clerk
              Francesca Arminio, Recording Clerk
              Mike Trusiewicz, Resident

Absent: Ron Clark, Chairman
        Harold Zinno III

CALL MEETING TO ORDER
Carolanne Browne called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

APPROVE MINUTES
Discussion regarding PYB field use and policies regarding neighboring towns. Mike Roach motions to table the minutes. Robert Mastroianni seconds. The April 2024 meeting minutes were tabled for now. Feedback notes to come.

PUBLIC COMMENT
Mike Trusiewicz wanted to follow up on a discussion he had with Betsy Anderson regarding using room number 8 for ping pong starting at 4 pm. There were personnel issues that made use of that room difficult. Betsy Anderson noted that when there is an activity, there's an adult leader. There needs to be a program and a schedule so we know what groups are going to be in the building to reserve rooms. Each group, like the Woodbury ballet, exercise instructor, dance instructor, and Scouts, all have a leader and their own insurance. If there’s an emergency and there’s no schedule in place, there's no one here to handle that. There needs to be a program so we know what groups are in the building.
Mike Trusiewicz mentioned that there is a possibility that someone could take this responsibility. But he felt that those playing were all adults, and this is Middlebury, CT; if there was a program with the sign-ups, someone could take responsibility. There was an ad hoc program for 5-6 years, so if there was a room open, we would check and clean up after ourselves; it was never a problem.

Robert Mastroianni asked if this was during the day or at night.

Mike Trusiewicz noted that it happens during the day and evening.

Mike Trusiewicz asked if we could use the honor system for rooms like farmers do for produce. Ping Pong is not a program. He asked, can't we have a room available for a healthy activity? I just wanted to put this on the table if you think it's worth discussing.

Mike Roach asked if there was a janitor here in the building at that time.

Betsy Anderson replied that the custodian would come in at 6. There's nobody in the building from 4 pm until 6 pm, and we cannot ask a custodian to be in charge. Robert Mastroianni asked when the custodian locks up. Betsy said 10 pm. Mike Trusiewicz noted there's a sign that says, please leave the building by 9 pm. Betsy Anderson noted that it gives the custodian time to finish cleaning if all activities are completed by 9 pm. Mike Roach discussed liability responsibility. Is there insurance for something like this? Mike Trusiewicz answered that there is no insurance. Mike Roach suggested that we should discuss when Ron Clark and Harold Zinno are in the next meeting or can discuss via phone so Mike Trusiewicz wouldn't have to wait 2 months.

Mike Trusiewicz asked about pickleball courts and offered that he knows there are plenty of people who would want to play. He remarked that the Memorial Middle School tennis court is a sad representation of tennis courts. He said he went and measured it out, and you could fit 6 pickle ball courts. The gym teacher could fit four on a court and when school is out, residents could use it. He asked if this fell under Parks and Rec or Region 15. Mike Roach answered that it is part of Region 15. Mike Trusiewicz asked if he should bring it up to the Board of Education. Mike Roach answered yes. And if the Board of Education doesn't do it, we're still trying to get something here. It's definitely in the works. Mike Trusiewicz said it looks like it was in the budget, but now the budget is cut. Betsy Anderson announced that she has some quotes.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**BUDGET**
Caroline Browne asked Betsy Anderson if there was anything to discuss. Betsy Anderson declined.

**PERSONNEL**
Betsy Anderson mentioned that we have a new park attendant, and that's going well.

**BUILDING AND PARKS**
Mike Roach announced he had a few items to discuss. Mike Roach showed the 2023-2024 season plaques to the Parks and Rec. Committee and reported that we did not use Southbury
and what a success we had this year with the kids. We worried about severing from Southbury, but it worked out due to Betsy Anderson and Ed St. John, who backed us up. I have a plaque for the First Selectman as well. Mike Roach thanked Betsy Anderson and handed Betsy the plaque and mentioned that it was for her and her office.

Mike Roach went on to discuss Pomperaug Youth Baseball. He said he's been in contact with them to get the signage out. They did make a digital flyer and they will distribute it. He did get Pies and Pints - their renewal is $250 to renew the sign from last year. Also, Cosmopolitan and Middlebury Liquors.

Mike Roach also noted that he has reached out to 4 of 5 advertisers. And are happy to renew this year. Robert Mastroianni asked about how many signs we can get. Mike Roach noted that we could fill up the field. Premier Turf did a really good job. Mike Roach asked if we could get the town crew to bag the clippings. They just put hundreds of dollars into the clay. Betsy Anderson replied that they use leaf blowers to blow it off. She talked to the person who does this, and he said he always blows it off. He leaves it in good condition.

Carolanne Browne asked if everything was all set with the contract and the responsibility of who's paying for what? Mike Roach said that, yes, it took a long time, but he thought the contract came out pretty well. Carolanne Browne asked if they signed it. Mike Roach said yes.

Mike Roach did speak to Pies and Pub again. He's going to talk to the owner himself. They are interested in doing "boxes to go" or something easy. Or a special sale. He said he would need to talk to him personally, whether it's 2 slices and a soda or something or wings. Pick up and go and bring it to the concert. Carolanne Browne suggested that she send them a concert schedule so that they are prepared that it's an option for the concert nights. Mike Roach asked if Carolanne Brown wanted him to ask them about being a donor. Carolanne Brown said that she thought that if we're going to promote this grab-and-go kind of thing, it would be nice for them to be donors. Mike Roach asked how they were donors. Carolanne Brown mentioned that last year, we had the advertisements "brought to you by" and showed a list of all the donors. Mike Roach asked about the price.

Carolanne Browne said that she left it up to the people. Whatever they felt comfortable contributing. She didn't have a minimum. Whoever gave the most was the top bill.

**PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Carolanne Brown said there was nothing to report.

**DIRECTORS REPORT – Betsy Anderson**

Betsy Anderson said she was working on the Memorial Day parade, which is a little more than 2 weeks away. We still need a parade marshall.

Betsy Anderson provided the following update on MRA passes and boat racks:
Sold 55 passes so far for MRA.
We had enough boat racks this year; DPW is building 3 new racks.

Total of 18 places.
Those are going to be small for smaller paddle boards or kayaks.
We have 3 different groupings.
Canoe/sailboats...sunfish.
Kayaks greater than 6 ft.
Stand-up paddle boards or Kayaks less than 6 ft.
Had enough for all.

Chip is back and getting MRA ready to open.

Betsy Anderson brought up the wheelchair accessibility issue in the Ples and Pub parking lot. Betsy showed a photo that the lot was painted to restrict parking in the area that is designated for wheelchair accessibility to the Greenway.

Betsy Anderson also mentioned the other accessibility issue at Meadowview Park, around the circle area. Robert Mastroianni showed a photo of the bump in the parking lot. Lip or crevice to be repaired.

Betsy Anderson updated everyone on the Pickle Ball courts:
The Department of Public Works contacted companies all over CT to get quotes. They got one company to quote for Ledgewood Park, the total: $22,726.97. For 2 courts. They mentioned that the tennis courts at Ledgewood Park are a bit smaller than a full-regulation tennis court would be, so they can only create 2 pickleball courts in that same space. The company that's working on the Pomperaug pickleball court can't work on anything else until that job is done. Mike Trusiewicz said they should be able to do 4 courts. Surprised to hear that this company is saying only 2. Betsy Anderson repeated that, per the report, this area can only accommodate 2 courts. As noted above, our courts are slightly smaller and cannot fit 4 pickle ball courts.

Betsy Anderson provided the Resurfacing at MRA quote for reconstructing and resurfacing from Hinding Tennis Courts. If the town does the preliminary work, the quote would be $37,567.15. If Hinding Tennis Courts does pavement and everything else, $134,000. At this point, it has to be determined if that's acceptable. Betsy Anderson also mentioned that the company doing Pomperaug courts is too busy, probably until July. No one else has returned any of the phone calls. Carolanne Browne said that when she was at Memorial MS courts, there was a sign at the door that said, "per Parks and Rec." Looks like we are responsible for that court. Betsy Anderson added I believe Ron Clark mentioned something about that. Mike Roach asked if we ever did programs there. Betsy Anderson replied that it was possible. Carolanne Browne said that there are 2 courts there, and if we do share responsibility, then maybe we do get in line for pickleball outside of school, and town residents can use it. Wouldn't be an expensive solution because also the school takes care of it or helps to take care of it. Carolanne Browne also mentioned that this may be an old sign that needs to come down. Betsy Anderson mentioned she will follow up on this.

Betsy Anderson announced a letter from the organization called Cancer Can’t. (see attached)
Last year was a hit, so they want to do this again this year at Meadowview Park. They want to add in Nigerian dwarf goats to get younger folks involved. Date: Saturday, June 8, 2024, from 12 pm – 4 pm. Carolanne Browne asked if there was an insurance issue. What will the goats do to the fields? Betsy Anderson noted that she would check with the Public
Works Director Dan Norton. Carolanne Browne mentioned she liked the idea but was worried about logistics. What was the turnout last year? How many people do they expect? Is this the right venue? Pending a discussion. Do we need to get parking directions? Carolanne Browne noted that it seems as if all in attendance are interested. How will this affect soccer? How many people do they expect? Carolanne Browne mentioned contacting the soccer teams to advise them of this event. Betsy Anderson said they were very organized last year. Carolanne Browne said to make sure there’s enough parking for soccer. If there’s soccer in the afternoon, we need to make sure the town is okay with it.

Betsy Anderson noted that per Dan Norton’s email regarding the condition of the soccer fields, using fields when wet causes damage. She sent an email to both groups that were disappointed that people were playing when the field was wet. Mike Roach said we should be able to make a decision on when to close the field. Betsy Anderson said that we have a good relationship with the teams; he tries to make sure they move them around the field. Pomperaug soccer said they didn’t play when the field was wet. Carolanne Browne said if we can’t trust them to make the call, then we have to close the parks. Robert Mastroianni mentioned that it gets really wet by the cemetery. Carolanne said that there is a drainage issue. Robert Mastroianni said it’s just that there’s just been so much rain and asked if we can move them to Ledgewood, especially in the spring. Betsy Anderson said that both teams are sharing both fields. It would leave somebody out. Carolanne Browne asked if we could offer them an alternative. Mike Roach asked if we could move them or reimburse them if they can’t play. Betsy Anderson replied that yes, we do that now. Robert Mastroianni asked if there is some place we can add a sign that says the field is closed. Mike Roach said that no, we can just call them. He suggested that we tell them that we’ll notify you. And, if this continues, add to the contract that we’ll notify you of any cancellations due to the weather. Robert Mastroianni asked if there were any nets at the Schoolhouse. Betsy Anderson said the problem is there are no big nets. Carolanne Browne asked if we should invest in a net for that field so people can use that field. And mentioned that there’s nothing happening there.

Betsy asked about tractors in the Memorial Day parade. Carolanne Brown said that in past years, someone had a float. And asked if it was being pulled by a tractor. Can we put the tractors last? Mike Roach asked how many requests there were. Betsy Anderson noted this is something that has been brought up, so she is bringing it to the commission. Carolanne Browne said that we need more information and to talk to the others. She suggested we make a decision next week so Ron Clark and Harold Zinno can chime in.

Carolann Browne asked how it was going with proof of residency with the MRA passes. Betsy Anderson noted that some people are okay with it, but some are not if they haven’t read the email sent listing that info.

Robert Mastroianni asked how much we make at MRA. Betsy Anderson replied that with boat racks; 350 passes, about $45,000 last year.

**VOTED:** Unanimously on a **MOTION** by Mike Roach and **SECONDED** by Robert Mastroianni to **APPROVE** the Directors Report.
OLD BUSINESS

a. PYB Contract
Mike Roach said that the PYB contract was signed. Mike Roach noted he received a text stating that Quassy Field is ready and signs are up. Carolanne Browne asked if we were reusing the signs, and Mike Roach stated yes.

b. Summer Concerts
Carolanne Brown gave a Sponsor update. She noted that the Middlebury Lions, Bannon, and Hebert, and she talked to Ion Bank. The first concert is on June 27, 2024. Mention it on Facebook and save yard signs until we have all the sponsor's information: $300 to $1000 last year, not counting the gazebo because the Lions sponsored that last year. There is no minimum. She will follow up with Harold Zinno.

Carolanne Browne said that Morgan Stanley has submitted all the appropriate paperwork. Concerts will run every other week through August 22, 2024.

Betsy Anderson said that the Board of Selectmen meeting brought up Celebrate Middlebury again; rather than having one event, concentrating on concerts, would it be a consideration to have non-profits have a table there? She suggested maybe spotlighting one or two nonprofits at each concert.

Carolanne Browne suggested setting up a schedule for non-profits as long as they are not competing with youth groups for fundraising and to prevent overlap, that would be fine. Possibly two a night.

c. Memorial Day Parade
Carolanne Browne asked if there was anything else on the parade. Mike Roach asked if we knew anyone interested in being grand marshall. Robert Mastroianni asked about Dr. Peterson. Mike Roach said there are requirements. The person needs to live in Middlebury and have served. He asked if we have a list of who did it in the past. Betsy Anderson noted that Ron Clark knows who used to do it in the past.

NEW BUSINESS
None

EXECUTIVE SESSION
None
ADJOURNMENT
VOTED: Unanimously on a MOTION by Mike Roach and SECONDED by Robert Mastroianni to ADJOURN the meeting at 7:15 PM

These minutes are submitted subject to approval.

Respectfully Submitted,
Francesca Arminio
Recording Clerk

cc: Town Clerk
Commission Members
Betsy Anderson
May 9, 2024

City of Middlebury
Parks and Recreation Commission
1172 Whittemore Road
Middlebury, CT 06762

Re: Proposal for the Cancer Can(t) Co. Annual Fundraiser
Saturday, June 8, 2024, at Meadowview Park

Dear Commissioners,

My name is Nicole Barber. I am a Middlebury resident and the founder of Cancer Can(t) Co., a Middlebury, Connecticut based non-profit organization that provides aid, comfort and resources to all adult cancer patients in the midst of active treatment. Cancer Can(t) has been active in our community since 2021 and will be hosting its annual fundraiser at Meadowview Park for the second year.

As you may have heard, last year's fundraiser was a hit throughout our community. As a result of being held at Meadowview Park, alongside the weekend soccer matches, we did have many families with younger children attend. This year, we wanted to gear some of our efforts towards those members of the community, encouraging them to become philanthropic at a young age. In that vein, we have added some child-friendly raffles to our event, and we now seek your permission to invite members of the 4-H Club, The Doesy Doats, to bring goats to the event.

My son was a member of The Doesy Doats for several years and I know the members thereof personally. They have spent the last several months trying to determine what they could do to volunteer for Cancer Can(t) and the fundraiser seems perfect. We are proposing the following:

- Members of The Doesy Doats will bring 4-6 Nigerian Dwarf goats. Adult Nigerian Dwarf goats stand a maximum of 23.5 inches tall and weigh, on average, 50 pounds. However, it is currently kidding season so I am hoping at least half of the goats (if not all) will be kids, standing approximately 6-8 inches tall and weighing 10-15 pounds.
- Members of The Doesy Doats will bring and assemble a freestanding enclosure in which the goats will remain for the entire event. The freestanding enclosure will be assembled under trees, away from any food and drink provided at the event.

Cancer Can(t) Co. is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization (#87-3317375). All donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.
• Members of The Doesy Doats will monitor the goats for the entire event, never leaving the goats alone or without supervision.
• Members of The Doesy Doats will provide the necessary food and/or water for the goats for the duration of the event.
• Members of The Doesy Doats and members of Cancer Can’t will ensure that the goat enclosure and all goat related paraphernalia and trash are thoroughly cleaned and removed from Meadowview Park before their departure.

We greatly appreciate your time and consideration. We are hopeful that, if permitted, the goats will bring awareness of philanthropy to a whole new generation.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Nicole L. Barber
Founder/CEO/President