

**APPROVED MINUTES
 PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
 Tuesday, April 23, 2024 @ 6:00 PM
 Charlestown Town Hall Council Chambers
 4540 South County Trail, Charlestown, RI 02813**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was CALLED TO ORDER by Chairman Wood at 6:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Leonard Wood	Chair	Present	
Lauren Classey	Commissioner	Present	
Jill Marie Fonnemann	Commissioner	Present	
Jodi Frank	Commissioner	Absent	
Kerry Gallup	Commissioner	Present	
Frank Glista	Commissioner	Present	
Christine Holden	Commissioner	Present	
Julie Melvin	Commissioner	Absent	
Timothy Quillen	Commissioner	Absent	
Gary T. Tedeschi	Vice-Chair	Present	
Lynn Varadian	Commissioner	Present	

Also present: Vicky Hilton, Parks & Recreation Director

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS –

Faith Labossiere would like the commission to consider putting on our agenda for discussion and research the possibility of installing a backboard near the tennis courts. It would be a permanent structure that anyone could use. She mentioned money being in the budget for re-surfacing the tennis courts. Is it possible to use some of that money?

Chairman Wood suggested that Ms. Labossiere do some research and investigate what will be needed.

4. COMMISSION COMMENTS

Commissioner Glista volunteered to clean the multipurpose path for the Deerfoot 5k which was held on April 20th. The job took him 3 hours because the path was covered with rocks and dirt from the winter storms. During his cleanup, he was disappointed at how poor the path looked with cracks and frost heaves. When any maintenance or improvement requests come to the Commission, we need to make sure the job is done correctly.

Chairman Wood reminded the commission that we were approved for a part time Parks and Recreation Department Maintenance person. This person could possibly be responsible for cleaning off the multipurpose path.

5. MINUTES APPROVAL

Discussion and/or potential action and/or vote(s) concerning:

A. Parks & Recreation Meeting Minutes for March 23, 2024.

VOTE

A motion was made by Commissioner Gallup, seconded by Commissioner Varadian to approve the minutes of March 23, 2024. The motion was unanimously approved with six (6) in favor, two (2) abstained and three (3) absent.

Result: Unanimous

Mover: Gallup

Secunder: Varadian

Ayes: Wood, Glista, Varadian, Gallup, Fonnemann, Holden

Abstain: Classey, Tedeschi

Absent: Frank, Melvin, Quillen

6. REPORTS- (NO VOTE NEEDED)**A. Director's Report April 2024**

Commissioner Gallup commented that the Flashlight Easter Egg Hunt was cool and very cold. A great event.

7. NEW BUSINESS

Discussion and/or potential action and/or vote (s) concerning:

A. Discussion and Potential Action – Event Calendar on Home Page of Website.

Commissioner Glista stated the town website is misleading with the calendar. The calendar just has the dates for meetings. He would like to see the website have a spot for events that are happening so the community knows what is happening.

Director Hilton stated that the Assistant Director, David Shoemaker is working on making the website better.

Chairman Wood suggested keeping the Senior Center in the loop with our agenda and minutes, so they know what is going on as well.

B. Discussion and Potential Action – Dismantle Friends of Ninigret Park Sub-Committee.

Commissioner Glista stated that a few parties involved with the Friends of Ninigret Park Sub-Committee feel that the committee should be dismantled.

VOTE

A motion was made by Chairman Wood, seconded by Commissioner Glista to have Director Hilton write a recommendation to have the Friends of Ninigret Park Sub-Committee dismantled. The motion was unanimously approved with eight (8) in favor, and three (3) absent.

Result: Unanimous

Mover: Wood

Second: Glista

Ayes: Wood, Glista, Varadian, Gallup, Fonnemann, Holden, Tedeschi, Classey

Absent: Frank, Melvin, Quillen

8. APPLICATIONS

Discussion and/or potential action and/or vote (s) concerning:

A. Atlantis Rising

Discussion and Potential Action Regarding the Approval of the Following Event at Ninigret Park, including recommendation to the Town Council to Waive §108-4 and §108-5 of the Charlestown Code of Ordinances, Subject to Review of Contracts by the Town Solicitor, receipt of All Applicable Paperwork and Insurance and that All Event Details Are Satisfactorily Met by the Parks and Recreation Director:

- A. Event: Atlantis Rising
- Dates: October 11-14, 2024
- Camping: Yes
- Insurance: \$
- Fee: \$

Louise Bishop, President, and CEO of South County Tourism attended the meeting. She gave an overview of the event. This will be the third year holding this family friendly event. The past two years were at Misquamicut State Beach, Westerly. The event will have sand sculptures, food, and vendors. The event centers around art. They have a company that cleans up the entire site from sand to trash.

Kerry Schwaab, from Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge, was present to discuss her concerns. She asked if the length of time could be shortened due to migrating birds.

Many questions concerning camping, parking, tower lights, exact areas being used in the park, alcohol being served and the fee for the event were asked.

Louise Bishop will do a site walk and find out the answers to all the questions.

Chairman Wood suggested that South County Tourism amend the application and resubmit it.

VOTE

A motion was made by Commissioner Tedeschi, seconded by Commissioner Classey to have South County Tourism continue the application and resubmit it. The motion was unanimously approved with eight (8) in favor and three (3) absent.

Result: Unanimous

Mover: Tedeschi

Second: Classey

Ayes: Wood, Glista, Holden, Classey, Fonnemann, Tedeschi, Varadian, Classey

Absent: Melvin, Frank, Quillen

9. OLD BUSINESS**Discussion and/or potential action and/or vote (s) concerning:****A. 2023/24 Ninigret Park Master Plan Draft update.**

Director Hilton stated the meeting lasted 4 hours and it is now in the hands of the Town council.

B. Disc Golf Update.

Commissioner Tedeschi stated 3-disc golf t-pads have been installed and three are ready to go. There is a Friday Night league being played now. They are looking into a storage unit for the park to store the baskets before installation.

C. Ninigret Park Application and Administrative Fee update.

Director Hilton and Commissioner Glista are still working on the issue. Commissioner Glista stated they are working on cleaning up the application and focusing on acreage with a map.

Commissioner Tedeschi stated the application fee should not be refundable. Submit an application with the fee attached.

D. Arts and Crafts Show, July 20, 2024, update.

Commissioner Classey stated the applications for the arts and crafts show are coming in slowly. There is a nice variety of vendors so far. The set up is still being discussed. It's best to be in a circle so all vendors are seen. Still looking for a group to sell beverages and food during the event.

Commissioner Tedeschi suggested having a walking path around the pond with the vendors set up along the path.

E. Dog adoption/parade/fashion show update.

Commissioner Fonnemann is hoping for a September date. There will be vendors, demonstrations, and other organizations on display. Looking for vendors to sell dog items.

F. Pawaget Park Labyrinth update.

Director Hilton has secured \$5,000 from a Legislative Grant and \$10,000 from a Wellbeing Collaborative. She is requesting \$50,963 from the Town Council from the leftover ARPA funds. A quote from a landscaper priced the labyrinth to cost \$65,963 to install. A new sign would be needed to let people know where the labyrinth is. Bat houses will also be needed for mosquito abatement. Parking would be an issue as well. It's tough to get in and out of. The project could be done in phases.

VOTE

A motion was made by Commissioner Tedeschi, seconded by Commissioner Fonnemann to request the consideration of the Town Council to use the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds in the amount of \$50,963, and to request authorization for the Parks and Recreation Commission to accept a legislative grant in the amount of \$5,000 and funds up to \$10,000 from Daniel Fitzgerald Executive Director, Wellbeing Collaborative funding towards a project in Pawaget Park. The motion was unanimously approved with eight (8) in favor and three (3) absent.

Result: Unanimous

Mover: Tedeschi

Seconded: Fonnemann

Ayes: Wood, Glista, Holden, Classey, Fonnemann, Tedeschi, Varadian, Classey

Absent: Melvin, Frank, Quillen

10. DIRECTOR COMMENTS

Director Hilton wanted to thank Commissioner Gallup for helping with the Flashlight Easter Egg Hunt and the Deerfoot 5k/Earth Day events. She also wanted to thank Commissioner Glista for blowing off the multipurpose path before the race. The Trolls are being built in the park. Go see them, they are interesting.

11. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Glista, seconded by Commissioner Varadian, to adjourn the meeting. All in favor. The vote was unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 6:38pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jill Cuddy