

**DRAFT MINUTES  
 PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING  
 Tuesday, July 23, 2024 @ 6:00 PM  
 Charlestown Town Hall, Town 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	Absent	
Lauren Classey	Commissioner	Present	
Jill Marie Fonnemann	Commissioner	Present	
Jodi Frank	Commissioner	Present	
Kerry Gallup	Commissioner	Absent	
Frank Glista	Commissioner	Present	
Julie Melvin	Commissioner	Present	
Timothy Quillen	Commissioner	Present	
Gary T. Tedeschi	Vice-Chair	Present	
Lynn Varadian	Commissioner	Present	

Also present: Vicky Hilton, Parks & Recreation Director and Susan Cooper, Town Council Liaison

**3. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Taylor Erkkinen stated that she was wondering if there is a volunteer group who takes care of Ninigret Park. She observed lots of poison ivy throughout the park and asked if volunteers could clean it up. Is it possible to have a volunteer group and be part of Friends of Ninigret.? Director Hilton suggested to Taylor that she send an email to her and that she would investigate such a group.

**4. COMMISSION COMMENTS**

Commissioner Varadian stated how great the Arts and Crafts Show was and that she was impressed with the local talent. She commented that the American Legion provided affordable food and drinks at the event. The set-up was perfect. It was spaced out and close to the playground for kids to play on.

**5. MINUTES APPROVAL**

- Discussion and/or potential action and/or vote(s) concerning:**  
**A. Parks & Recreation Meeting Minutes for June 11, 2024.**

**VOTE**

A motion was made by Commissioner Classey, seconded by Commissioner Frank to approve the minutes of June 11, 2024. The motion was unanimously approved with seven (7) in favor, one (1) abstained and two (2) absent.

**Result: Unanimous**

**Mover: Classey**

**Secunder: Frank**

**Ayes: Glista, Varadian, Classey, Tedeschi, Frank, Quillen, Fonnemann**

**Abstain: Melvin**

**Absent: Gallup, Wood**

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

Director Hilton stated that the beaches have been very busy lately with the rough ocean. The lifeguards watch over East Beach and Quonnie Beach as well as our two beaches because the state beaches don't have lifeguards.

**7. NEW BUSINESS****Discussion and/or potential action and/or vote (s) concerning:****A. Discussion and Potential Action – Heated year-round bathrooms near tennis/pickleball courts.**

Commissioner Quillen is suggesting that Ninigret Park have a year-round bathroom facility built near the pickleball/tennis courts. The facility should have four toilets for women and two toilets and two urinals for men, storage area and outside walls for practicing tennis/pickleball/soccer. The existing bathrooms are old and overused. We need a safe/clean facility year-round.

**VOTE**

A motion was made by Commissioner Classey, seconded by Commissioner Frank to have Commissioner Quillen move forward with investigating the bathroom facility for Ninigret Park. The motion was unanimously approved with eight (8) in favor, and two (2) absent.

**Result: Unanimous**

**Mover: Classey**

**Secunder: Frank**

**Ayes: Glista, Varadian, Classey, Tedeschi, Frank, Quillen, Fonnemann, Melvin**

**Absent: Gallup, Wood**

**B. Discussion and Potential Action – Parks and Recreation Commission gear (baseball hat) for identification at events.**

Commissioner Glista is suggesting that the Parks and Recreation Commission get gear that will help to identify them at events and throughout the park. A baseball hat or t-shirt with the Parks and Recreation logo will allow the commission some authority.

Director Hilton stated that she doesn't have any money in the budget for gear but perhaps we could bring the idea to the Town Council.

**8. APPLICATIONS**

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

Discussion and Potential Action Regarding the Approval of the Following Event at Charlestown Town Beach/Blue Shutters, 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: SkimRhody**  
**Dates: Saturday, August 3, 2024**  
**Camping: No**  
**Insurance:**  
**Fee: \$**

**This event application was pulled because the promoter was not ready for the event. They will apply in spring.**

**9. OLD BUSINESS**

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

**A. Disc golf update.**

Commissioner Tedeschi stated that there was nothing new to report. The part-time DPW employee the town hired is no longer working due to being allergic to poison ivy. They are not replacing him. Volunteers have been helping at the disc golf course.

**B. Ninigret Park Application and Administrative fee update.**

Nothing new.

**B. Arts and Crafts Show, July 20, 2024, update.**

Commissioner Classey stated that the event was a big success. Most vendors and attendees at the Arts and Craft Show had positive feedback. American Legion sold hot dogs and hamburgers as well as drinks. Atwater and Donnelly provided music for a couple of hours. Del's Lemonade and Scoops Ice Cream also provided delicious treats. Macaroni Kids is a group that advertises" things to do" in the South County area. They had a booth with activities for children to keep them busy. She also advertised the event for us. Looking ahead, we can discuss a different time of year and have the music for a longer time.

**D. Dog adoption/parade/fashion show update.**

Commissioner Fonnemann is still coordinating the logistics.

**E. Tennis backboard update.**

Nothing new.

**F. Goatscaping update.**

Director Hilton stated that we are having the goats clear an area in the park on September 20th and 21<sup>st</sup>. The goats will be fenced in an area near the soccer fields. They eat and clear all day and night, resting when they need it. This will be a great activity for kids and families to watch.

**G. Sculpture Trail update.**

Commissioner Glista is still investigating local artists to display artwork around the multi-purpose path.

**H. Atlantis Rising update.**

Director Hilton stated that she believes South County Tourism will be applying for the event to take place in the spring of 2025.

**I. Removal of the word “Events” from the town’s website which now reads. “Calendar of Meetings/Events”.**

Commissioner Glista is questioning the word events on the Town Website. It appears that nothing is ever listed on the link.

Director Hilton stated she will have David Shoemaker, Assistant Director, investigate the issue.

**10. DIRECTOR COMMENTS**

Director Hilton thanked Commissioner Classey for the fantastic Arts and Crafts Show. It was a huge success. Thank you for the volunteers that helped as well.

**11. ADJOURNMENT****VOTE**

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:00pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jill Cuddy