

P & R Committee Mtg. Minutes- January 22nd

1) Call to order- 5:32pm

In attendance- Bill Ford, Bill Kernan, Farhad Khan, Mark Wilch, Tricia Allen, Carl Robinson, Greg Boglioli, Scott Bourne, Cicilia Robinson, Meg Mayo, Dustin Hunt, Megan Curran

Agenda Approved- Motion by Farhad, seconded by Mark W

Minutes from 10/2 Approved- Motion by Farhad, seconded by Mark W

There were no public comments

2) Budget

- First draft of the 2021 budget was presented to the select board in December and was met with very few questions/concerns
- The budget on both the revenue and expenditure side is essentially remaining flat from FY 20. The 1.2% increase on the expenditure side is due to putting money into an equipment fund to replace/revitalize the aging department truck
- Dustin explained the Major drivers for both revenue and expenditures.
 - Tricia asked about step increases for Non-Union employees, Bill K stated that non-union members receive a standard 3% COLA increase each year
 - Mark W questioned why the expenditure budget wasn't higher if the Town of Middlebury has extra money. Mark would like to see a larger budget to expanded programming. Dustin explained that a higher budget wouldn't necessary mean more programming at that the department is reliant on new instructor's willingness to start programming. Dustin also stated that the department is going to do some outreach to attract new instructors which will be addressed later in the meeting.
- Halfway through the current FY 20 budget we have taken in about 40% of projected revenue, with an understanding that a large portion of our revenue comes in May and June when we open registration for summer programming. On the expenditure side we have spent 51% of our projected budget which is right in line where it typically is this time of year.

3) ACSD Discussion

- Dustin explained that Karen had preliminary discussions with the school board to discuss programming when the 6th graders move to the middle school. The board said that they'd like for Parks and Rec. to take the lead on researching what other communities with a Rec. Dept and a 6/7/8 middle school do and make a recommendation back to them and that we should also plan to look at who we would play and how they break down their teams to ensure that all levels remain competitive.

- Bill F suggested that we contact the Vermont Supervisory Association to find out what other areas in Vermont in the same situation do with their programming
- The general consensus was that we would continue our programming as is and if the School District decided to change their programming we would address it at that time.
- Tricia, Meg C and Karen all agreed to meet and research other what other districts do so we have that information moving forward
- Cicilia stated that the Teen Center cannot accept children under the age of 12 due to a state statute and wondered if athletics/activities might have same issue. In response to a question about transportation, she also stated the ACTR provided a shuttle bus from the Middle School to Mary Hogan which typically arrives a few minutes before 3:30pm

4) Programming

- Scott reported that the department was experiencing some issues with party rentals leaving the building a mess after parties. In response he has drafted some new language in the department's facility rental form.
- The committee also suggested raising the cost of rentals or requiring a cleaning deposit. Dustin stated that he worried if we raised the prices too much we might price some families out of renting the facility
- Scott passed around a calendar that showed a typical week of scheduling in the facility so members can see that the facility is used every day from about 7am to 9pm.
- The committee questioned what the priority was for scheduling, programs or rentals. Dustin explained that at the beginning of each season the department adds all of their programming to the calendar first and then parties get scheduled in the remaining open slots
- Scott passed around a draft letter that the department is going to distribute in hopes of attracting new instructor/programs and invited the committee to pass along suggestions if they had any
- Scott talked about new programs being offered by the department and went into detail about a skateboarding camp that will be offered this summer

5) Looking Ahead

- Dustin said the department is starting to accept applications for summer seasonal help. He asked committee members to pass along any suggestions on methods they use to attract/hire new candidates. Dustin stated he would like to have a deeper pool of candidates this summer with a priority on hiring older staff if possible.
- Cicilia suggested we research AmeriCorps; Dustin will have a follow-up discussion with her.
- Dustin stated he thought now is a good time to take the "pulse" of Parks and Recreation in Middlebury with a forward thinking community survey. He would like the committees help in drafting questions to include on the survey and hopes the results will provide a road map of wants/needs in the community as we look to expand recreational opportunities. Dustin said two areas of importance to him were outdoor recreation and programming for active adults.

- Tricia stated that the Library is currently undergoing a program audit that might be a useful tool as we develop the survey.
- Dustin quickly went over several capital projects that will be getting underway this spring/summer including a complete renovation of the Tot Lot at Rec. Park. The Middlebury Rotary club provided an \$8000.00 grant and will be helping install some of the features during Rotary Week in May. Dustin hoped committee members would also volunteer to help during that time to show our appreciation
- Other improvements include adding a second bathroom on the outside of the Warming Hut, replacing and extending the backstop at Jack Brown field, and continued pool house improvements
- Major events happening this summer include both the Festival on the Green and Peasants Market moving to the Recreation Park as well as the return of the CSAC bocce tournament.

6) Other member concerns/reports

- Bill F mentioned that the second floor renovation of the Sportscenter is nearly complete and invited committee members to stop by and take a tour
- Mark told members about a recent fundraising effort by the Pickleball group to raise money to install additional padding in the gym after one of their members got hurt. Dustin explained that the courts are currently in compliance with building codes and that money wasn't budgeted in the next two fiscal years for additional padding so they took it upon themselves to fundraise. Dustin thanked Mark for his efforts and said the additional padding will certainly help players feel an additional level of safety.
- Mark also briefly talked about the dog park touching on continued fundraising efforts and the hope to install a railing down the hill leading to the dog park
- Cicilia asked about additional storage at the Teen Center and the need for faster more reliable internet service. She also stated the Teen Center was now its own 5013c and that she had received her type 2 school bus endorsement and will be using a bus from the Career Center for summer programming.
- Tricia talked about expanded offerings to adults as well as soaring numbers in digital services and streaming services
- Carl talked about the Mountain Bike Club and the possibility of collaborating with the department to grow the club and expand offerings.
- Dustin reiterated that he is looking for help from committee members to research program offerings for 6th graders, recruitment of seasonal staff and help developing a community survey.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:57