

**Minutes of the  
Norwich Recreation Advisory Board  
MARCH 16, 2022**

**Call to Order:** 6:08pm.

**Present:** Derell Wilson, Julie Cagle, Cheryl Hancin, Tara Booker, Grant Neurendorf, Jeff Brown. Meeting held by Zoom.

**Minutes:** of the January 19, 2022 meeting were approved. Motion made by Derrell Wilson, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Julie Cagle, 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion passed unanimously.

**New Business:**

Cheryl gave a facility update. The crew is working on cutting back brush and limbs, shrubs removal at Jennings football field, Ouellet Park and Mckeon Park. Putting bleachers together for the Spring season, fixing sprinkler heads, Working on roofing projects, repairing park facilities, painting signs, and fences. Cheryl reviewed and gave several project updates.

**Program update:**

Winter Session 1 and 2 recreation programs were reviewed. Waitlists exist for many classes such as Karate, Tumbling, basketball, dance and many pre-school programs mostly due to space constraints. More space is needed for program and in the office. Our annual basketball league ended strong this past week for our youth and high school programs. The Spring/Summer brochure book is at the printer and registration opens March 24 for spring programs and summer camp. Expect to see many program offerings including summer camp, sports and specialty camps along with the opening of Spaulding pond.

**Ad Hoc tennis committee appointment:**

Francis Fratoni was nominated to the Ad Hoc Tennis committee. The appointment will next go to City Council for final approval. Motion made by Julie Cagle, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Derrell Wilson. Motion passed unanimously.

**Elections:**

The committee nominated Julie Cagle as chairperson of the Rec. Advisory Board. Motion made by Derrell Wilson, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Grant Neurendorf. Motion passed unanimously.

**Old Business**

**ARPA update:**

Cheryl reviewed ARPA funding and project plans for the Rec. Dept. No date of review has been set by the city to review proposals. The committee had questions about the status of several projects.

**Vacancy update:**

Cheryl stated that the Community Engagement Coordinator position has not yet been hired. They are waiting for the certified list from HR. The Facility Maintainer position has been requested to be filled and we are waiting on HR to post the position. Derrell and Julie had concerns on the slow process and asked questions regarding this process and the ARPA funding. Derrell stated, that ARPA funding needs to be spent in a timely manner and he would like to see things move more quickly as Recreation and parks are an essential service and people are in need of more programs and services in Norwich from the Recreation dept. The department has been underfunded for years and the parks are in need of improvements. Tara asked for everyone's top 2 projects to be funded going forward and the majority stated synthetic turf at Fontaine with

a track, concession stand, scoreboard and light, Skatepark upgrades to current park and funding Phase 2 and finishing Armstrong tennis courts including paving of the parking lot.

**Budget:**

The Rec. Dept. submitted its budget request in October for FY2022-23. Meetings have begun to review the budget. Julie asked several questions about the budget and funding levels to the Rec. Depart. She stated that she was involved a few years back on a City committee regarding reviewing and comparing the staffing and budget levels given to the Recreation Dept. in CT. She stated the levels of support in Norwich are severely lacking and not much has changed in recent years either. She was upset that the Administrative Specialist position is not here yet and was surprised that it is being funded by revenue generated by the Rec Dept. programs and fundraising efforts. The community deserves a general funded position and more staff.

**Other Business:**

None

Meeting adjourned at 8:05pm. Motion by Julie Cagle, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Derrell Wilson. Motion passed unanimously.

Next meeting is May 18 at 6pm.