A meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission of the Town of Fairfield was held on Wednesday, December 18 at 7:00 p.m. at the Eunice Postal Recreation Center, Fairfield, Connecticut.

PRESENT: Scott Walker, Chairman; Brian Nerreau, Mary Von Conta, Bridget McBride, Jessica Gerber and Caitlin Schmidt (not yet sworn in).
ABSENT: Jamie Benton, David Weber and Chris McCoy
ALSO: Anthony Calabrese, Dir. Parks & Recreation

Chairman Scott Walker called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

I. ACT ON MINUTES OF: November 20, 2019 – Hearing no objections, the minutes were approved as written.

II. COMMUNICATIONS: To hear and act upon:
A. Robert Didato – Special Olympics Polar Plunge - Jennings Beach April 4, 2020 – Lt. James Simsonellli, from Fairfield University Public Safety was present to make the request. This is the second year of this event with no changes.
Motion: B. Nerreau moved, and J. Gerber seconded to approve the request.
Vote: 4-0-1 (Walker Abstained)
B. Aaron Fossi- Save the Children Polar Plunge - Jennings Beach Feb. 16, 2020 – Mr. Fossi was not present to make the request but the members understood this to be the second year of this event with no changes.
Motion: J. Gerber moved, and B. McBride seconded to approve the request.
Vote: 4-0-1 (Walker Abstained)

III. PUBLIC INPUT: None

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
A. 2020-21 Budget Approval – Mr. Calabrese reported on his proposed 2020-21 Budgets as a follow up to last month’s review. He has yet to meet with the First Selectwoman and explained that there may still be changes to his proposals. There were several questions from members. The new marina budget was explained, as was his request for a new position.
Motion: B. Nerreau moved, and J. Gerber seconded to approve the 2020-21 Recreation budgets as presented.
Vote: 4-0-1 (Walker Abstained)

V. NEW BUSINESS: To hear and act upon any business that may properly come before the Commission:
A. Increase Beach Sticker and Daily Parking fees due to new State Taxation – Vote - Mr. Calabrese reported that beginning Jan 1, 2020 the State is taxing municipal parking lots, (eg. train, Beach lots). Mr. Calabrese stated that if the Town were not to pass this tax onto its beach users, it would result in a loss of $76K. He presented three sample scenarios, one included that idea, one included raising the non-resident rate from $200 to $250 as well as the daily weekday parking from $20 to $35. The final scenario was to spread increased costs across the board to all passes
and daily parking. Mr. Calabrese recommended the second scenario. After discussion members agreed to scenario 2 but felt that they wanted to go to $40 rather than the recommended $35 for daily parking.

**Motion:** C. McCoy moved, and A. Mullady seconded to approve the request.

**Vote:** 5-0-1 (Walker Abstained)

### B. Election of Officers – Mr. Walker asked Mr. Calabrese to handle elections.

**Motion:** Mr. Calabrese opened the floor to nominations for Chairman and nominated Scott Walker for Chairman.

**Vote:** *Motion passed 4-0-1 Mr. Walker abstained.*

**Motion:** S. Walker moved to nominate Brian Nerreau for Vice Chairman for 2020.

**Vote:** *Motion passed 4-0-1 Mr. Nerreau abstained.*

**Motion:** Mr. Calabrese nominated Mary Von Conta for Secretary for 2020.

**Vote:** *Motion passed 4-0-1 Ms Von Conta abstained.*

### C. Approve 2020 Meeting Calendar

**Motion:** M. Von Conta made a motion, seconded by B. McBride to approve the 2020 meeting calendar as presented.

**Vote:** Unanimous

### D. To hear and act upon any business that may properly come before the Commission - None

### VI. To hear and act upon information in Reports:

**A. Board of Education Report:** Ms. Gerber reported that one new member; Bonnie Rotelli has joined the Board. Four others were re-elected. Ms. Gerber expects that she will continue as the Commission’s BOE liaison. There were several new Capital projects approved including a new generator for FLHS, Air conditioning for the FWHS Cafeteria and a cooling tower of RLMS. Two capital projects will be voted on at the next meeting including a partial roof for Osborn Hill School and a possible purchase of the St. Emery’s campus, currently leased, for the Walter Fitzgerald campus. The 3-year custodian contract was approved and work continues on the Middle School block schedule being rolled out for 2021. There will be four meetings in January dedicated to the budget.

**B. Director’s Report** - Mr. Calabrese presented a written report summarized below:

The holiday season is upon us but the Department realizes that spring is right around the corner and we are busy planning new events including a Beach Bunny 5K Family Fun Run and Annual Egg Scramble. Our spring brochure is heading to the printer by the end of this week and is expected to hit mailboxes in late January. We recently held our annual Tree Lighting on the Town Hall Green and our Holiday Breakfast at Fairfield Ludlowe High School. Both events were extremely successful and well received by the public. To date, our Santa staff has responded to 375 letters to the North Pole!

Our staff has been very busy this past month. We held our sold out Dueling Pianos event at Penfield Pavilion. The event was a smashing success with tons of positive feedback from the attendees. The staff also attended a career night at Southern Connecticut State University. The objective of this event was to help promote the Department and network with students who are trying to break into the field of recreation.

The dredging at the South Benson Marina is going well. To date, the weather has been cooperating. This project is still scheduled to conclude in January. Phase 2 will being and allow for further dredging.
They heard good news from RACE. DEEP agreed to the transplanting of the seeds which will allow for the 100-foot wide channel. The entire project must be completed by Jan. 31.

The flooring and painting upgrades at Jacky Durrell are continuing to move toward completion. The facility is going to look gorgeous when it is completed later this winter. Gaylen has been working on a communication to alert the upcoming renters of the building. We will be sharing pictures as the work is completed. Our Pavilions at Penfield Beach was just recognized as “The Knot 2020 Best of Weddings”! The staff is thrilled with achieving this designation.

Last, but not least, we are also ringing in the new year with two comedy shows at Penfield Pavilion on New Year’s Eve. We will be starting the new year off on the right foot with a special New Year’s Restorative Yoga event at the Penfield Pavilion. Both of these events still have space available for registration.

VII. GOOD OF THE ORDER – Chairman Walker welcomed new member Caitlin Schmidt who is a teacher in the Wilton School system and lives in Town with her husband and three sons.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 807: p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Joan C. Ryan, Recording Secretary