**FINAL MINUTES**

**Salem Parks and Recreation Commission**

**Minutes of Meeting**

**Date and Time: Tuesday, May 21, 2019 at 6:50 P.M.**

**Meeting Location: Dining Room, 401 Bridge St.**

**Members Present: Bob Callahan, Amy Everitt, Chris Burke**

**James Shea, Deb Amaral**

**Also Present: Patricia O’Brien**

**Clerk: Kathleen Fitzgerald**

**Meeting Called to Order**

Amy Everitt calls the meeting to order at 6:50 P.M.

**New Business**

Approval of Minutes of the meeting on April 16, 2019. James Shea moves to approve, seconded by Bob Callahan, and unanimously passes.

First on the Agenda:

**Claire Shultz/Mark Dawson** -- Wedding on Salem Common September 7, 2019 from 12:00 P.M. to 1:00 P.M. They are requesting permission for a small P.A. system during the ceremony to provide background music. Amy Everitt clarified that amplification would only be from, 12:00 P.M. to 1:00 P.M. and asked Trish O’Brien if there were any issues. Trish advised that there were not.

Chris Burke asked if we set up chairs for the event and Trish advised that people were responsible for that and they needed to make sure they weren’t driving on the Common.

James Shea makes a motion to approve the event, seconded by Bob Callahan and passes unanimously.

Next:

**Patty MacLeod/David Smith, Sail Salem** -- Requesting permission to have a camp at Winter Island. Amy Everitt asked if there were any changes to the program and David Smith advised there were some; i.e. keel boat program involving the YMCA, New Liberty School and the Park & Rec. Department. which would take place Wednesday through Friday. Bob Callahan inquired if everything was coordinated though Dave Gilbert. He advised it was, and also with Bill McHugh who are both now on the Advisory Board.

Trish O’Brien advised that Keegan Whitehair, who is working here at the Park & Rec, has been pushing sailing and exposing kids to the water and is working with the YMCA to get kids interested.

James Shea makes a motion to approve, seconded by Bob Callahan, who states that he thought it was a great program and passes unanimously.

**Guy Robinson, Back to School Bash** -- Not in attendance.

**Carol Meyer – Witch City 5K** – Requesting October 19, 2019 for the annual event and advised that there have been no changes from prior years. Bob Callahan asked Trish O’Brien if there have been any issues in the past. Trish advised no and stated that any amplification needed to be facing the water and not the neighbors. Carol Meyer’s agreed.

James Shea motions to approve the event, Chris Burke seconds and it passes unanimously.

**Lucy Corchado – Men’s Softball League** – She thanked the Board for putting her on the Agenda and stated that this issue was extremely import to her and the Latino community at large. She stated that the history goes back forty years and it is a Salem league. She stated that he prior home field was Salem Willows, then went on to Mack Park, and then Castle Hill but after harassment from neighbors, went to Gallows Hill. She advised that the players spent their own money to clear up the field, i.e. mowed, lined field, etc. She stated that with a $500.00 donation from the Mayor and a $200.00 donation from her the league was able to continue last year. She stated that the league has attracted many players and they do not want to be penalized for players outside of the City or unable to be the fees. She informed the Board that any fee is a barrier for the league to continue. They spent approximately $10,000.00 last year for umpires, port-a-potties, getting the field ready, etc. and stated that this Board had the discretion of waiving the fee and asked that it be waived, and the league be grandfathered. She stated that softball was very important to the Latino community and stressed that participating in the league would keep people off the streets and motivated. Additionally, she asked for the home field to be Palmer Cover because of its proximity to the Point where people could walk to the field to participate and watch. She submitted a petition supporting the league and additionally there was a letter submitted by Councilman McCarthy supporting the league.

James Shea asked what the total fee was for the league to play and Lucy stated almost $2,000.00 and that last year season it was $1,700.00. James then asked if she was proposing that the league take out the trash, line the fields, etc. if the Board waived the fee. Trish O’Brien advised the Board that they put a lot of work into Gallows Hill last year. She stated that the league worked on the field because the City’s DPW personnel had not gotten to it yet and that they worked on the field without permission. She further stated that in the future if they worked on the field, it would have to be coordinated with DPW and that they could do a volunteer day after coordination. Trish further advised that relining the fields was different because the coaches keep it up, but that maintenance of the fields goes back to the Park & Rec. Department.

There was a discussion then about Gallows Hill. Lucy Corchado advised that they had to use Gallows Hill last year because of the indecision of when it would go off-line. Trish reminded Lucy that it was the league’s decision to play a Gallows Hill and that when that decision as made, she sent in a crew to work on the field.

James Shea asked what the percentage was of Salem residents playing. Lucy Corchado stated that the majority of players are all from the neighborhood and James asked that she give him a percentage, to which she replied 95%. James further stated that when he was young and played ball they always went out and got sponsors to help with fees/costs and that if they got 4-5 sponsors paying $300.00-$600.00 that would cover the fee. Lucy responded that the sponsors they obtained basically paid for uniforms. James then asked how many players were in the league. Lucy responded 180 players in both leagues but that the problem was that some of the players that started in the league have moved and are not considered Salem players and Amy Everitt asked what the percentage was of Salem players to which there was no answer. Chris Burke stated that doing the math it would cost about $20.00 per player for the season, which was not unreasonable. Chis asked if the fee was per team or per league. Trish O’Brien stated that there were different tiers and tiers are based upon the number of Salem residents participating.

Bob Callahan addressed Lucy Corchado and stated that when he first asked her what the cost for the field was last year, she stated $1,800.00 and that if they received $500.00 from the Mayor and she donated $200.00, that would make the total cost $1,070. With 180 players which she stated were in the roster, that breaks down to about $5.00 per player. Lucy advised that she was talking about two different parks and has been expanded to include older players. Trish O’Brien then asked Joe Candelaria if he received an application for a second league to which he responded he had not.

Deb Amaral asked how much players were charged last year to play, and Lucy responded $130.00. Deb Amaral made the observation that it was cheaper to play softball than basketball.

Bob stated to Lucy the following – you said you charge each player $130.00 and you just told me you had 180 players in both leagues. How many did you have last year? Lucy stated 60 players last year. Doing the math, Bob Callahan said 60 players x $130.00 per player comes out to $7,800.00 and your expenses, including paying for the park don’t come to $7,800.00. Lucy stated there were other bills like mowing, cleaning the bathrooms, balls, etc. She said it was $5,625.00 for the season and $2,800.00 for balls, bathrooms, etc. and use of the park $1,850.00 totaling $12,300.00.

Deb Amaral asked if the fees charged included lining the fields. Trish O’Brien advised that the fields are lined at the beginning of the season, but after that the teams needed to keep up with the lining.

Deb Amaral then asked Lucy Corchado if there was a roster of more than 50% Salem residents. Lucy stated that the problem is that some of the players that started in the league have moved and are not considered Salem residents. Amy Everitt asked what the percentage was of Salem residents. No response.

Chris Burke stated that he did not think it was a good precedent to set when they reserve the park or have additional expenses that the fee should be waived and that $20.00 per player for the season is not unreasonable. He said that we are trying to charge everyone the same and that it was only free for kids. If the roster states over 50% of players are Salem residents, you get the break. If not, you don’t.

Lucy Corchado said last year they paid the fee and saw no change. James Shea stated that it should be a dual effort since it is a minimal cost per player and that the league should want to put something into the City park. Lucy said that the league is being asked to pay for something insufficient and if they have to remove trash, line fields, and take care of divots, it is something the City should take care of.

Trish O’Brien stated that the first time the league played they left a ton of trash and DPW had to pick it up and further advised that a lot of work was done at Gallows Hill after having a meeting with she and Fausto as that was the field that they wanted and then they didn’t use it/changed their minds. Trish mentioned that a lot of groups will do community-based volunteer programs to clean up. She further advised that fees charged are put back into the fields.

Bob Callahan stated that the reason he questioned the league so rigorously was because he wanted to find a way to do something and stated that they do the same thing for all leagues and it is the City’s way to recoup expenses. He stated that the Park & Rec. Department needed to get at least the minimum fee and that as long as it was done with everybody, we were okay, but once the Board started making exceptions, we are gone.

Lucy Corchado informed the Board that not everyone has the same history as the Latino league to which Bob Callahan stated that everyone can come in with history and further stated that the Board had to do what was best for everyone in Salem and do it on an even keel. He further stated that the Board would love to give it to them without a fee but cannot justify it. Chris Burke stated that a long history is not a reason to pay less and stated that he didn’t understand why the focus was on the field cost since it was the most minor cost. Lucy Corchado said the policy said “may” waive the fee to which Trish O’Brien advised that the question on the application form is for everything not just fields and courts and that certain events don’t require a fee. (for example a neighborhood association having an event at a Park).

Deb Amaral asked if the league was more than 50% Salem residents and Eduardo Leon who was in the audience, said yes. Deb then said if there were more than 50% Salem residents in the league, they would go to Tier 3 and Trish O’Brien moved them to Tier 3 and told Lucy it would be $20.00 instead of $30.00 per hour. Lucy Corchado said she would take the Salem rate.

Amy Everitt advised Lucy that if the field were not in great shape, the league would have to advise the Board and Trish O’Brien.

Councilman Domino Dominquez addressed the Board and spoke about the diverse Latino community. He spoke about the Point being dangerous with a lot of issues and that the only thing they have is a park based on softball. He asked that the Board do anything they could do to understand that it is a solution to an issue. He said there are so many young people in the streets with nothing to do and that we needed to find programs for them. He stated that the only avenue that might help is softball.

Trish O’Brien reiterated that we do not charge any Salem youth groups for use of the fields to which Councilman Dominquez responded that those playing in the league are parents of the youth in the Point.

Yoleny Ynoa then spoke. He said some of the people didn’t have money and the league never turns anyone away. He advised that some people had to put in extra money to pay for others to play and then we could take people out of the street and have less problems in the city. He again stated that not all players had $130.00 to play and that sometimes there is not enough money for celebrations and trophies.

Deb Amaral said that if more than 85% were Salem residents the league would pay $10.00 per hour and if 50-85% Salem residents the fee would be $20.00 per hour.

Councilwoman Lisa Peterson then spoke. She advised the Board that she was working with Sean last year. She said she thought the Latino league parallels with Little League, and it is like majors and minors.

Deb Amaral made a suggestion that if the league had 95% Salem residents the fee would be $10.00 and less that 50% the fee would be $20.00.

Aeoncio Veicia spoke. He said the following was his experience and he lives in Salem and has a business. Last year two teams approached him to get some support and he did it and then they invited him to see people play and it was good to see but he saw a lot of people who wanted to play but had no team so he decided to make a team and they started playing and were trying to get a permit in order to play in Salem but it was too much money. People started investigating what it would cost if they went to Peabody or Beverly, so they went to Peabody last year.

Deb Amaral asked the cost and Mr. Veicia said they paid $20.00 per field and they used two fields. He said they paid for lighting too but that wasn’t much. He said some people cannot afford to pay to play and when you play it costs a lot to start. He said the condition of the park in Peabody was so different and so beautiful. He said he believed we had to do the same think here in Salem as our parks are not great and that would have to change. He said Salem should have 2-3 parks only for softball. He said he had a lot of meetings with the City, but it was time wasted. He said if they spent time, they wanted to get good results.

Bob Callahan stated in his opinion no amount was a small amount, but that the Board had to maintain a fee structure across the board and the fee depended on the amount of Salem residents and Trish O’Brien will determine what the fee would be. Bob stated that the Board would not be waiving fees.

Deb Amaral said to spread the Boards’ emails around and if things were bad at the fields to let the Board know.

Trish O’Brien asked to address the wording of the policy. Some people will call and say that want to have a birthday party and it’s a neighborhood party so there is no fee for that, but as the numbers grow, we need to know that. The policy is about everything, not just fields and league. There are so many variables.

Lucy Corchado said the policy had to be clearer because it talks about the application for a permit and how it is charged. Trish O’Brien stated it depended on what the event was and welcomed any suggestions of wording to make it clearer.

Next:

**Pam Ryan, Women’s Softball League** – She stated she was going to mirror a lot of things said by the Latino league.

She said adult softball is very important and said the league she is going to talk about has been around for 40 years or so. It has a long history but the numbers of participants have dwindled and so they combined with Danvers and that’s where the residency issue comes in to play. She said that in Danvers they get two fields per week and are not charged and because of that they don’t want to pay fees in Salem and was hoping the Board would consider a reciprocal arrangement. She said there were six teams in the league and three are based in Salem. She said they were registered as a non-profit and were trying to keep the league small. She advised there was a 30 games schedule spread between Salem and Danvers.

Deb Amaral asked if 85% are Salem residents and Pam said yes. Pam advised that the teams consisted of college kids and moms and while they never complained about the condition of the fields, they cannot pay the fees. Trish O’Brien stated that when the roster was turned with proof of residency, the tier could be determined. Pam advised that the roster would not be ready for two weeks into the season and Trish reiterated that the fee could not be determined until the roster was presented. Pam said she wanted to remind the Board that Danvers does not charge them.

Jerry Ryan spoke and said that the Salem fields were the worst fields and asked if the money was going into a fund to maintain the fields. Trish O’Brien said yes. She also added that the crew for the City to maintain the parks was about 5 and that the Park & Rec. Department was doing the best they can and as funding was secured, we would be requiring much more discussions about maintenance. She further stated that community support was needed to help with the parks.

Pam Ryan asked where the money was going, and Trish said right back into maintenance of the fields. She stated that one of the things the league had a problem with was the condition of the fields and it was had to swallow paying for a field that is not maintained. She said once you start paying for the field you have to assume some level of accountability and if you make a real investment into something you want to see that the fields are maintained. She said I know each of you want greater fields but to charge us a fee to use them is hard to swallow. From personal experience to explain it to 5 other people paying for a field is….

Bob Callahan told her that when she sends emails to make sure she cc’d every City Councilor so when Trish Obrien puts it in the budget is not something coming out of the air and they will see that there is a problem.

Trish then again told Pam Ryan that she needed to get her a roster so the fee could be determined and that she would work with her. Pam said that there would be certain nights when they did no not have 85% Salem residents and Trish said she would look at the whole league.

Pam Ryan stated that they were trying to get the field at Palmer Cove but were having some issues on that with lighting, etc. Trish O’Brien advised that the issue was netting and that people in the neighborhood were complaining about balls going into the neighborhood.

Next:

**Barbara Warren, Salem Sound Coast Watch** – This request is for an event on August 11, 2019 and is their 14th year of swim and fin at forest River Park. She advised that the race will be early this year because they have to work with the tides. The race will be at 8:00 A.M. and over by noon, but they would like to be in the park by 6:00 A.M. She stated they will have three port-a-potties and that they always clean the beach before and after the event and take trash away. She requested parking inside the park.

Trish O’Brien advised that parking will be in the regular parking lot. Barbara Warren requested some parking over by the pool and Trish O’Brien asked the reason for parking inside the gate. Ms. Warren said that they have always done that and stated they would be going into the park at 6:00 A.M. and would then park cars carrying equipment, etc. back where the pool filter is and will leave the cars there the entire time.

Trish O’Brien asked how many cars she was talking about and spoke of the safety issues and leaving the gate open and Ms. Warren stated that they have parked a lot of cars there. She stated that B&s has a set up truck and timer and then they have six vehicles with things they are carrying, so at least eight vehicles. Trish O’Brien advised that we were now doing permits for transport vehicles and Ms. Warren stated there would definitely be vans. Trish then asked what the volunteers were bringing in and Ms. Warren advised tents, food, raffle items, etc.

Trish O’Brien advised that they were willing to do it for people volunteering and confirmed that 8 vehicles was requested for set up.

Chris Burke asked if they would be using amplification at 6:00 a.m. and Barbara advised amplification would not be used until 8:00 A.M.

James Shea makes a motion to approve the event, seconded by Amy Everitt and passes unanimously.

Deb Amaral arrived late to the meeting and was told that Salem United was skipped on the Agenda and called them to speak.

**Doreen Wade, Salem United** -- She stated that she was here to find out exactly where they stood on the Black Picnic scheduled for July 20, 2019 at the Willows. She stated that she understood that if she came to the meeting everything would be approved and they would have to discuss the Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”).

Bob Callahan asked her if she brought a list of vendors for the event. She did not, but said she would email it

James Shea stated that they needed a permit to set up the vendors and for the Gazebo

Deb Amaral advised that the basketball court was not included this year – only the Gazebo and vendors

James Shea makes a motion to approve the Gazebo and vendors for the event, seconded by Bob Callahan and passes unanimously.

Doreen handed the Board members an MOU from Salem United for next year’s event and stated that she also gave a copy to the City Solicitor, Beth Renard.

Doreen Wade then questioned the MOU and asked if there would be a meeting regarding that. Bob Callahan stated that the MOU may not be necessary, but something we will be looking at to see if necessary next year.

Bob Callahan then addressed Ms. Wade stating that he would like to see her come into the August meeting to talk about the picnic. He made a recommendation that the Board put Ms. Wade on the August Agenda as a guest speaker to see how things went at the picnic so any problems could be discussed and addressed. Ms. Wade stated that she usually comes to the August meeting.

Next:

**Kyle Zick, Gallows Hill Project Update** – He was present with Tom Devine, City Planner, and Jenna Ide. He stated that Gallows Hill was priority to upgrade and that a lot of work has been done by the City for the skate park. He stated they had fund funding opportunities. He said there were no major disagreements for stakeholders and advised that for the past months they have been working on the park which has different components as follows:

* Baseball field
* Softball field
* Large parking lot
* Adjacent soccer field
* Trail network

Part of the park is Upper Gallows, but their part is Lower Gallows which includes the skate park and memorial to Ryan Brennan. He stated that they worked with skaters and the skater community.

Goals are as follow:

* Signage
* Central gathering place
* Memorial enhanced
* Moe sitting with shade
* Improved parking lot
* Storm water responsibility
* Baseball field renovation
* Home field for Salem High School
* Improved trails

He advised that they had stretched dollars as far as they could, and they had met with the Police Department regarding security and surveillance.

Trish made the observation that concerning the softball field it looked like left field went into the batting cage. Deb Amaral stated that the field did not look like a regulation softball field. Kyle said an aerial view might provide a better look.

Domingo Dominquez asked if there was enough parking for people watching games and parking for other people at the park and also asked I bathrooms were provided.

Kyle Zick said there was a total of 40 spaces and temporary port-a-potties would be centrally located and maintained. He said the softball/baseball field would have natural turf with a regulation outfield and fencing for back stop, etc. He stated that bowl skating and street skating would be world class.

**Pat Liberti, 3 Lions Lane** questioned that if there were only 40 parking spaces and you have skate park users and there is a softball game, where were people to park. Jenna Ide advised that there was street parking and that they were trying to make it more friendly for people to walk.

**Kelly Schatzke, 9 Looney Avenue** -- **stated** that the 40 parking spaces concerned her because Looney Avenue becomes so jammed that there is a parking problem especially during cheerleading season and wants to make sure her street is safe.

**Michael Cusick, 19 Putnam Street** -- Michael wanted to know where all the waste baskets were going as the ones there now are filled with tons of litter and now there is only one waste basket in the park and thinks 10-20 are needed. There are coyote dens and racoons so trash left attracts animals and must be picked up immediately. Jenna Ide advised that they were developing an operations maintenance plan on each ongoing project.

Mr. Cusick stated that there used to be 3 waste baskets at Mansell, and he talked to someone to move the baskets and they removed them entirely.

Trish O’Brien said where we put more trash cans out more and more residents take personal trash to public parks and it’s a struggle about decision making. They are trying to encourage people with the idea “trash in trash out”.

There was a discussion about different type of lighting and cameras for policing the area and Tom Devine advised that cameras were a high priority, but that lighting is expensive and didn’t know if that could be included. It was advised that it was gated access and cameras would see in towards the baseball field so all open corners could be seen. Security cameras will highlight other areas as well.

Kelly Schatzke then spoke about recycling cans and educating the community to not use the park for personal trash and that perhaps some signage and community services would be a good idea.

Jenna Ide stated that they were working on trail improvements. Chris Burke asked if the trail component was on the bottom of the list, to which Jenna responded that the trail work would be done but that there were a lot of trails so there was a lot of discretion on what could be done with a lot of flexibility.

**Richard Stafford, 30 Boardman Street** - Rich asked what the priorities were regarding the trails and what are the things we have we have to have and what are the things we would like to have and was advised that some could be alternates

Chris Burke said it looked like a definite plan but understood that everything couldn’t be funded but asked if a plan had been worked out where the trails are. Kyle responded that they had walked the trails and surveyed them and thought the connection to Upper Gallows was most important. He said clearing will be important.

Chris Burke asked if anything was going to be done behind the future rock garden. Kyle responded that he did not think so right now.

James Shea stated that it was an important project for baseball and kids in the City. He stated that at one time they were going to do turf in the field, and he thought it should be a requirement to do the field in turf and that it should be a priority on the entire project. Kyle stated they had talked about it and the cost would be about $200,000.00-$250,000.00.

James Shea asked how the project was being funded and Kyle advised through CPA funds, state grant, park grant, etc.

Trish O’Brien advised that the state would not pay for turf so they would have to look for non-Gallows Hill funding.

James Shea this was going to be a No. 1 field and asked if the City was bonded for that and stated that money should go into the field and asked how we should proceed. Jenna Ide stated that the budget has been submitted and we would have to put in a request for short term funds or we would have to go for a separate bond matter hearing. It is design change because the budget is now in. James Shea asked who we would have to get to do that.

**Tom Doyle, 53 Gallows Hill** – He stated that we are behind the times and need be sure our parks are constantly used and if have grass fields, they would be good for a year but we could rent them out if we had turf fields because they would be highly coveted. He advised thy he would help in any way he could.

Bob Callahan stated that when you turn over dirt at Gallows Hill and find hazardous waste, who takes care of that. Jenna Ide said they found high levels of arsenic and low levels of contaminates and incorporated that into the budget.

Next:

**Michael J. Sullivan, Beacon Architects, Bertram Field, Phase II** – He advised that the amenities building was in poor shape, not acceptable, and not code compliant. A stakeholder group has been put together and they are working on this. He advised it was a difficult site because of ledge and North Shore Medical Center. They now have a much more refined design and cost estimate and do have approval for the plumbing variance and recommendation for bond approval. He stated that this project does not have a lot of grants because they don’t do buildings and that CPA funding as needed. It needs to be sustainable, needs to be energy efficient, accessible, etc.

The schematics have now been finished and have done due diligence regarding hazardous waste, etc.

* Public amenities building;
* Concession stand
* Athletic changing area
* Access for emergency vehicles

He advised that the parking amount stays the same, the roofs will be sloped so allow future solar panels and it will be a three-season facility. He said construction would last approximately 10 months.

James Shea sked if people would still have access to the track during construction and Mr. Sullivan advised yes. Bob Callahan asked if residents were aware of this and Lisa Peterson said yes but was concerned about Bertuccio being used permanently as a parking area and Trish O’Brien inquired about using Collins Middle School for emergency vehicles.

Next meeting – Tuesday June 18, 2019.

A motion to adjourn is made by James Shea, seconded by Amy Everitt and unanimously passes.

The meeting ended at 10:05 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen Fitzgerald, Clerk