

RECREATION BOARD MINUTES 5-27-2020

The 5-27-2020 meeting of the Portsmouth Recreation Board was a Zoom meeting moderated by Chairman Carl Diemer. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Chairman Carl Diemer, City Council representative Deaglan McEachern, Mayor Rick Becksted, Rich Blalock, School Rep. Tara Kennedy, Kathy Lynch, Todd Henley, Jackie Pitts, Recreation Director Rus Wilson,

MEMBERS EXCUSE: Kory Sirmaian, Lisa Louitt

GUESTS: Barry Foley, Tim Bailey, DPW Director Peter Rice, DPW rep. Dave Allen, Representatives from Weston and Sampson, Lexi van Binsbergen, Brinn Sullivan, Tom Kozikowski, City Manager Karen Conard, Health Officer Kim McNamara

- Recreation Director Rus Wilson explained the Governor's guidelines for reopening ball fields to amateur and youth sports. Teams will be allowed to "practice", keeping social distance at all times and numerous other guidelines. The Board had a long discussion on the proposal, and included health officer Kim McNamara in the conversation. With Board approval, the city will allow all youth and amateur sports to proceed immediately and review the Covid statistics in three weeks to see if Phase 2, baseball and softball games, will be allowed.
- Director Wilson went over the decision to not open the outdoor pool at this time. The Governor has still not given permission to open pools and the Covid restrictions and operating costs would be prohibitive. There was a long discussion about the possibility of opening the pool at some point. That decision would require the Governor and city health officer to allow it and the City Council to fund it.
- Peter Rice and Weston and Sampson gave a brief presentation on the proposed artificial turf field to be built behind the DPW complex. There was a long discussion on offering the City Council a choice between a crumb rubber infill and a new product call Safe Shell. While the Board recommended crumb rubber, a less expensive option, the Board realized there is a crumb rubber safety concern in the public, and offered Safe Shell

as a more expensive alternative. The Board unanimously voted to recommend both to the City Council.

- The indoor pool supervisor gave a written report on the operating loss the indoor pool would absorb if we opened the indoor pool under social distancing guidelines. The pool would have a net operating loss of \$25,000 per month with restrictions in place. SIPP and the Recreation Department staff have recommended we do not open the indoor pool until social distancing guidelines are eliminated.
- The department gave a written presentation on the new “boutique” programs we will run this summer. The 10 different programs consists of 12 hour long sessions throughout the summer with 32 kids in a session, for a total of 320 children we can accommodate.
- Spinnaker Point Recreation Center is working on a number of capital projects, including a new roof, sprucing up the locker rooms, painting the gym, repairing the pool, and other small items. We expect the work to take a couple of months and open when the work is done and the Governor gives the o.k. for gyms to reopen.
- There was a discussion on whether it would be wise to open the new senior center, given the fact that the population it serves is at extremely high risk for Covid-19. A decision to open that facility in the future will be based on safety number one, and financial concerns of the city.
- The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.