

**TOWN OF SULLIVAN'S ISLAND  
RECREATION COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
Tuesday, June 23, 2015  
10:00 AM**

A meeting of the Recreation Committee of Council was held at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, June 23, 2015 at Town Hall, 2050-B Middle Street, all requirements of the Freedom of Information Act having been satisfied. Present were Council Committee members Sarah Church (Chair), Rita Langley and Susan Middaugh. Staff members present were Andy Benke, Jason Blanton, Danny Howard and Anthony Stith.

1. **Call to Order.** Chair Church called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m., and stated the press and public were duly notified pursuant to State law. There were five members of the public present, and no media members were present.

2. **Expectation and Goals of Recreation Committee** – Chair Church distributed a list of past events the Committee has participated in, as well as a list of entities the Committee has relationships with including Park Foundation, Island Club, and Battery Gadsden Cultural Center. The role of the Recreation Committee with these entities was discussed.

3. **Park Foundation** – Chair Church stated a good starting point would be to meet with the Park Foundation to discuss the scope of the park's plans, as well as what support they are looking for from the Recreation Committee. Clarification is needed from the Foundation for the initial requested budget of \$70K for the park items. Resident Karen Coste inquired on the Foundation's financial status, including funds received from the recent Round on the Mound fundraiser and the engineering study of the mound. Comptroller Blanton responded as a 501-C(3) entity, its tax return is available to the public, and Mrs. Coste should contact the Park Foundation for a copy. Administrator Benke reported that a request from the Park Foundation for \$14,500 was approved about one year ago for an engineering study because it was determined a study was needed to make decisions concerning improvements to the Park. These improvements included how to stabilize the finer soils on the face of the mound and control stormwater runoff; how to stabilize the road and control vegetation. The contract for this project is currently being reviewed with the engineer. A question was asked if any of the Town Council members are also members of the Park Foundation or its Board. Diana Browder reported that the bylaws of the Park Foundation allow for a representative from Town Council to attend meetings and serve as a liaison from the Park Foundation to Town Council. Former Councilmember Watson chose to serve as a liaison to the Park Foundation. Chair Church said a meeting will be scheduled for the Recreation Committee to meet with the Park Foundation Board. Because the Board does not typically meet during the summer, the meeting may not take place until the Fall.

4. **Battery Gadsden** – Chair Church reported the building has substantial indoor humidity problems that will need to be resolved. The organization will submit a proposal to Council concerning Battery Gadsden items. The lease is a two-year triple net lease for \$10 a year, with an option to renew.

Triple net means the entity renting is responsible for all expenses related to the building including maintenance, improvements, and utilities. Resident Karen Coste questioned why the lease required a Town Council member to be on the Board. She asked why one community group can have a voluntary Town Council member; while another community group is required to have a Town Council member. Chair Church stated the Committee will review with Mr. Benke about the lease requirement and if a Town Council member needs to be appointed to serve on the Board at this time.

5. **Island Club** – There was discussion on the current situation and different options moving forward. The current lease is a triple net lease. The Club has served as a non-exclusive club where community events, summer camps, and special events have taken place. Approximately six months ago the Town agreed to pay the utilities because the Island Club was unable to do so. Also, the Town has received an inspection report on the condition of the building. Chair Church stated estimates are needed on the critical items, and the bigger picture is what role the Town will take with this structure, or with the Island Club as a group. Information will be gathered including how many residents are members, how many groups meet there on a regular basis; and the building's value as well as the replacement value. Improvements over 50% of the value would cause the building to be raised in order to meet FEMA requirements. Repairs are not considered in that value. The possible use of grant funds could be explored. The inspection and financial information on the Island Club will be available to the public. Diana Browder reported that there are approximately 45 people paying dues at this time. Many of the events are free; therefore, the revenues do not cover all of the expenses. Technically the Town does not have a community center and people view the Island Club as a community center and should not have to pay to go to the events. Chair Church summed up the discussion by stating the next course of action will be discussed after all information is gathered.

Mr. Benke gave an overview of the recreation department. In the 1960's the dads on the island built any necessary recreation equipment. The Isle of Palms, Mount Pleasant and Town of Sullivan's Island had a "joint" recreation department with the Isle of Palms and Mount Pleasant carrying the load. The Island Club at that time was a place for the dads to go on Friday nights. At some point a budget item called Recreation Department was created mainly to buy new nets for tennis courts, pay for the lights on the court, and eventually beach paths were constructed under that department. Hurricane Hugo destroyed the park, so the Park Foundation was developed to plant trees and provide some recreation equipment for children to enjoy. The demographics of the Island later changed, and the Dads that built and maintained the recreation items were not here, and more people joined organizations and raised money to do what the dads previously did. That is the genesis and origin on the Island Club and Park Foundation. About 13 years ago because the Town did not have a real recreation department, it was arranged for Sullivan's Island children to participate in the Isle of Palms' sports teams. The Town of Sullivan's Island allowed soccer, lacrosse and tennis instruction on the Town facilities. It filled a need by offering recreational activities without adding to the budget. More recently, the Island Club began offering cultural activities and activities for smaller children. All these organizations have contributed to a recreation department that the Town really does not have.

Chair Church stated she did not believe there was interest on Council to start a recreation department; however, the decision to be made is does the Town want to have a space that can be used

as a community center in which the Island Club can have activities. After all information is gathered, the Committee and Council will discuss.

6. **Independence Day** – Completed items on the list include the band, fireworks, and portable bathrooms. Alcohol will not be served at the Island Club at the conclusion of the parade. Other items discussed:

- Any vendor coming to the island has to have a liability insurance policy; especially a jump castle or water slide vendor, as although the insurance carrier allows these, they do not advise these types of activities.
- Andy Benke will check with principal concerning power at Sullivan's Island Elementary School.
- Parade line-up will begin at 8:00 a.m. at the school, with the parade starting at 8:30 a.m.
- Chair Church will talk with Mayor O'Neil and National Anthem singer.
- Ellen Miller and Mary Poole can assist with ordering and flyers.
- Ribbons will be Most Patriotic 1, 2, 3 places; Most Creative 1, 2, 3 places; Best All Around 1, 2, 3 places; and 12 honorable mentions.
- Street closes at 5:00 p.m., band starts at 6:00 p.m. in park.
- No rain date.

7. **Motion was made by Rita Langley, seconded by Susan Middaugh, to adjourn at 11:40 a.m., carried unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,



Ellen Miller