TOWN OF STANFORD RECREATION COMMISSION

MEETING OF 8-13-2019

PRESENT: Richard Bell (phone), Antonio Ingenito, Sara Knickerbocker and

Justin Cooper – Director

ALSO PRESENT: Lisa Costa – Community parent, Danielle Sundberg – Community parent and Ginny Gertling – Community parent

Ms. Costa, Ms. Sundberg and Ms. Gertling attended the Commission meeting to voice their thoughts and concerns about the current state of the Rec and Rec program.

Ms. Sundberg stated that there were a few concerns she had but these concerns were shared by all three individuals:

* There is a lack of Director/Assistant presence at the Rec during the summer season; there has been a decline in leadership, not just this season but the past few seasons.
* There are no arts and crafts during the day for children, not just this season but for the past few seasons.
* Ms. Sundberg and other parents would like a way to express their concerns and asked how parents can help support the Director/Rec Program.

Ms. Sundberg also directs children’s programming at the library and expressed interest in collaborating with Mr. Cooper and the commission to incorporate programming at the library with programming at the Rec.

Ms. Gertling also expressed specific observations, concerns and suggestions:

* She stated that there was a time that the Rec ran smoothly and in many years past the Assistant Director was an older adult.
* Many people were looking for the brochures this season and they were not distributed. Also, there was no physical sign-up day. The online sign-up was great, but people were still looking to sign-up in person.
* The Town website is not up to date; many people look to the website for forms and information which are either outdated or do not exist.

Ms. Costa, Ms. Sundberg and Ms. Gertling were all disappointed in the summer scheduling for the end of this summer season. They expressed their disagreement regarding the fact that the Rec needed to have limited hours for one week and closure another week. They also expressed their disappointment in the weather-related closings; in years prior, the Rec never closed but instead parents and children waited out any inclement weather underneath the pavilion and many times played games or did crafts with Land Staff. They indicated that this is the feeling of the entire Rec community regarding both the limited hours and weather closings. Mr. Cooper explained that the limited hours and closing are due to lack of staff for those weeks. He went on to explain that he had made the decision to close in response to the weather because he didn’t feel it was necessary for the Rec to be staffed and to pay staff if the weather wasn’t going to allow for swimming or outdoor activities.

Mr. Cooper spoke regarding the concerns and he feels he couldn’t provide the best summer experience possible this year due to the disorganization he inherited from previous summers. He stated that he was hoping to learn from this season in order to make changes and additions to the program for next season. He also expressed that he didn’t feel as if he had the full support of the commission which makes it tough for him to execute his responsibilities to the fullest. Additionally, he doesn’t feel as if the salary is fair for the hours in which he is asked to commit to the position. He feels as if the compensation is too low.

Commission member Antonio Ingenito spoke in defense of the Commission and expressed concerns regarding Mr. Cooper’s lack of presence at the Rec. He felt as if Mr. Cooper wasn’t present enough this summer season and did not take lead on many issues that developed, particularly with the Health Department. Additionally, he felt that the Assistant Director wasn’t there enough hours to cover Mr. Coopers absence and that the staff was not trained enough to cover his absence. Some staff had communicated to Mr. Ingenito that they were overwhelmed because there was a lack of staffing this season. He also expressed the same disagreement with the weather-related closings as well as the scheduled closings for the end of the season.

Commission member Richard Bell suggested to Ms. Costa, Ms. Sundberg and Ms. Gertling as well as the commission members that there be a parent liaison to the commission so that there was a direct line of communication from parents at the Rec to the commission members. He also suggested that a parent or mom from the Rec community join the Rec commission (the commission is short one member) so that there is direct representation. All present, including commission members agreed that this would be advantageous for everyone. Ms. Costa, Ms. Sundberg and Ms. Gertling stated that they would gauge interest of parents and moms at the Rec.

**OLD/ONGOING BUSINESS**

SOCCER PROGRAM: Mr. Cooper informed the Commission that as of now, 7 children are signed up to participate in fall soccer.

PAVILION RENTAL: Mr. Cooper suggested that the pavilion be open for rental to members outside of the Stanford community to generate more interest and revenue.

Submitted by: Lauren Osterman, Secretary