

NEWTOWN COMMUNITY CENTER COMMITTEE

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL BY THE COMMUNITY CENTER COMMITTEE

The Newtown Community Center Committee held a special meeting on Tuesday, August 14, 2018, at the Municipal Center, 3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT in Meeting Room 1. Meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m.

PRESENT: Kinga Walsh, Bill Manfredonia, Nancy Doniger, Brian Hartgraves, and Jeff Tousignant

ABSENT: Bill Buchler, Doria Linnetz, Fred Taylor, and Cheyanne Wirtz

ALSO PRESENT: Matthew Ariniello

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JUNE 19, 2018 AND JULY 10, 2018

Mr. Manfredonia moved to approve the minutes from the June 19, 2018 regular meeting.
Second by Mr. Tousignant. Motion passed.

Mr. Manfredonia moved to approve the minutes from the July 10, 2018 regular meeting.
Second by Mr. Tousignant. Motion passed.

COMMUNITY CENTER MISSION STATEMENT

Ms. Walsh stated that the goal for tonight's meeting was to get as far as possible on the mission statement. Mr. Ariniello created a first draft of the statement based on the Committee's vision and other center's mission statements (Att. 1).

In preparation for tonight's meeting, Ms. Doniger and Mr. Manfredonia visited the Ridgefield Recreation Center and put together a list of site observations (Att. 2). Ms. Doniger shared some highlights:

- Center position for entry desk; disposable bracelets given on a daily basis to pool members. Mr. Manfredonia said once the studs are up we will have a better sense of size of the entryway. Fire Marshall would also have to approve its location.
- Hours of the center are 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. with 3 full-time pool operators which helps address any problems in a timely manner. Mr. Ariniello met with Fred Hurley, Marilyn Place, Bob Tait and Patricia Fahey and decided there will be one Facilities Manager who would serve 3 locations - Community Center, Senior Center and Municipal Center.
- Ridgefield offers 10% membership discounts to seniors, military and town employees.

- Ridgefield uses RecTrac Software; they recommend keeping memberships simple.
- Fitness and workout equipment located at center but competes with private facilities in town.
- Day camp and after-school programs are offered; surcharge of \$3.00 goes toward keeping facility ADA accessible.
- Pool has 4 lanes and they regret reducing its size from original 8 lanes. It cannot be used for functions or tournaments. Finding enough lifeguards is a challenge. Mr. Ariniello stated he will be offering lifeguard classes in October, February and April.
- Extra wide hallways (18 ft.) are used for benches, foosball tables, and other games/activities to give parents and others waiting for classes something to do. The NCC hallways will be 16 ft. wide. And can offer this as well.
- Birthday parties are very popular and bring in thousands of dollars. Mr. Ariniello thinks this a great idea and has already started planning for it. The recreation pool can be divided to use at parties as well.

The Committee shared ideas about the draft Mission Statement provided by Mr. Ariniello. Attention was put on key words, incorporating the arts, and recognizing G.E.'s intent with its donation. A second draft was decided upon for further discussion at next week's meeting (Att. 3).

G.E. RECOGNITION IN BUILDING

Mr. Ariniello would like a couple of members of the Committee to put the wording together for the plaque recognizing G.E.'s donation. He spoke with John Godin, G.E. employee and Newtown resident, who stated G.E. would just like the final wording/design to be presented to their legal department, etc. for review. The size of the plaque will have to be reviewed based on what goes on it. Mr. Manfredonia suggested going back to G.E.'s original donation letter to look for some wording. Discussion will take place at next week's meeting regarding possible fundraising for an additional donor wall. Mr. Ariniello will bring a draft to the next meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 21, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. at Town Hall South.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Hartgraves made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:41 p.m. Second by Mr. Tousignant. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann LoBosco, Clerk Pro-Tem

Att. 1

The Newtown Community Center is a multi-generational hub that enhances the quality of life in our community and provides members of our community a place to connect and an opportunity to grow while instituting health and wellness initiatives, youth development, social interaction and personal growth

A.H. 2

Ridgefield Recreation Center site visit observations
For Newtown Community Center Committee
Aug. 14, 2018

Dennis DiPinto, Jane Byrnes and the facility's longtime pool superintendent at the Ridgefield Recreation Center spent close to three hours with Matt, Amy, Bill and I and answered all of our questions during our site visit on July 19. They gave us an extensive tour and let us know what was working well and what could be better.

- Entry desk: The RFD desk is along the right wall in the entrance foyer. The principals said that a center position would be better for traffic control. During busy times it's possible for someone to slip through. Everyone who enters gets a disposable bracelet to wear for the day.
- The center is open 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., like NCC will be. Maintenance stays an hour later to make sure things are cleaned up and operating properly. Ridgefield has three full-time pool operators. Peter, the longtime supervisor who retired just after we visited, knows how to fix all the equipment. He and his crew avoid serious problems by addressing problems as fast as they occur to prevent more serious troubles from arising, Peter said.
- Ridgefield offers membership discounts of 10% to seniors, military and town employees. A separate senior center is located on the same campus.
- They use Rectrac software and recommend keeping membership plans simple and direct.
- The Rec Center has fitness and workout equipment but competes for members with all the private facilities in town. Some classes pay instructors by the hour, others such as a long-running dance program, has a 30/70 split.
- They offer day camp, after-school classes and babysitting. A surcharge of \$3 goes toward keeping the facility ADA-accessible.
- Their pool has four lanes, down from eight originally requested due to value engineering. They regret that change and can't use it for functions or tournaments. Finding enough lifeguards is a challenge.
- Benches, foosball tables and other games and activities are placed in the extra-wide hallways to give parents and others waiting for classes to end something to do. Sometimes families bring food while the kids are at activities. They don't have a cafe but they do have a kitchen because the center doubles as an emergency shelter.

- They make thousands of dollars on the very popular birthday parties they offer. They have their own inflatables so they don't have to bring in outside vendors. They added an outdoor Spray Bay in 2014t.
- The center sustained serious leaking water damage and had to dig down to dirt to repair it.
- Dogs on leashes are permitted in the building but not at classes aside from dog obedience.

— Nancy Doniger

Att. 3

MISSION STATEMENT

The Newtown Community Center is a multi-generational hub that strengthens our community by enhancing social interaction, health and wellness, cultural creativity and personal growth.