

Recreation & Parks
July 17, 2024
11am @ Community Center

Attendance: Commissioners Matt Martin - Chair, Linda Rice Collins, Rosanna Ferrante, Shelly Bedrossian, Karin Ernst

Meeting called to order at 11:05a.

Topics:

- Request for Quotations Paddleboard Program Discussion
 - Linda noted she believes the yearly incremental rise in the amount taken by the department after the 25% (from the 75/25 split) is too much to take from someone's business
 - Unfair to take so much from a small business as they still need to pay their overhead costs after the dept takes its share
 - Karin explained how the numbers were decided as a starting point for deliberation
 - Linda suggested a flat \$6,000 for the five-year duration of the contract as she believes there is room for a vendor to increase the number of programs for the 25% split
 - Rosanna expressed an apology on behalf of the Commission to Leah and the SUP group about the way this was all communicated to them
 - She clarified that no negotiations or decisions would happen at this meeting – that will happen after bid goes out
 - Feels that numbers are reasonable, Commission should focus on their role and not be getting into the financials and business models of those bidding
 - Matt believes number is not that high compared to commercial real estate prices
 - Shelly suggested approaching it a bit differently as it is a seasonal business with weather-dependent programming; maybe do one-off instead of the 75/25 split
 - Maybe 70/30 instead? If not set rent price, then there is more money for all if good season, if rainy summer then everyone makes less money – everyone shares the weather risk
 - Karin is open to getting rid of the tiered model or cutting back a little on the numbers
 - Each way she calculates costs for this property, she keeps getting to a number around \$8k-10k
 - Okay with \$8k
 - Linda thinks if it is priced too high, might hurt the business – not a lot of disposable income. She wants whoever is there to have a successful business
 - Fee is specifically due to the storefront – doing business on town property as opposed to regular rec programs
- Public Comment
 - Leah Goodman, owner of SUP East Coast Style since 2009
 - Last five years have been unusual due to the pandemic – hard to base anything off those years alone
 - Just starting to recover from that as a small business and a rec program
 - Prices evolve annually based on need and what is working vs what doesn't
 - She brought the sport to the state of Massachusetts and the town of Marblehead
 - Transformed space into what it is now – everything the space now has is due to Leah and out of her pocket and some she was told was not allowed to be there in the past
 - Everything the Commission is using to determine the value now is due to what she herself has done
 - Not a brick-and-mortar storefront, it is a kiosk in a space in a parking lot that is not maintained, no running water, electricity, etc.
 - Kiosk was a fight to get approved through the town in the past, has always been confusing on a municipal level with past Commissioners and even municipal lawyers

- When first started, the Commission had pushed for just weekends because people work during the week
 - Weekdays are important to them as she and Christos can pull a paycheck for themselves with the extra it brings in
- Comparing a paddleboard contract to commercial space
- Understands the need for rent increase but the value is not just about the numbers
- Christos – understands the board does not have anything to compare to and that they will do what they must do. He and Leah will also do what they need to do.
- They do not want to be part of the increased pricing for everything, want to keep their pricing consistent

Next Meeting – August 6, 2024

Meeting adjourned @ 11:55a

Minutes taken by: Amanda Viecegli