

**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
Minutes of the February 28, 2008 Regular Meeting**

A meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was held on February 28, 2008, 10th Floor Conference Room, Stamford Government Center.

In attendance were:

Commissioners: Thomas Lombardo
Mark Smith
Beth Cooper
Timothy McGuinness
Vincent Martino

Staff: Laurie Albano
Joseph Barbarotta
Mickey Docimo

Guests: Catherine L. Gredoni – Bench Donation

Michael Charles – Limbo Contest

Tori Brown – Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation

Harry Day – Kids in Crisis

Beth Shluger – Kids in Crisis

Chris Beers – Kids in Crisis

David Winston – Cove Island Park

Jean Rinaldi – Homer L. Wise Statue

Patrick Vigilio – I.S.T. Baseball

Rocco Cuscuna – Dugouts at Kane Avenue

Ronnie Tella – American Red Cross

Will McEwan – Lorenti Tournament

Al Simeone – Babe Ruth Baseball, Inc.

Rich LoRusso – Babe Ruth Baseball, Inc.

Jim Serafino – Babe Ruth Baseball, Inc.

Butch Lamotta – Babe Ruth Baseball, Inc.

Thomas McIntosh – Babe Ruth Baseball, Inc.

Tony Scartuchio – Babe Ruth Baseball, Inc.

Michael V. Vigliotti – Babe Ruth Baseball, Inc.

Joe Cullen – Babe Ruth Baseball, Inc.

Mike Beldotti – Babe Ruth Baseball, Inc.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:36 p.m. by Thomas Lombardo.

Review of the October 2007, November 2007 and January 2008 Minutes

Review of October 2007, November 2007 and January 2008 Minutes were tabled to the March 2008 Commission Meeting.

Mr. McGuinness made a motion to move the two items under New Business both under Mr. Mike Saccardi, Talent Evaluation at Cubeta Stadium and change of corporate name from Babe Ruth to Stamford Baseball Association, to the last item on the agenda.

Seconded by Mr. Smith

Unanimously Approved

Mr. Smith made a motion to approve Police Department use of Veterans' Park to assemble for Annual Police Memorial Parade on May 7, 2007.

Seconded by Mr. McGuinness

Unanimously Approved

Staff Reports

Mickey Docimo – Parks and Recreation/Operations

- Mr. Docimo stated that they have been very busy with the budget, but he doesn't have any solid numbers yet. The budget presentation with the Board of Finance will be on April 2, 2008 and on April 21, 2008 with the Board of

Representatives.

- Mr. Docimo reported that there is someone he would like to hire to manage the Skate Park, she has extensive police training. If hired she will start in April. Mr. Docimo will see how the budget goes in terms of the rest of the year.
- Mr. Docimo stated that the turf field contract has been approved by the Board of Finance and the Board of Representatives and the only thing we need is for the money to be appropriated in the budget.
- Someone came in today to discuss a proposal for the barn at Merriebrook. The proposal is in a preliminary stage and if it looks like it's going to work they will be coming in front of the Commission.

Joseph Barbarotta – Parks Maintenance

- Mr. Barbarotta stated that he is dealing with the Monk Parakeets in Cummings Park. He has had a lot of help from the people at the Wild Life Orphanage and also contacted the State DEP.

Lights need to be changed, the nests are very large and shadow the outfield making it impossible to play softball under those conditions. The DEP stated that the Monk Parakeets are not protected species and that we can move them, they suggested some guidelines. There is going to be a meeting on Tuesday to find a place where we can move them.

- We might need a Bid Waiver from the Mayor to get the lights for Field 1, Cummings Park.
- There will be a new Recycling Program at the parks. There will be new blue bins that will have holes and say "Recycle". The bins will be located at the picnic areas and strategic places, especially at Cove Island, Cummings and West Beach. We are also trying to get bags to give to the people as they come to park and ask them to bring their garbage back out.
- We are still working on the barn at Cove Island.
- We are now replacing the windows at the Mianus River barn, we have enough Capital money to put a new roof, new doors and paint it.
- We are half way done with the installation of the new playground at Carwin Park.

Laurie Albano – Recreation

- Very busy preparing for spring and summer programs.
- We now have the Recreation Center RFP, the vendor pre bid meeting will be on March 11, 2008.
- Ms. Albano stated that she will provide the Commissioners with a copy of the Recreation Center specs.
- Ms. Albano stated that the new software that they like is compatible with the City's financial software, HTE, where their present one it's not. This new software business model is not being received very well by Administration, because it is all transaction fee based. We may not be able to make this workable, so we will have to look at other options.
- Ms. Albano gave Mr. Lombardo a copy of the Traitor's Softball roster, requested by him at the last Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting.
- Ms. Albano gave the Commissioners a copy of the existing Policy Manual for field use. Ms. Albano asked the Commissioners to review the Tournament Fee Policy.
- We put in for a program expansion for a new camp in the budget, but are going to have to pull the request because we are running into possibly facility and budget issues. We have not registered yet, registration starts on March 8, 2008. We will let the word out that there will be no registration for that camp on March 8th.
- We put in our expense line the capability to take 80 additional spots and spread them among the existing camps.
- Ms. Albano passed out copies of the spring/summer brochure.

Donations

Ann Marie Benedetto - Bench Donation in Memory of Al Miranda at Scalzi Park.

Tabled to the March 2008 Commission Meeting. Representative was not present.

Catherine Lucia Gredoni – Bench Donation in Memory of Her Brother Angelo V. Lucia at Cove Island Park.

Mr. McGuinness made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Mr. Martino

Unanimously Approved

Special Events

Ron Miller/Health Department – Use of Cove Island Pavilion – Lead Information, Lead Screening and Picnic for Children. August 23, 2008 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Tabled to the March 2008 Commission Meeting. Representative was not present.

Ellen O'Neill – Annual Deloitte Impact Day Community Service Corporate Team Building Project – Cove Island Park and Beach. June 6, 2008 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Tabled to the March 2008 Commission Meeting. Representative was not present.

Michael Charles – Cummings/Beach Party and International Limbo Contest – July 12, 2008 from 1:30 to 9:30 p.m.

The Commission explained to Mr. Charles that the use of steel drums for the Limbo Contest at Cummings Beach will be intrusive to the neighbors and suggested that Kosciuszko Park be used instead. The Commission also asked that the event ends at 8:00 or 8:30 p.m.

Due to lack of parking Mr. Docimo asked that people be shuttled to the park.

Mr. Smith stated that with a plan like this Mr. Charles needs to get a Board together that would include some Stamford residents. The Commission requested that Mr. Charles provide them with a specific proposal in writing. The Commission will discuss this issue in the March 2008 Commission Meeting. Mr. Lombardo offered Mr. Charles the option of not being present at the meeting, if he provides a phone number with his package the Commission will contact him by phone if they have any questions.

Tori Brown – Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation – Walkathon on Sunday, September 28, 2008 from 7:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. – Cove Island Park.

The Commission had some questions regarding the event, they also stated that there were concerns with some issues and complaints from the Cove Island Association regarding last year's event.

Mr. Lombardo asked that the request be reviewed at the March 2008 Commission meeting. Ms. Brown was asked to come back with the answers to the Commissioners' questions and with ways to resolve the issues from last year.

The Commission will hold the day of September 28, 2008 for the event.

Old Business

Maddie Sachs – Request to Donate a Bench in Memory of David Mond at Hiking Trail at the Mianus River Park.

Mr. Martino made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Mr. Smith

Unanimously Approved

Bob Pepi – Request Permission to Install a Concession/Storage Building in Conjunction with the West Beach Project.

Tabled to the March 2008 Commission Meeting. Representative was not present.

There was a short discussion regarding the latest events on the West Beach Soccer Fields. Mr. Docimo explained that the fields will need a fence to prevent them from being damaged.

The Commission requested a copy of the West Beach Soccer Field Plan.

Mr. Smith made a motion to add presentation of Triathlon to benefit Kids in Crisis by Representative Harry Day to the agenda.

Seconded by Mr. McGuinness

Unanimously Approved

Representative Harry Day – Kids in Crisis, Inc. – Triathlon - Sunday, June 29, 2008 Starting at 6:30 a.m.

The triathlon event will start and finish at West Beach and consists of a .9 mile swim, a 25 mile bike race through Shippan Point, (Cummings Park) and North Stamford and a 6.2 mile foot race through downtown streets. Columbus Park will be the site of the finish as well as the bike to run transition area. The 10K (6.2 mile) run is a 2-loop course through downtown and Scalzi Park. The race is limited to 500 participants.

Race starting time will be 6:30 a.m. Staging at Columbus Park and West Beach will be conducted during the day prior to the event and breakdown of all equipment in West Beach and Columbus Park will be completed immediately following the event.

Participants will be parking in downtown and taking shuttle busses down to the beach. Check in will be at Columbus Park.

The triathlon has the support of the Shippan Point Association and the D.S.S.D. They will contact all the churches around the area.

The West Beach boat ramp will be shut down for public use approximately from 7:00 to 7:45 a.m.

Mr. Martino made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Mr. McGuinness

Unanimously Approved

Establish Date for Public Hearing for Dog Park.

Date for Public Hearing for Dog Park was established for Wednesday, March 19, 2008 at 6:00 p.m.

Discussion with Stamford Tree Foundation.

Representative for the Stamford Tree Foundation was not present. Mr. Barbarotta stated that Mr. Milton Puryear provided a copy of the report for the trees at Mill River Park for the Commissioners.

David Winston – Booth Realignment and Traffic Sidewalk Plan into Cove Island Park.

- Mr. Winston stated that there was a Traffic Calming Study last year asking neighborhoods for input. The Traffic Department received a Grant for Safe Routes to School Program. The money is for sidewalks to encourage kids to walk to school. Mr. Winston stated that there is a sidewalk on the south side of Cove Road and the Traffic Department is planning to install a new sidewalk on the other side of street. Mr. Winston suggested that they should double the width of the existing sidewalk instead of installing a new side walk. The wider sidewalk would help when the school has field trips to Cove Island Park. Mr. Winston feels that if this is done it could be tied in with the work that Mr. Docimo wants to do at Cove Island Park.
- Mr. Winston requested the Commission's input as to how traffic into the park would be improved if there was any improvement to the sidewalk on Cove Road.
- Commissioners will take a look at the neighborhood and revisit the issue at the March 2008 Commission Meeting.
- Mr. Docimo will touch base with Mani Poola, Traffic Engineer.

James S. Vlasto and Jean Rinaldi – Proposal to Erect a Bronze Statue of Homer L. Wise (World War II Veteran) at Veterans Memorial Park.

Mr. Lombardo stated that there is going to be a meeting next week to discuss reconfigurations to Veterans' Park. Mr. Smith suggested and the other

Commissioners agreed that the statue should be placed at Homer L. Wise Park instead of Veterans' Park as requested. Mr. Lombardo stated that the Commission will take a look at the issue and will make a decision at the March 2008 Commission Meeting.

I.S.T. Baseball Headquarters – Talent Evaluation at Cubeta Stadium – July 30, 2008 from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. – Rain Date October 13, 2008.

The Commission requested that Stamford residents pay a reduced rate and that a reimbursement be made to cover all maintenance costs.

Mr. Smith made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Mr. McGuinness

Unanimously Approved

Rocky Cuscuna – Request to Install Dugouts at Kane Avenue.

Stamford American Little League requested permission to build dugouts at the Kane Avenue field.

Mr. Lombardo stated that Stamford American Little League needs to provide the Commission with dimensions and they also need to poll the neighbors on their opinion of dugouts.

Item was tabled to the March or April 2008 Commission Meeting after the Commission reviews the information.

Romeo Fraccaroli – New Soccer League.

Mr. Fraccaroli withdrew the item from the Agenda.

Ronnie Tella – American Red Cross – Fall Ball Softball Tourney for Darien/Stamford Red Cross Armed Forces Emergency Services Program and Partners. Saturday, September 13, 2008 and Saturday, September 20, 2008.

Mrs. Cooper made a motion to approve American Red Cross use of **Scalzi 1, 2 & 3** Fall Ball Softball Tourney for Darien/Stamford Red Cross Armed Forces Emergency Services Program and Partners. Saturday, September 13, 2008 and Saturday, September 20, 2008 – Rain Dates to be determined.

Mr. Lombardo stated that he hopes to see more City representation from Stamford in their Board of Directors.

Seconded by Mr. Smith

Unanimously Approved

Will McEwan – Lorenti Tournament – Saturday, May 3, 2008 – Use of Cummings 1, 2, 4 or 5 – Whatever Time They Are Open.

Mr. Smith made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Mr. Martino

Unanimously Approved

Stamford Babe Ruth – Talent Evaluation at Cubeta Stadium – Monday, June 23, 2008 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Mr. Mike Saccardi did not attend the meeting.

Mr. Rich LoRusso stated that Mr. Saccardi and the Executive Board were removed from Babe Ruth Baseball by the State of Connecticut.

Talent Evaluation at Cubeta Stadium was tabled to the March 2008 Commission Meeting, the Commission will hold the date for the event.

The Commission requested that Stamford residents pay a reduced rate.

Change of Corporate Name from Babe Ruth Baseball of Stamford to Stamford Baseball Association.

Mr. Lombardo stated that there has been a moratorium in place for seven years on new groups.

Mr. Rich LoRusso stated that he has taken over as President for Stamford Babe Ruth. Mr. LoRusso spoke to Mr. Al Simeone from Babe Ruth Head Quarters and worked out how the new Board was to take place and how they are going to proceed. Existing Board members that did no violations will stay on the Board, there will also be some new Board members. Mr. LoRusso spoke to Rob Connors from National Babe Ruth and explained that the Board will stay and that new members will come, Mr. Connors said that if they do this they will grant them the Charter.

Mr. Lombardo asked if it would add value to their Board if either Mrs. Cooper, Mr. McGuinness or Mr. Smith join. Both Mr. LoRusso and Mr. Simeone agreed that it would be a good idea.

Mr. Simeone stated that there will be two Co-Presidents, Mr. Rich LoRusso, Operational President and Mr. Lou Scalfani, Internal President. Mr. Kevin Collins will be the Vice President; Mr. John Sava will be the Treasurer.

Mr. Smith assumes that the Stamford Baseball Association was going to start Travel Teams if it wasn't covered by Babe Ruth it could be picked up by the Stamford Baseball Association, they will not have any right to baseball fields but

they are still going to play under the umbrella of Stamford Babe Ruth. Mr. Simeone stated that Stamford Baseball Association is not recognized by the Charter that the Town has for Stamford Babe Ruth.

If Stamford Babe Ruth runs Travel Teams and they want to play Travel games and other open tournaments they need to be sanctioned by Babe Ruth.

Mr. Smith stated that we want the same opportunities to have our kids to play as many games as other States, and play as competitive as possible.

Mrs. Cooper commended Mr. LoRusso and the other Board members for what they are doing and asked them to turn Stamford Babe Ruth around and recognize that there are kids with all different skills and capabilities.

Mr. McGuinness reinstated that the Commission would like to have some type of participation in the group. Mr. McGuinness made a request that Stamford Baseball Association be removed from their website.

Mr. Simeone stated that he needs to know how many Commissioners are going to be part of the Stamford Babe Ruth Board. Mr. Lombardo stated that no more than two Commissioners will be able to be part of the Board.

Mr. Smith made a motion to withhold recognition of the Stamford Baseball Association.

Seconded by many

Unanimously Approved
Vote 5 – 0

The March Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting will take place on Wednesday, March 19, 2008.

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Mrs. Cooper

Seconded by Mr. McGuinness.

The meeting adjourned at 10:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
Margarita Arenas
March 3, 2008