

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
Minutes of the January 21, 2009 Regular Meeting

A meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was held on January 21, 2009, 10th Floor Conference Room, Stamford Government Center.

In attendance were:

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

Staff: Mickey Docimo
 Laurie Albano
 Joseph Barbarotta
 Kevin Murray

Guests: James Grunberger – Hunt Park Entranceway

 Joe Sessa – Hunt Park Entranceway

 Joseph Pate – Hunt Park Entranceway

 Andy Caruso – Hunt Park Entranceway

 John Mallozzi – Appeal

 Doug Hamilton – Marine Operations

 Kevin Ziperstein – Traitors

 Rich LoRusso – Babe Ruth

 Jim Serafino – Babe Ruth

 Thomas McIntosh – Babe Ruth

 Mike Beldotti – Babe Ruth

 Louis Blanco – Marina

 Ginger Winston – Resident

 Dave Winston – Resident

Commissioner McGuinness arrived at 6:47 p.m.

Joseph Falzone did not attend the meeting.

Call to Order

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

Mr. Smith made a motion to add Babe Ruth Representatives to the agenda.

Seconded by Mr. Martino

YES: Mr. Smith
Mr. Lombardo
Mr. Martino

ABSTAINED: Mrs. Cooper

Mrs. Cooper made a motion to add Louis Blanco to the agenda.

Seconded by Mr. Martino

Unanimously Approved

Review of the November 19, 2008 Minutes.

Mr. Smith made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Mrs. Cooper

YES: Mrs. Cooper
Mr. Lombardo
Mr. Smith

ABSTAINED: Mr. Martino

(Mr. Martino abstained because he was not present at the November 19, 2008 meeting).

Review of the December 16, 2009 Minutes.

Mr. Martino made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Mr. McGuinness

YES: Mr. Martino
Mr. Lombardo
Mr. McGuinness

ABSTAINED: Mrs. Cooper
Mr. Smith

(Mrs. Cooper and Mr. Smith abstained because they were not present at the December 16, 2009 meeting).

Staff Reports

Mickey Docimo – Parks and Recreation/Operations

- Mr. Docimo stated that the Budget was submitted on Friday. They were directed not to ask for anything extra. They were asked to highlight any programs that were mandated (nothing in Parking and Recreation is really mandated). Laurie Albano developed a form which outlines the implications of the cut to a given area.
- The Parks' Budget has been cut year after year and we do not have half the money we had five years ago, hopefully we will not get cut any further. Mr. Docimo stated that he has not heard anything definite yet, but probably will know by the next meeting. Preliminary, it doesn't look like there will be any layoffs, Mr. Docimo does not anticipate being able to fill our vacancies.
- Mr. Docimo stated that this year's Budget is exactly what it was last year.
- We are low in some of our accounts, specifically seasonals and overtime. We have \$250,000 less this year than we had last year. Last year we let a lot of the seasonals go early and we are going to have to bring them back late. Joe Barbarotta is now investigating shift rotations.
- The fields at West Beach are 60% done. Lione Park's fields are a little behind.
- Mr. Docimo stated that he has proposed new fees to Director Barnes but he has not heard back from him yet.

Laurie Albano – Recreation

- We are preparing for spring and summer activities and registration.
- Brochure printing deadline is February 2, 2009.
- We have set up the schedule for the spring/summer registration for camps; it has not been released to the public yet, but will very soon. With the new software half of the full pay camp spots are on-line, to eliminate some of the lines in the lobby. First, they will open half on-line and then about two days later they will open the rest to walk-ins.
- There was an informative meeting with the software vendor today. He will be sending a time line for further training and implementation; hopefully it will be good to go in March.

- Budget for next year will be very lean. Ms. Albano is concerned in the area of the seasonal staff because the minimum wage just went up.
- Still waiting to hear about some summer space. Al Barbarotta and AFB helped us facilitate getting back into Westover School. We are looking for another spot at Newfield School because we got asked to move out of Toquam because of some work being done there. Springdale School which was going to be our backup to Newfield School is now possibly out because asbestos removal.
- The Recreation Center Study is moving along really great, we have a preliminary wish list. Ms. Albano will try to have the next meeting on a late afternoon or evening so the Commissioners can attend. There are a few proposed sites including one on Long Ridge Road.

Joseph Barbarotta – Parks Maintenance

- Munk Parakeets have been moved.
- New lights are up and functional at Cummings.
- As an in-house project we started to level the softball field at Cummings. Work will be finished in the spring. We are now working on a RFP to irrigate the softball fields.
- Just finished the lighting project at Cummings Boardwalk. They put the same kind of streetscape lighting that you see downtown at the parks.
- Doug Hamilton the Supervisor at the Marinas took a big project that consists of installing some new lines for a bubbling system. When it gets cold in the winter we blow air into the harbor to keep it from freezing.
- Mr. Barbarotta did some research about the possibility of charging an entrance fee to get into parks such as Scalzi, Cummings and Cove. The preliminary numbers are a half a million dollars, Mr. Barbarotta does not feel that we will ever recover that much money to pay for it.
- The Budget is very lean, the numbers are the same except that they took some money out of Seasonal and put it into Overtime.

Donations

No Donations.

Special Events

No Special Events.

Old Business

East Side Partnership – Hunt Park Entranceway at the Corner of East Main Street and Courtland Avenue.

- Mr. Lombardo stated that the Commission has been presented with a petition from people who are East Side residents and a number of members of the East Side Partnership who object to the Archway Project.
- Mr. Lombardo reiterated that the Commission has no level of comfort with a gate that is going to open; they feel that this could become a real safety issue. The Commission wants a gate that is stationary, one that will be welded shut.
- Mr. James Grunberger stated that East Side Partnership voted on this project, Carlo Leone got them the State funding which will run out in June if they don't get the project done. Andrew McDonald is also very much in favor of this project.
- Commissioners discussed the issue and expressed their concern with a gate that moves and with the location of the entranceway. Mrs. Cooper and Mr. Martino would like the entranceway to be moved. Mr. McGuinness stated that he did not have any concerns with the entranceway proposed.
- Mr. Joe Sessa stated that he feels that this is a waste of tax payer's money for a little fluff. It was explained that the East Side Partnership was getting State funds for this project. Mr. Sessa feels that the position of the proposed entranceway is dangerous. Mr. Sessa already has about 50 or 60 signatures opposing this project already.
- Mr. John Peters from the East Side Partnership stated that he has some issues with this Archway Project, his opposition is more location. Mr. Peters is not opposed to having the East Side Partnership make an improvement at Hunt Park, but he is opposed to the location and any type of gate that opens up.

Mrs. Cooper made a motion to approve proposed Archway with a welded gate, set back approximately 8" to 12" from the archway and no lower than the wall.

Seconded by Mr. Martino

Unanimously Approved

Playground at Homer Wise Park- Determine if Public Hearing is Needed.

- Item has been tabled to the February 2009 Commission Meeting.
- Mr. Lombardo requested that residents that are requesting the playground and the residents that are opposing the playground be invited to the meeting.

New Business

John Mallozzi for His Daughter Maria – Appeal of a Dockmaster Decision of Assessing Fines and Revoking Docking Privileges for the 2009 Season.

- Mr. Doug Hamilton/Marinas stated that the marinas were closed on November 15, 2008, at that point all boats were supposed to be removed from the water and Mr. Mallozzi's boat was not removed from the water. The boat has not been moved as of this date, there has been no effort made by Mr. Mallozzi to come in to pay for either winter storage or resolve his fines that are outstanding. At this point we are nine weeks into the close down season at the rate of \$100 per week which is stated clearly in our rules. Mr. Mallozzi owes the City \$900 in fines for not removing his boat from the Marina. The charge for Winter Storage for Mr. Mallozzi's boat is \$720.
- Mr. Mallozzi stated that they will not accept his payment for winter storage unless he pays the \$900 fine.
- Mr. Mallozzi stated that he would like to pay what he thinks is fair, he wants to pay the fee for the Winter Storage and whatever interest on the difference.
- Mr. Mallozzi proposed to pay \$720 for the Winter Storage and \$130 for interest for the course of the year. Mr. Hamilton stated that Mr. Mallozzi's proposal was not fair and he proposed that Mr. Mallozzi pay a fine based on the City's Regular Fine Schedule (six weeks at \$100 a week). Mr. Mallozzi will have to pay a prorated Winter Storage Fee from now until the remainder of Winter Storage since we are into the season already. Mr. Mallozzi will be able to get his slip for next year as well.

Mr. McGuinness made a motion to approve that the fee to be paid by Mr. Mallozzi be \$950. The proposal by Mr. Hamilton had come to \$1,050, the proposal by Mr. Mallozzi had been \$850, the Commission split it in half at \$950. Mr. Mallozzi will be able to keep his slip for next year.

Seconded by Mr. Martino

Unanimously Approved

Tournaments

Kevin Ziperstein – Traitors Men's and Co-ed Softball Tournament – April 25 & 26, 2009 or May 9 & 10, 2009 (Rain Date or if Field 1 is not Completed by 4/25) – Use of Cummings Park Fields 1, 2, 4 & 5, Kosciuszko and Scalzi 1 & 2 for the Entire Weekend. All Day on Saturday, April 25th. Tournament will Take Place on Sunday, April 26th Starting at 1:00 p.m.

Mr. Docimo will contact Mr. Ziperstein to inform him that he will be responsible for Parks Department's maintenance fees.

Mr. Smith made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Mr. Martino

Unanimously Approved

Correspondence

No Correspondence.

Babe Ruth Baseball.

- Mr. Rich LoRusso stated that they need some guidance from the Commission with some issues that have been going on. Mr. LoRusso explained that Babe Ruth has dropped a lot of their programs; they have cut out the 16 year old program completely. They also have cut out all the housing for Regional Tournaments, so if a kid makes a Regional Tournament he will have to pay his own way, which could be very expensive.
- Mr. LoRusso requested permission to change their name to Stamford Youth Baseball. By playing under the name of Babe Ruth Baseball they can only play Babe Ruth tournaments. By being a Stamford Youth Baseball they will be able to play both Babe Ruth Baseball and also other tournaments in case Babe Ruth has nothing available. It was stated that they are not doing anything different with Babe Ruth or the league, but by being able to be Stamford Youth Baseball they can play Babe Ruth Baseball and do other things for the kids.
- Ms. Albano stated that within our existing Field Use Policy one of the staples of those policies is that any new sports league in Stamford needs to be affiliated with a National Organization.
- Mr. Smith stated that what they want to do is still under Babe Ruth be able to play a Senior Little League Tournament if there is no Babe Ruth Tournament. It will be the same kids playing the same house game.
- Mr. Lombardo asked that Mr. LoRusso put his request in writing and the Commission will act on it in the February meeting after talking to Corporation Counsel.

Louis Blanco – Marina Appeal.

- Mr. Hamilton/Marinas stated that he believes that Mr. Blanco's issue does not have to be discussed by the Commission and that he can help him.
- Mr. Lombardo stated that in the event the issue is not resolved Mr. Blanco can come to the February 2009 Commission Meeting.

Mrs. Cooper left the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

The next Parks and Recreation Commission will take place on either Wednesday, February 11, 2009 or Wednesday, February 25, 2009.

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Mr. Martino

Seconded by Mr. McGuinness

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
Margarita Arenas
January 24, 2009