

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
Minutes of the May 20, 2009 Regular Meeting

A meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was held on May 20, 2009, 10th Floor Conference Room, Stamford Government Center.

In attendance were:

Commissioners: Thomas Lombardo
 Mark Smith
 Beth Cooper

Staff: Laurie Albano
 Joseph Barbarotta
 Kevin Murray
 Ron Markey

Guests: Representative David Martin – Scofieldtown Park

 Mildred Ritchie – Memoriam Request

 Jeanne Lauer – Memoriam Request

 Cheryl Ritchie – Memoriam Request

 Alex Martinez – Flag Ceremony

 Representative Eileen Heaphy – Dog Park and Wild
 Geese Bloomsday Walk

 Art Layton – Dog Park

 John Bysiewicz – Lymphoma Research Foundation

 Donna Fullmore – Southern Fairfield County Activity
 Group of Narcotics Anonymous

 Dirk Miller – FCS Foundation

 Nathan Mayes – The Fellas

 Landon Reesor – Encounter Church

Sharon Coppola – National Lione

John DaRosa – Approval of Small Plaque

Commissioner Martino and Commissioner McGuinness did not attend the meeting.

Commissioner Copper came in at 6:39 p.m.

Call to Order

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

Review of April 15, 2009 Minutes.

Tabled to the June 2009 Commission Meeting.

Staff Reports

Laurie Albano – Recreation

- The on-line registration is back up and functioning. Without advertisement the first day it was back on we had over \$3,000 coming in. There is going to be an ad in the paper this weekend announcing that the website is officially up and functioning.
- All set with beach lifeguards, they start this weekend.
- The GSTA and Recreation Services Tennis Tournament went very well this past weekend, they had about 100 participants and a little over half were Stamford residents. The Men's Open Singles Final was played by two Stamford residents. The GSTA donated 4 squeegees (tool that dry the courts).
- Camp enrollment is a little bit low, last year our total campers were 1,228 right now we have about 1,023.
- Softball is underway, all the fields are jammed and going, permits are out. Mostly everyone has complied with paper work and insurance.
- There is a 31 team Beach Volleyball League that is going to start at Cummings in early June.

Joseph Barbarotta – Parks Department

- Parks are up and running, ready for Memorial Day Weekend.
- The Parks Department acquired a Beach Cleaning Machine. By having two machines, one stationed at Cove Island and the other at West beach we will be able help reduce overtime and still get the beaches ready on time.
- Director Barnes asked Mr. Barbarotta to distribute to the Commission a letter that announces the temporary closure of Scofieldtown Park. The DEP has done some soil samples and found contaminants; this is now a project that the Engineering Department is taking over. There is going to be a remediation of that site, but we don't know how intense or how involved that is going to be. At this point the park is officially closed; the play set will be relocated.
- The Parks Department initiated a new schedule starting this weekend where the shifts will be staggered; an emphasis was put on having coverage on the weekends. This new measure was driven by reducing overtime for budget presentation this year. The seasonals are scheduled for Saturdays and Sundays, in the past the workers were out of the parks by 2:30 p.m. on the weekends, now workers are scheduled in the parks from 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. After the season is over the schedule goes back to normal.
- Mr. Barbarotta stated that Ron Markey/City Tree Inspector attended tonight's meeting to talk to the Commission about a National Program that donated an Elm Tree to Fort Stamford.
- Ron Markey/City Tree Inspector stated that we received the Liberty Elm Tree and he got permission to plant it. The tree is in the ground, it has a 16' circle of mulch, compost and top soil, the tree is about 16 or 18 feet tall. Mr. Barbarotta stated that Brian O'Neill and the Board members that are involved with Fort Stamford and historic site were involved in the finding of the planting site; certain areas of the park cannot be disturbed. Mr. Lombardo thanked Mr. Barbarotta and Mr. Markey for getting them involved.
- Mr. Markey stated that a plaque was delivered with the tree. The plaque is 20" W x 1/2" D x12"H, which is oversize, Mr. Lombardo stated that the plaque would have to be approved by exception. Mr. Barbarotta stated that this is part of a National Program so this is the standard plaque.
- There will be a ceremony on July 4, 2009 at around 9:30 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Smith to approve the plaque as an exception because it is part of the National Program Commemorating America's First Symbol of Freedom. The exception is because the normal size of plaques accepted are considerably smaller, but the Liberty Tree Memorial Group requires that particular plaque to be consistent nationwide.

Seconded by Mrs. Cooper

Unanimously Approved

- Mr. Barbarotta stated that the Parks Department has been very diligent in replacing the lights and relocating the parakeets at Cummings Field. In the process of relocating the parakeets they were informed that there were osprey nests. Mr. Barbarotta was told by the State that the osprey nests can be removed as necessary as long as there are no eggs in them. Two weeks ago a nest was taken down with eggs in it, photographs were taken by someone and sent to the State. Mr. Barbarotta called the State and found out that the eggs were actually parakeet eggs. Mr. Barbarotta stated that the issue has been addressed, it was put in writing and workers were reprimanded.
- Mr. Murray stated that another option to deal with the nests would be to install an osprey nest on top of the light, on another pole that branches off.

Kevin Murray, Parks Department

- The Parks Department is not fully staffed for the summer yet, there are about 8 more positions to fill.
- The staff demo the sweeper at Cummings Park.
- Dorothy Heroy pool needs significant repair, part of the wall caved in. The Parks Department is working with the Engineering Department to get a fix on that, they are getting prices and will get estimates by the end of the week. Mr. Barbarotta estimated that it will cost about \$5,000 or \$6,000 to repair the pool.
- There is a sink hole in the basketball court at Dorothy Heroy and the Parks Department will need guidance from the Engineering Department. Mr. Barbarotta stated that they are doing an in-house investigation.

Representative David Martin stopped by to see if there were any questions regarding the temporary closure of Scofieldtown Park. Representative Martin stated that there were soil samples very close to the playground that were contaminated, he hopes that the contamination is all contained within the park.

Consent Agenda

Our Lady of Grace Nursery School & Kindergarten – Use of Cove Island Pavilion for Graduation and Family Picnic – June 27, 2009. Rain Date June 28, 2009. Request to Waive the \$25.00 Fee for the One-Day Parking Pass for 25 Families.

Approved by Mrs. Cooper.

Seconded by Mr. Smith

Unanimously Approved

Villa Divino Amore Nursery School – Use of Cove Island Pavilion for Graduation and Family Picnic – June 20, 2009. Rain Date June 21, 2009. Request to Waive the \$25.00 Fee for the One-Day Parking Pass for 25 Families.

Approved by Mr. Smith.

Seconded by Mrs. Cooper

Unanimously Approved

Special Events

Mildred Ritchie – Memoriam Request.

- Mrs. Ritchie appealed to the Parks & Recreation Commission to honor her son George Ritchie by naming the softball fields at Cumming Park, Field #1 and Field #2 in his memory. Mr. Ritchie worked for the City of Stamford for many years and his greatest joy was working with the youth of the City. Mr. Ritchie was responsible for planning, organizing, promoting and administrating the comprehensive year round recreation program for Stamford's diverse population among other things.
- Mr. Lombardo stated that the Commission must recommend one way or the other and send the recommendation along to the Board of Representatives. The Board of Representatives has the sole naming power; the same is with naming schools or naming things of that sort.

Mrs. Cooper made a motion to make a recommendation to the Board of Representatives to name the fields at Cummings 1 & 2 after George Ritchie.

Seconded by Mr. Smith

Unanimously Approved

Peruvian American Community Center of Connecticut – 18th Annual Raising of the Flag Ceremony for Peruvian Independence Week – Columbus Park on July 26, 2009 from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

- Mr. Alex Martinez, President of the Peruvian/American Community Center in Connecticut, requested permission to have a flag raising ceremony in Columbus Park. The ceremony has been celebrated in Stamford for the past 18 years, the Mayor along State Senators and Representatives attend the event.

- Mr. Barbarotta stated that the Peruvian flag cannot be larger than the American Flag.

Mrs. Cooper made a motion to approve contingent that the Peruvian flag is not bigger than the American Flag.

Seconded by Mr. Smith

Unanimously Approved

Representative Eileen Heaphy – Use of Latham Park for Wild Geese Bloomsday Walk on Sunday, June 21, 2009 from 12:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

- The route for the event is as follows:

Ferguson Library
Butterfield 8
Tigin Pub
Latham Park
Return to Tigin Pub

- There will be no alcohol served in the park.

Mr. Smith made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Mrs. Cooper

Unanimously Approved

Representative Heaphy's second item regarding the Dog Park was moved ahead on the Agenda.

Representative Eileen Heaphy – Dog Park – Review Rules, Signage, Benches, etc.

- Representative Heaphy presented to the commission a proposed sign for the new Dog Park.
- The Dog Park Rules presented to the Commission are as follows:
 1. Maximum of two dogs per handler are allowed in the Park.
 2. Pick up after dog and dispose of waste.
 3. Current rabies vaccination and license tags required.
 4. Handlers are responsible and liable for their dog's actions and must remain in the park.
 5. No food of any kind is allowed in the park due to food aggression.
 6. Dogs must be leashed upon entry and exit of the park.
 7. Females in heat or puppies under 4 months should not use the park.
 8. Aggressive dogs must be removed from the park.
 9. No bicycles, strollers or sports activities are allowed in the park.
 10. Only bring dog toys you can donate to the park.

11. Small dog park is reserved for dogs under 25 pounds, timid or elderly pets.
12. Children under 15 must be accompanied by an adult. The Dog Park is not appropriate for small children.
13. Report complaints or suggestions to www.stamforddogpark.com on the contact page.

- Representative Heaphy stated that the above rules were presented to Corporation Counsel. Tom Cassone, Director of Legal Affairs told them that since the Dog Park is not going to have 24 hour enforcement, they have to be careful how they word the rules. Mr. Cassone told them to make the rules more like guidelines rather than telling people that they MUST do things.
- Representative Heaphy would like approval of a Wooden Kiosk similar to the one at Waveny to hold the park rules and a bulleting board.
- Park hours need to be added to the Park Rules.
- Dog Park Rules should have Stamford Parks and Recreation Commission on it.
- Mrs. Cooper stated that the Dog Park rules should be more forceful and requested that some changes be made. Additions and changes are as follows:

Statement right out front saying “You are entering at your own risk” and end with “Enjoy and respect your Dog Park” signed The Stamford Parks & Recreation Commission.

#7 Change should not for shall not.

#6 Leashed upon entry and exit of the Dog Park.

#9 No bicycles, carriages, strollers or sports activities are allowed in the Dog Park.

#11 Small Dog Park is reserved for dogs that are 25 pounds or less, elderly or timid dogs.

Everywhere that it says “park” change it to “Dog Park”.

Mrs. Cooper made a motion to approve the Dog Park Rules with revisions suggested by the Commission, also the signage and wooden kiosk.

Seconded by Mr. Smith

Unanimously Approved

Mrs. Cooper made a motion to approve four benches for the Dog Park that are donated in memory of a dog. ONLY for the Dog Park.

Seconded by Mr. Smith

Unanimously Approved

Christopher Adams and Nancy Flohrs – Use of Horseshoe Beach, Cove Island Park for Wedding Ceremony – August 22, 2009 from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. – 50 to 70 Guests. Request for a Group Rate Parking Permit and Permission for Access of One Vehicle to the Beach.

No representative was present. Mr. Adams requested to be taken off the Agenda.

John Bysiewicz – Lymphoma Research Foundation – Lymphomathon – Walk to Raise Money for the Lymphoma Research Foundation – Use of Cove Island Pavilion on October 17, 2009 – Start at 8:30 a.m. for Set-up to 12:30 p.m.

No amplified music is allowed in the park.

Mr. Smith made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Mrs. Cooper

Unanimously Approved

Donna Fulmore – Southern Fairfield County Activity Group of Narcotics Anonymous – Use of Kosciuszko Park for Recovery Picnic on August 15, 2009 from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. – 50 Adults and 25 Children.

- No amplified music is allowed in the park.
- Not allowed to bring their own grills.

Mr. Smith made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Mrs. Cooper

Unanimously Approved

Dirk Miller – FSC Foundation – Use of Scalzi Park for 2nd Annual Community Outreach Cookout – May 23, 2009 from 12:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

- 50 to 70 people will be attending the cookout.
- No amplified music is allowed in the park.
- Must use grills in picnic area, not allowed to bring his own grills. Must claim grills early. Mr. Barbarotta will make sure that the grills are working fine.

Mr. Smith made a motion to approve the request with the caveat that they use the picnic area, 50 to 70 people including the children. There will be no amplified music. Mr. Miller will have to claim grills early and will not be allowed to bring his own grills.

Seconded by Mrs. Copper

Unanimously Approved

Nathan Mayes – The Fellas – Use of Picnic Area Near Little League Field at Scalzi Park for Community Cookout/Fish Fry – Give Back to Stamford Day. August 29, 2009 from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. – Approximately 200 People.

- No amplified music is allowed in the park.
- Will have to claim grills early.
- Needs to contact Ed Gentile in the Engineering Department regarding renovation project at the park.
- Will need to have Police Officers.
- Not allowed to bring their own grills.

Mr. Smith made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Mrs. Cooper

Unanimously Approved

Landon Reesor – Encounter Church – Use of Scalzi Park (Grass Area Near Entrance and Tennis Courts) for Family Festival – July 10, 2009 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

- Food must be served in the picnic area/claim grills early.
- Not allowed to bring their own grills.
- No amplified music is allowed in park.
- No Bounce House is allowed.

Mr. Smith made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Mrs. Cooper

Unanimously Approved

Lisa Ocasio – Pitney Bowes – Use of Kosciuszko Park for Company Picnic – July 7, 2009 from 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. – Rain Date July 8, 2009.

No representative was present. Ms. Ocasio requested to be taken off the Agenda.

Sharon Coppola – Use of Little League Field at Scalzi Park for Annual Picnic – June 6, 2009 from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

- Food must to be served in the picnic area.
- No amplified music is allowed in park.
- Not allowed to bring their own grills.

Mr. Smith made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Mrs. Cooper

Unanimously Approved

Old Business

Ben Velishka – Donation of Tree for Southfield Park.

Mrs. Cooper made a motion to accept the donation of a tree for Southfield Park and the placement in the spot suggested by the City Tree Warden.

Seconded by Mr. Smith

Unanimously Approved

Mike Lemberger – Shoreline Adult Soccer League – Permit to Use West Beach Soccer Field Nine Times a Year – Sunday Mornings for Two Hours – Either 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. or 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

- Mr. Lombardo stated that the Commission needs a written report from Ms. Albano before the next meeting so the Commissioners can review it. The report should include the reasons why we will be willing expand the league.
- Mr. Lombardo stated that if the use policy is going to be changed, the Commission needs to do it as a thought out process.
- Mr. Smith stated that he would like the Shoreline Adult Soccer League to be allowed to use the West Beach fields. Mr. Lombardo stated that once the Commission receives the report from staff he is willing to call a Special Meeting to make a decision on this issue.
- Ms. Albano stated that she received a request from another team that belongs to this same league requesting use of West Beach soccer field.

Item tabled to the June 2009 Commission Meeting.

New Business

John DaRosa – Approval of Small Plaque (8x9) Honoring Beverly Eckert in the Jackie Robinson Park.

- Mr. Lombardo stated that historically the Commission has had a lot of requests for plaques and such in number of our parks honoring deceased family members. The Commission changed a number of years ago to permitting a bench with a plaque on it, instead of approving plaques on trees.
- Mr. Lombardo stated that if Mr. DaRosa is willing to purchase a bench, the Parks Department will be delighted to help Mr. DaRosa choose a spot for it.

Mr. Smith made a motion to deny the request for a small plaque honoring Beverly Eckert in the Jackie Robinson Park, suggesting instead a bench.

Seconded by Mrs. Cooper

Unanimously Approved

Tournaments

No Tournaments

Correspondence

No Correspondence

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Mrs. Cooper

Seconded by Mr. Smith

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
Margarita Arenas
May 26, 2009