

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

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

In attendance were:

Commissioners: Thomas Lombardo
 Tim McGuinness
 Mark Smith
 Vincent Martino

Staff: Laurie Albano
 Kevin Murray
 Joe Barbarotta

Guests: Fern Pessin – Stamford Hospital Cancer Walk

 Paul Newman – National Lione Little League

 Robert Zmarzlak – North Stamford Little League

 Shahzad Khawaja – Stamford – Cricket

 Hamid Kiani – Stamford – Cricket

 Jan Goldfluss – Dog Park

 Rich LoRusso – Stamford Boys Babe Ruth

Commissioner Cooper and Mickey Docimo did not attend the meeting.

Representative Annie Selkovits Taylor attended the meeting.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. by Thomas Lombardo.

Review of the September 2009 Minutes.

Item was tabled to the January 2010 Meeting.

Review of the November 2009 Minutes.

Item was tabled to the January 2010 Meeting.

Staff Reports

Laurie Albano – Recreation

- Ms. Albano stated that she has been working on the budget, which is almost done. The budget is a little over \$2 Million Dollars, it is a very flat budget, the only increase is the insurance cost which has gone up 10%. Recreation revenues are a little over \$1 Million Dollars.
- There was a great winter registration bringing in about \$140,000.
- Recreation is in the process of recruiting summer staff right now.
- Winter leagues have started.
- The Hay Ride with Santa was sold out for the 12th year in a row.

Joe Barbarotta – AFB/Parks Maintenance

- Mr. Barbarotta stated that there will be a re-organization in the Parks Department. Staying within the limits of the existing budget, they will be recommending to Mr. Docimo and with his approval to create an additional Operations Foreman position using the existing funding from two open maintenance workers positions. There is not enough coverage in the parks with only one Foreman. Recently the Parks Department lost a Foreman to retirement and also lost a maintenance worker to his fifth violation of the Drug Policy.
- There is an existing position in the Administration Department called Inventory Control. The Parks Department will like to create a similar position to assist with their inventory control.
- Playground at Scofieldtown Park will be taken down and removed from the park. They are working on coming up with a site to relocate to another park in that area.
- Mr. Barbarotta asked Phil D'Amico and Ron Markey to address the Commission regarding some tree issues at Vine Road and a tree at Scalzi Park that was used to secure a rope from the Ropes Course Program (Youth Services). Mr. Murray stated that they are thinking of replacing the tree with a pole to secure the rope. The Commission would like Terri Drew from Youth Services to attend the next Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting.

Consent Agenda

Eileen Mancusi – Bench Donation at West Beach – Empty Spot Under Tree Side Walk Along Plot by Beach Near Newer Benches.

Mr. Smith made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Mr. McGuinness

Unanimously Approved

Special Events

Fern Pessin – Stamford Hospital Bennett Cancer Center – Request to Use Columbus Park for Hope in Motion, WALK, RUN and RIDE Event – Saturday, June 5, 2010 and Sunday, June 6, 2010 – The Event will Begin Saturday Afternoon and will End After Cleanup on Sunday, June 6, 2010 at Around 4:00 p.m.

- Mr. Lombardo stated that last year and the year before they spray painted the roads with arrows after the Commissioners told them not to do it. Ms. Pessin stated that she spoke to Ernie Orgera and he said that the Commission should talk to him because the way the streets were marked was the best way to do it.
- Mr. Lombardo stated that this item will have to be held until next month until the Commission can talk to Mr. Orgera.
- Ms. Pessin stated that she met with the people from the churches. They are working on doing something cooperative where they can have something at the event for the churches. They are also working with the Police, and will continue to work on making sure that the access to all the churches is open. They will give out special parking passes.

In conversation with the people from the churches they were OK with what happened last year, but prefer that the event be moved to a different time. Mr. Lombardo suggested that they talk to every single church that will be affected.

- Commissioner Smith asked if the Ride can be removed from the fundraiser, Ms. Pessin will bring the suggestion to her Committee.
- Item will be tabled to the January 2010 Commission Meeting. Acting Director of Operations Ernie Orgera will be invited to the meeting. Ms. Pessin does not need to attend the meeting.

Kathryn Rhodes – US World Harmony Run – August 17, 2010.

Item was tabled to the January 2010 Commission Meeting. No representative was present.

Old Business

David Himmel and Leigh Shemitz/SoundWaters – SailLaser – Expanded Sailing Programming in Cove Island Park – Programs to be Offered at Holly Pond and Through the Cove Island Beach or Marina.

- Mr. Lombardo spoke to Mayor Pavia and the Mayor has no problem with the SailLaser program being approved if it is a Board of Recreation program and the Board of Recreation receives the percentage (25% of the revenue) and not SoundWaters. SoundWaters already gets free rental for a \$1.00 a month and also they get the maintenance.

Mr. McGuinness made a motion to approve SailLaser's Sailing Program in Cove Island Park as long as they partner with the City's Board of Recreation only.

Seconded by Mr. Martino

Unanimously Approved

Scot Weicker – Use of Cove Island Park and Pavilion for Live Green Connecticut Event – Saturday, September 25, 2010 and Sunday, September 26, 2010 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. – Friday, September 24, 2010 for Set-Up. 600 Adults and 400 Children.

- Mr. Lombardo stated that he spoke to Mayor Pavia about this event. The Mayor feels that this is a very positive program and that at that time of the year it will have limited impact. Mayor Pavia prefers to give it a try for the first year.
- Mr. Weicker was told at the December meeting that no amplification was allowed, so he is going to do a separate fundraiser at the Palace Theater.
- Mr. Weicker also knows that if there is any food involved it has to be a first option to the vendor from the parks. If the vendor is not interested, the food will need to be monitored by the Health Department.
- Mr. Smith feels that this event is more of a convention and has some concerns, one of them is how the electricity is going to be provided. Mr. Barbarotta stated that there is going to be some cost associated with that and as long as Mr. Weicker is OK with it they will try to meet whatever requirements the Building Permit is going to require.

- Mr. McGuinness is concerned; he feels that the Commission will be breaking protocol by approving this event. It seems that there will be a lot of commercialization of the park.
- Mr. Dave Winston, resident from the Cove stated that this event will be a Fair. This is a big business and it will draw a lot of people into Cove Island Park. If you look at any website where this type of activity has taken place, in municipalities like Philadelphia, San Francisco where the event has drawn 25,000 people. In the demographics that Mr. Weicker is working with he can easily draw the number of people his website is claiming, which is 10,000 people. Mr. Winston feels that this event will mean commercialization of the park.
- Mr. McGuinness stated that this is a wonderful event, but he does not feel comfortable with the event and going back to past practices the Commission will be making an exception to the rule.
- Mr. Smith would like Mr. Weicker to re-submit the numbers, he feels that Mr. Weicker is running a for profit event.

Mr. Martino made a motion to table the item to the January 2010 meeting. Mr. Weicker will be asked to attend the meeting.

Seconded by Mr. McGuinness

YES: Mr. Martino
Mr. McGuinness
Mr. Lombardo

ABSTAINED: Mr. Smith

New Business

Kathryn Rhodes – Request to Inaugurate a Sri Chinmoy Peace Grove Garden.

Item was tabled to the January 2010 Commission Meeting. No representative was present.

Candace Owens – Request for Permit to Operate Small Jetski Business at a Stamford Beach Location.

No representative was present.

Paul Newman – National Lione Facility Improvement at Scalzi Park.

- Mr. Newman stated that National Lione Little League would like to begin to raise funds for improvement of their facilities at Scalzi Park.
- REPLACE SNACK BAR AND KITCHEN BUILDING – Existing snack bar is a small building with no running water. Goal is to replace with larger building with grill and running water.
- INCREASE STORAGE – Existing storage shed holds a minimal amount of tools and field maintenance equipment. Goal is to create larger storage area to include baseball equipment.
- REBUILD PRESS BOX – Existing press box is small. Goal is to build a larger press box.
- REBUILD BOTH DUGOUTS – Existing dugouts are original circa 1950's. Structures are solid, but the drainage in the dugouts is broken. Goal is to replace both dugouts.
- REBUILD WALKWAYS AND PATIO AREA – Walkway and patio area are currently asphalt with many bare dirt patches – Goal is to rebuild and landscape walkway and patio area.
- Mr. Barbarotta stated that this project has to go through the Engineering Department to see if it's feasible due to the Master Plan.
- Mr. Lombardo stated the Health Department requires a grease trap for the grill that goes down into a commercial septic tank and that has to be pumped.
- Mr. Lombardo stated that the Commission needs to get the Master Plan, talk to the Engineering Department and requested rendition of what they are planning to do from Mr. Newman.
- Item will be tabled to the January 2010 Commission Meeting. Mr. Lombardo asked Mr. Newman to get things together and to coordinate with Mr. Barbarotta a meeting with the Engineering Department. If Mr. Barbarotta feels that someone from Engineering needs to come to the next Commission Meeting, to ask Lou Casolo or one of his designees to attend.

The Commission will take a 3 minute recess at 8:09 p.m.

The meeting was called back to order at 8:12 p.m.

Robert Zmarzlak – North Stamford Little League – Renovation of Heroy Park – Little League Field Dugouts.

- Mr. Zmarzlak stated that they would like to demolish the existing dugouts that are along 1st base side. One Fence Style dugout with metal roof is proposed along both the 1st and 3rd base sides. Existing bleachers along the 1st base side will be relocated closer to new dugout. New bleachers are proposed next to new dugout on 3rd base side. Also a storage shed is proposed near the existing batting cage.
- There will be no need to pour anymore concrete.
- Mr. McGuinness would like to see the rendering of the shed to make sure it is esthetical pleasing.
- The new proposed shed is 10' x 12'. Mr. Lombardo stated that there have been issues with storage sheds in the past where they have been vandalized and broken into. Mr. Murray suggested instead of a shed they can use the lock boxes that the City uses at Kosciuszko Park.
- Mr. Barbarotta stated that the Parks Department does not want to put up sheds in all the parks. If they can get a lock box big enough to accommodate them, it would be better.
- Mr. Lombardo stated that the Commission will need something in writing from David Emerson from EPB stating that he is OK with these changes. Mr. Lombardo requested that nothing be demolished until they have a Building Permit in hand.
- Mr. Lombardo suggested placing the storage facility behind the Back Stop.

Mr. Smith made a motion to approve the bleachers, dugouts and the jobox. The Commission will need to receive written direction from David Emerson from EPB stating that this project meets his specs.

Seconded by Mr. McGuinness

Unanimously Approved

Hamid Kiani – Children’s Cricket League.

- Mr. Kiani stated that they are just a group of friends getting together to play cricket. They have had some informal discussions of perhaps formalizing something, maybe forming an official league. They started thinking about it after being interviewed by the press.
- Mr. Lombardo stated that Mr. Kiani and Mr. Khawaja should contact Laurie Albano when they are ready to start the league. Ms. Albano will help them with the requirements.

Jon Goldfluss – Information Board for Dog Park.

- Mr. Goldfluss stated that the dimensions for the Information Board for the Dog Park are 2' x 3' sign, 5 x 5 cedar post on both sides of it, 7' ft. high, 18" inches to get the pitch. The hip roof has asphalt shingles on top. The facade of it is a clipboard with a Plexiglas. The backside will be made of plywood.
- The Information Board is meant to be used by the Dog Park community for information pertinent to them. Notices, things about licensing, any problems that might be occurring. It will be a community service for people to get information.
- The Information Board will be located right at the entrance of the park. They will finish the plantings in the spring. Eventually they will like to put a bench right next to the Information Board.

Mr. Martino made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Mr. Smith

Unanimously Approved

Tournaments

Shahzad Khawaja – Cricket Tournament – Memorial Day Weekend – May 29, 2010 to May 31, 2010.

- Mr. Lombardo stated that in the past the Commission has not approved Tournaments on Memorial Day Weekend and suggested that they change the date to the weekend before or the week after.

Mr. Smith made a motion to approve Cricket Tournament for the weekend after Memorial Day.

Seconded by Mr. McGuinness

Unanimously Approved

Stamford Boys Babe Ruth – Request to Host the 2010 16 to 18 Year Old Regional Tournament – July 21, 2010 to July 28, 2010.

- Mr. LoRusso stated that Stamford Boys Babe Ruth would like to host the 16 to 18 Regional Tournament on July 21, 2010 to July 28, 2010.
- Mr. LoRusso stated that they would like to have a Showcase for 16 year olds on Friday, June 11, 2010 at Cubeta from 3:00 p.m. on, Saturday, June 12, 2010 all day and then Sunday, June 13, 2010 in the morning until 2:00 p.m.
- Mr. LoRusso stated that they would like to have a Jamboree for Prep-Leagues for the 13 year olds on Saturday, April 10, 2010 and Sunday, April

11, 2010. Saturday, April 17, 2010 and Sunday, April 18, 2010 and Saturday, April 24, 2010. Mr. Barbarotta stated that this is usually the time the Parks Department starts prepping the fields; he will let Mr. LoRusso know if the fields will be ready by this date.

Mr. Smith stated that he will abstain from voting because he is affiliated with the Babe Ruth League.

Mr. McGuinness made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Mr. Martino

YES: Mr. McGuinness
Mr. Martino
Mr. Lombardo

ABSTAINED: Mr. Smith

Correspondence

No Correspondence.

The next Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting will take place on Wednesday, January 20, 2009.

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Mr. Martino

Seconded by Mr. McGuinness

The meeting adjourned 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
Margarita Arenas
December 28, 2009