

MINUTES
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
TOWN OF FAIRFIELD, CONNECTICUT
September 15, 2010

A meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was held Wednesday, September 15, 2010 at the Eunice Postol Parks & Recreation Center, at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Ellery Plotkin; Dante Gallucci; Bob Seirup; Barbara Rifkin and Brian Nerreau

ABSENT: Stacey Zahn; Jack Tetreau; Michael Hahn and Bob McMaster

ALSO PRESENT: G. Lombardo, Dir Parks & Recreation

The meeting was called to order at 7:05p.m.

Prior to the start of business, Liz Hoffmann, RTM Dist 8 asked to have her letter (see attached) addressed prior to approving the minutes as she felt they should not be approved. As a point of order, D. Gallucci and E. Plotkin explained that since she was not at the prior meeting then she could not object to wording of the minutes. Her objections to interpretations of the minutes could be noted in the minutes from this meeting.

I. ACT ON MINUTES: August 18, 2010

MOTION: D. Gallucci made a motion seconded by B. Seirup to approve the minutes as written.

VOTE: 4-0-1 (Nerreau Abstain) Motion Passes

II. COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Delta Zeta Alumnae Craft Fairs- Jane Miraval, 103 Old Farm Ln. was present to request Sherman Green for two craft fairs to be held on April 30, and Sept. 3, 2011

Motion –B. Nerreau made a motion, seconded by B. Rifkin to approve both dates as requested.

Vote- Unanimous

2. B. Colonnese, J. LaRicca, D. Belletsky-Request for BMX Bike Park – Agreed to be heard under IV. New Business #2 Review Skate Park Policies.

3. Greens Farms Garden Club Plant Sale- Wynn Herrmann was present to request use of Sherman Green for May 21, 2011.

Motion–B. Rifkin made a motion, seconded by B. Seirup to approve the request.

Vote- Unanimous

4. Melanie Marks – Cemetery Cleanup- Ms. Marks sent an email to Mr. Lombardo requesting permission to cleanup the Greenfield Hill Cemetery. They also discussed work that will be done on headstones in the future. Mr. Lombardo had no objections to this work.

Motion – B. Rifkin made a motion, seconded by B. Nerreau to approve the request.

Vote - Unanimous

5. Michael O’Hare - 100 Eunice Ave.- Present to request permission for the scouts from Pack 82 to have a campout and bonfire at Jennings Beach on Sat. Oct 9, 2010

Motion – B. Nerreau made a motion, seconded by B. Rifkin to approve the request at Jennings Beach.

Vote- Unanimous

III. PUBLIC INPUT ó Little League Gould Manor Field Plans – Liz Hoffmann- 203 Lovers Ln., RTM Dist #8 read the aforementioned letter written on behalf of several people in her district. All Commission members were given a copy of the letter. Tony Pontecorvo, 90 Parkwood Rd. Pres., of the Gould Manor Assn. spoke as did Tom McCarthy of 15 Loverø Ln. Ms. Hoffmann wanted to be sure that the Commission members understood that what was stated by B. Seirup last month as òa lack of opposition by the neighborsö was because they were under the impression that nothing was going to be done until the girlø softball field proposal at Hoydenø Hill was resolved. Mr. McCarthy stated that they feel that there are some discrepancies between the plan they saw previously and what was approved by the Commission last month. They heard only one tree was going to come down and that the field would remain open to the children and that the hill would barely be touched. öThey only want to get real concrete facts by taking a look at the drawings.ö Mr. McCarthy felt it is probably not going to be a problem but wants it to be reviewed.

D. Gallucci stated that he is sensitive to the fact that they don't feel they had their say but he wants it to be clear that the Commission was not trying to sneak anything through. Mr. Pontecorvo stated that he was concerned that it was similar to the Turner Center/Armory where they had only one day's notice and added that they asked for a Park at the Armory property and were told they already had a park, now they feel that that park is being taken away from them. Ms. Hoffmann added that if the head of the Assn. is not contacted then transparency comes into question. "We want to see the exact plans. We want input and everyone to be happy." E. Plotkin stated that it could be put back on the agenda for reconsideration.

D. Gallucci asked for the opportunity to respond to Ms. Hoffmann's letter. He stated that Mr. Plotkin did not make a false statement when saying that he wanted to wait on the Gould Manor field until the Girls field was resolved. The Commission had waited until a time that they felt it was on its way. He added that he is the Pres. of the **National** Little League, not the American LL; the organization that is making this request. He feels, if anything, he could be considered their arch-rival. "The idea that I can't vote on anything involving a field in Town means that I can't vote for any field. To question my ethics, I deeply resent that. I know my master and what my job is."

G. Lombardo reported that he was led to believe that the RTM had contacted the neighbors for the May meeting. He had a sit down with Zoning, DPW and the architects. At that meeting they were aware of only one tree near the dam that would be taken down. Since then they have mentioned a tree on the Crestwood Rd. side near 3rd base and he told them he did not believe that that would be allowed to be removed. "I see no reason why the Commission can't revisit this." D. Gallucci also agreed because "the neighbors weren't involved and we are hearing different plans than the one we approved; trees, hill cutting," "There was discussion about who could actually bring a motion to the floor. B. Rifkin stated that the motion needed to be made by someone who voted in favor of it previously."

Motion—E. Plotkin made a motion, seconded by D. Gallucci to reconsider the approval vote for the Gould Manor field from 8-18-10.

Vote- Unanimous

Ms. Hoffmann apologized to Mr. Gallucci who accepted her apology.

G. Lombardo stated that he would notify the American LL of the vote.

2. Camera Monitoring- Linda Crowley spoke regarding the recommendation to place cameras at both ends of the roofs of the Jennings Pavilion, the new Penfield Pavilion, and atop the Bait & Tackle & Boating Fuel Concession Building in order to enable the police to monitor activity and review in case of an incident.

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Lake Mohegan Policies – G. Lombardo suggested tabling this matter until next month when more members can be present.

Motion—B. Rifkin made a motion, seconded by B. Seirup to table the request until next month.

Vote- Unanimous

2. To Review Skate Park Policies- Commissioners wanted to readdress the rules for the skate park because it is clear to them that skaters are not adhering to the rules. It was decided that the BMX Bike Park request would be heard concurrently. Most recently, an incident occurred on 9/9 where a 17 year old, with no helmet on, was transported to Bridgeport Hosp. in a semi-conscious state. G. Lombardo stated that when this park was planned, the skaters said they would "police themselves." "This is not holding true." He is in discussions with the police and he has had thoughts of putting a supervisor there but wouldn't know what times to do so. Ann Iuraduri, 22 Barlow Place and Lou Heumann, 494 Harbor Rd. who helped to plan the park with their sons were both present. Ms. Iuraduri stated that while the boys had the best of intentions, they got more opposition than they were prepared for and were sometimes afraid of physical confrontations. Ms. Heumann stated that the incident on 9/9 was actually caused by a BMX bike in the bowl. She also added that the boys felt that the Police treated the skaters with disrespect early-on and it's been a process that they have had to work through throughout the summer. She also did not think that there would be 100% compliance with the rules.

Hector Restraepo - 40 Pease Ave. Spt. who owns a biking business, was present to speak on behalf of the BMX Group asking for the possibility of setting aside time for the bikers or allowing them all to exist together. He stated that not they call these types of parks, "ramp parks" and don't distinguish between bikes and skates, adding, "I don't see why everybody can't get along."

E. Plotkin stated that in terms of "mixed use" that has been addressed and the Town's insurance doesn't cover it. Two of the three boys Jacob LaRiccia, 87 Perry St. and Brian Colonnese, 35 Perry St. who sent the request spoke. Jacob asked if it were possible to raise money and put the BMX Park next to the Skate

Park. D. Gallucci said that while he was impressed with their approach, he doesn't see the skate park ever going to mixed use and he feels it's imperative that the Town hire a supervisor even if the hours have to be limited. He added that the users should pay for the attendant. They should wear their helmets, if not, leave or the police will be called. There should be no negotiations because we have to protect them from themselves. B. Rifkin agreed. While G. Lombardo agreed, he felt that helmets are a necessity but they may never agree to wearing pads. He felt the rules may need to be amended.

When discussing an attendant and fees, Ms. Iuradiri reminded the group that this was previously discussed and that ball fields, etc. are used free of charge and that's how everyone wanted the park to operate. She added, "If there is a fee, please don't make it exorbitant like it was under the YMCA."

Motion—B. Nerreau made a motion, seconded by B. Seirup to modify the Skate Park Rules to state that Helmets are required and knee and elbow pads are highly recommended.

Vote- 4-1 (Gallucci opposed) Motion Carries

G. Lombardo stated that he would search for an attendant right away. He asked whether or not they wanted the park to close until he hires some people.

Motion—B. Rifkin made a motion, seconded by D. Gallucci to authorize G. Lombardo to hire an attendant for the Jennings Skate Park as soon as possible but prior to the October Commission meeting after which time the park may remain open only under supervision. The attendant will be paid with money in the Department's budget until such time as a user fee structure can be established.

Vote- 4-1 (Nerreau opposed) Motion Carries

L. Heumann asked that as soon as the Department knows the start time and schedule for the attendant that they publicize it so that the users are not found to be trespassing when the attendant is not on duty.

E. Plotkin told the BMX group that they can always do what the skaters did and petition, get some parents to help and bring it to the Town bodies. Tony Pontecorvo, 90 Parkwood Rd. asked whether or not some of the Armory property might not be a good area for that type of activity.

V. OLD BUSINESS:

1. Tennis Center Renovation Plan Report – G. Lombardo reported that the contract is 99% complete and they plan to go before the BOS on Oct 6, then RTM on Oct 25. It will be a public/private partnership with a 20-year lease. Payments will begin at \$60K a year and increase. The building will be \$2.0 million and Town will receive \$1.5 million over the 20 years. The Town is only looking to spend approx. \$60K on flooring for the Beanery and special windows for the game room. Mr. Lombardo feels this is a win-win for the Town and will definitely clean up the area.

3. Girls' Softball Field Report – E. Plotkin reported that during the meeting of the TPZ on 9/14/10 they heard the presentation and then a postponement was requested. They tabled the matter until a later date, most likely Oct 12.

4. Penfield Renovation Project Report – G. Lombardo reported that the funding to renovate the West wing of Penfield was passed 9-0 by the BOF. The RTM is the next to take up the matter on Sept 27 with Sub-Ctte. meetings prior. There are tours planned for the RTM members to tour the building and ask any questions they may have.

VI. BOARD OF EDUCATION REPORT: No Report

VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT: G. Lombardo Reported:

- Fall registration went along without a hitch.
- End of the beach season and thankfully no serious incidents at the waterfront locations.
- A letter was received from a Jennings Beach neighbor, Karen Greenwood (see attached). One incident mentioned was a bus passing through the Jennings gates on Aug 31 where she didn't think they paid because there was no attendant on duty late in the season. Mr. Lombardo assured the Commission that this was a planned excursion for a NYC school and the \$63.00 per bus was paid. He thought that the other matters could be addressed at another meeting if Ms. Greenwood wished.
- There was a customer service incident that he would be addressing with the staff.

VIII. PROGRAM REPORT - None

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, B. Seirup made a motion to adjourn at 9:15

Respectfully submitted,
Joan Ryan, Recording Secretary