

MINUTES
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
TOWN OF FAIRFIELD, CONNECTICUT
June 16, 2010

A meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was held Wednesday, June 16, 2010 at the Eunice Postol Parks & Recreation Center, at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Ellery Plotkin; Bob Seirup; Brian Nerreau; Michael Hahn; Dante Gallucci; Barbara Rifkin and Jack Tetreau

ABSENT: Stacey Zahn and Bob McMaster

ALSO PRESENT: K. Flatto, First Selectman; G. Lombardo, Dir Parks & Recreation; R. White, Dir. Parks Dept.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00p.m.

I. ACT ON MINUTES: May 19, 2010

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

VOTE: 3-0 in favor (D. Gallucci, M. Hahn and B. Nerreau abstained) B. Rifkin not present for vote.

II. COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Fred Cotter- Comm. John Barry Day- Perry Green Sept. 11, 2010 – Mr. Cotter, 2275 Elm St, Stratford, was present to make the request. G. Lombardo suggested approval as it is a repeat event and there have been no problems.

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

Vote- Unanimous (B. Rifkin not yet present)

2. Elizabeth Principe- Cancer Care Walk Amended Request-Ms. Principe, 535 Connecticut Ave, Norwalk, asked that a 5K Race be added to their previously approved Sept. 12th Walk. She has been in contact with the Fairfield Police who have gone over the route and have no objections.

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

Vote- Unanimous (B. Rifkin not yet present)

III. PUBLIC INPUT – Melanie Marks -3808 Redding Rd.- Wanted to let the Commission know that she is helping to restore the Greenfield Hill Burial Ground and with permission they will be holding a “Work Day” in September. This is the 3rd year that they will take on this work. The Commission was appreciative and asked to be appraised of the date.

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Fairfield Baseball Club - Dave Boback-312 Edward St.–Was present to let the Commission know that he heads up a Sr. Citi Baseball League of 18 year-old adults and older. He would like to be able to get Blanket permits as a Resident-Only team but he is also requesting that non-resident Town Employees be permitted to play as they do in Recreation Softball Leagues. There is a Fairfield Police Officer, Michael Guilfoyle who would like to play. He stated that it would put no burden on the Town as far as needing another field or keeping off a resident. It is difficult to compete against towns who allow anyone on CT to play on their teams. M. Hahn asked and was told that the order of preference in handing out fields is:

- 1) Recreation Leagues including the adult leagues that allow 3 non-residents per team
- 2) Schools
- 3) Resident Youth Leagues, Babe Ruth, Little, League etc.
- 4) 80% resident leagues that can obtain permits 2 weeks in advance

Mr. Boback stated he does not want to have to call in two weeks ahead as he needs to be able to plan in advance.

G. Lombardo explained the history of why they took non-residents off the teams due to a lack of fields. He is afraid that if you open this “can of worms” you’ll be opening it for anyone to ask for the same. D. Gallucci agreed that there are many new Premiere teams even in the Youth division and that this would be a change to the rules. He also felt that, like Legion, the Recreation Dept. usually is able to clear some field space for them. There was discussion as to whether or not they want to consider Town Employees as residents. B. Nerreau asked if they have the authority to make an exception for this one person and revisit the matter at a later date.

Motion – B. Rifkin made a motion, seconded by M. Hahn to permit Town Police Officer, Michael Guilfoyle to play on the Citi League team for the remainder of the 2010 season but not again unless a new policy is implemented.

Vote- Unanimous

2. Lars Fitter- Marina Slip Issue- Mr. Fitter of 40 Eastlawn St. was present to request that his Marina slip be reassigned to him because he was not properly able to renew it as he did not receive the notification. Robin Bimmel, Marina Mgr., though not present did provide the Commission with ample proof that notification was sent several times though Mr. Fitter claims never to have received any of them. A certified letter was returned undelivered to Mr. Bimmel. Members wondered why, after three years in the Marina, Mr. Fitter was not aware that he needed to renew in January. They also were wondering, if he indeed lived at that Fairfield residence, why the letters were not received. Mr. Fitter did not know though he has been in HI on extended work assignment. He had been back since July, 2009. Mr. Fitter wondered why he did not get a phone call as Mr. Bimmel has called him about other matters. The Commission felt that phone calls are not necessary in tracking down those who do not renew. The certified letter was above and beyond what is required.

Though the members were sympathetic, they felt they had to enforce the rules for renewal and took no action.

3. Prohibit Sailing into Marina Channel – Following the May meeting where it was felt that there should be a rule regarding the sailing into the channel, Mr. Lombardo proposed the following addition to Section 16 of the Rules and Regulations- *All sailboats are required to be under power when entering and exiting the South Benson Marina Channel.*

Motion – B. Seirup made a motion, seconded by B. Rifkin to approve the addition to the Rules and regulations as stated.

Vote- Unanimous

R. White reported that the emergency dredging of the channel due to the March storm began on Monday, June 14 and should be complete in two weeks. They have hollowed out a portion of the beach on Jennings Beach and will put the dredged sand there and then cover it up with better sand.

4. Request for Designated Smoking areas at Town Beaches – Susan Hersh - 1 Oak Bluff Rd. was present to make the request that, because of second hand smoke and the littering of the beaches with cigarette butts, the Town consider creating designated smoking sections at the Beaches. She made calls and presently, no CT Towns do this but there are several in surrounding states. R.I. has a voluntary ban at State Beaches and Westerly Beach has for 3 years had a designated area. (see attached pictures). She asked, “How is it different than the rule the Commission has for fields where there are youth games going on? The beaches are full of children.” When discussing the rule for not littering on the beach, Mr. Lombardo agreed that it is a difficult rule to enforce. D. Gallucci asked how this rule would be enforced as the lifeguards need to watch the water. Ms. Hersh stated that there are signs and a small fenced area that smokers would go to smoke, then return to their towels and chairs. Adrienne Fishman sent an email to the Commissioners in favor of the request. (see attached). B. Rifkin and B. Nerreau and B. Seirup all spoke in favor of the idea. E. Plotkin, D. Gallucci and M. Hahn were wary of impinging on people’s freedom in an outdoor area. Mr. Lombardo felt the idea should be investigated and asked for a sub-committee. Mr. Flatto stated that his office receives hundreds of

complaints every year and agrees there is a health issue but sees the other side as well and feels a designated area might be a good compromise, or perhaps making a Smoke Free area within 100 feet of the pavilion. B. Nerreau, M. Hahn and B. Rifkin agreed to form a sub-committee to look into the possibilities.

Motion – B. Rifkin made a motion, seconded by M. Hahn to table the request until the sub-committee reports back on the matter.

Vote- Unanimous

V. OLD BUSINESS:

5. Request to relocate the Sturges Cottage – (Moved out of order to accommodate Mr. Flatto’s schedule) Melanie Marks -3808 Redding Rd. was present, along with David Sturges and Mr. Flatto to report on the project and to request approval.

Mr. Flatto spoke first and stated that he felt two Parks & Rec. goals were discussed when this project first came to their attention. One was cleaning up the dirt lot behind the existing parking lot and the other was to change the way the entry road is configured. When looking at the road issue with the Engineering Dept., they decided that because of trees and curvature of the road, there was no value to moving it and it would not improve safety so that idea was dropped. They have agreed that speed bumps will be placed on the existing driveway. Police agree.

The back lot can be created to house 60-70 cars in a lined lot that is not fully graded but uses crushed gravel and concrete millings. Kiwanis Parking lot is an example. It can be plowed. It will cost \$30-40K to create. E. Plotkin stated that last month this was a sticking point for the Commission because they didn’t know who would be paying for the paving. Mr. Flatto responded that this is actually a 3rd piece to the puzzle because Fischel Enterprises that owns the rear property has an interest in seeing that lot improved and for a short-term (3 year) lease that Mr. Flatto can approve, they will do the work at the DPW specs, put in 1 strip of lights, and drainage if the Town were to allot them half of the parking spaces. They would like to do it before the Fall so Mr. Flatto would like an answer by next month.

Mr. Flatto then addressed the idea of moving the Cottage. He stated that the Chamber would raise the money for the relocation though there is the possibility of the Town giving them seed money to get started so they can get the cottage off the Carrolton property and possibly even store it temporarily. Ms. Marks and Mr. Sturges stated that it is important to keep the building in the Mill Plain area. They showed (see attached) a sketch of the existing and proposed lot. They would however after discussion move the house to the area closest to the cemetery and not where it is shown on the sketch. M. Seirup mentioned his concern that the paving be done in the rear lot prior to any work in the present lot so that Fitness Members and visitors will not be inconvenienced. Mr. Flatto agreed with Mr. Hahn that the move will not impact the taxpayers and will be raised by the Chamber. All is dependant on the approvals of the Town Boards. The Chamber is a non-profit and he doesn’t think there will be zoning issues.

Motion –J. Tetreau made a motion, seconded by B. Nerreau to move the cottage nearest to the cemetery after the paving of the rear lot is completed, subsequent to Town Board approvals.

Vote- Unanimous

1. Tennis Center Renovation Plan Report – G. Lombardo reported that the Town Asst. Attorney, Eileen Kennelly is still working with the FIT attorneys putting together the contracts and the goal is to go before the BOS in September. He agreed that things are moving more slowly than they anticipated.

3. Little League Gould Manor Field Plans – No report. They will likely come next month.

4. Girls’ Softball Field Report – G. Lombardo reported that this matter will come before the RTM this month.

5. Penfield Renovation Project Report – G. Lombardo reported that the request for bids is out and the goal will be to take bids in mid-July and “fast-track” it to get approval from BOS/BOF/RTM in July since they don’t meet in August but it will more than likely be possible to stay on track even if it has to wait until Sept.

SKATE PARK- B. Seirup asked to discuss the Jennings Skate Park as he is concerned that rules are not being followed. When he goes to watch he sees that of 30 to 40 kids skating only 3 or 4 are wearing helmets and there are bikes in the bowl as well. He says that the kids are not policing themselves as they said they would. “We should either take down the signs and it would be skate at your own risk or we should fence it and put a guard in charge and have users pay for a photo ID to enter.”

M. Hahn agreed that he has also gone down to observe and feels that enforcement is always going to be an issue. He also feels that now that summer is coming it will become a real “gathering place/congregation point. He feels that the police should be brought in on the discussion. G. Lombardo agreed with them and said that he is already in contact with Mr. Flatto and Gary MacNamara. They are discussing a Bike Patrol and what can be done. Even the parents don’t obey as they bring in small children on scooters. If the police are called the kids get out until the police leave. It’s well-used, the kids love it.” He’d like to get a year under their belts and see what happens. He added, “If after a year it still remains an insurance risk to the Town, we may have to close it.”

VI. BOARD OF EDUCATION REPORT: No Report

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

- Fireworks will take place on July 4th with a raindate of July 5th
- Beach Fest is Friday June 18th All are welcome.
- Due to the possible renovations to Penfield I West side and the loss of lockers there, there will need to be a revision to the way that lockers are distributed. The Staff is working on some possible scenarios but G. Lombardo would like input from the Commission.
J. Tetreau and M. Hahn agreed to be on the sub-committee that will propose changes to locker distribution.

VIII. PROGRAM REPORT: None

The commission agreed to hold their July meeting near the Skate Park or at the Coast Guard Station.

M. Hahn apologized to the Commission that his work schedule has kept him from making several meetings and he stated that he is committed to his obligation to the Commission and it shouldn’t be a problem in the future.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, B. Nerreau made a motion to adjourn at 9:00

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Ryan, Recording Secretary