

TOWN OF FAIRFIELD
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Minutes of November 16, 2011

A meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission of the Town of Fairfield was held on Wednesday, November 16, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. at the Eunice Postol Parks & Recreation Center, 75 Mill Plain Road, Fairfield, Connecticut 06824.

PRESENT: Ellery Plotkin, Chairman; Dante Gallucci; Brian Nerreau; Robert Seirup; Alexa Mullady and Jack Tetreau

ABSENT: Barbara Rifkin and Robert McMaster; BOE liaison (not yet appointed)

ALSO PRESENT: G. Lombardo, Director of Parks and Recreation; Rich White, Dir. Public Works

Chairman Plotkin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

I. **Act on Minutes of October 19, 2011:** Brian Nerreau *moved*, and Jack Tetreau *seconded* to approve the meeting minutes as written. **In Favor:** Ellery Plotkin; Robert Seirup; Alexa Mullady; Brian Nerreau; Jack Tetreau **Opposed:** (None). **Abstention:** Dante Gallucci *Motion passes 5-0-1.*

II. COMMUNICATIONS:

1. **Marina Bickel** – Plaque for Mother, drowning victim (165 Nostrand Ave, Brooklyn, NY) Ms. Bikel and Nina Sloat, 212 Woodridge Ave, Fairfield asked for permission to place a memorial plaque on a bench, presently at Jennings Beach that faces the water where Ms. Bickel's mother swam every day prior to her tragic drowning this summer. Mr. White was present and had no problem with the request and stated that he would facilitate it if the Commission approved the request. J. Tetreau *moved*, and B. Nerreau *seconded* to approve the request. *Motion passed unanimously.*

2. **Joe Riccio- Warren Street, St Pat's Race**, asked for permission to use Jennings Beach lot for their annual event on Sun., March 18, 2012. Alexa Mullady *moved*, and Jack Tetreau *seconded* to approve the request. *Motion passed unanimously.*

3. **Rabbi Stock- Menorah Lighting**- Rabbi Stock was not present, however his letter requested permission to use the Sherman Green on Tuesday, Dec. 20 for their annual Chanukah event. B. Nerreau *moved*, and Bob Seirup *seconded* to approve the request. *Motion passed unanimously.*

4. **Rabbi Landa- Menorah Lighting** – Rabbi Landa was present to request permission to hold their menorah lighting on Sunday, Dec. 25 at the Sherman Green. Alexa Mullady *moved*, and Jack Tetreau *seconded* to approve the request. *Motion passed unanimously.*

5. **Fairfield Prep Caroling** – A letter was received from language teacher, Koren Mumma requesting that his class be permitted to sing carols at the Sherman Green on Monday, Dec. 12. Alexa Mullady *moved*, and Dante Gallucci *seconded* to approve the request. *Motion passed unanimously.*

III. **PUBLIC INPUT** – Dante Gallucci brought it to the Commission's attention that Craig Curley, Chairman of the Golf Commission will be coming to the Commission to discuss the possibility of placing a removable ice rink up at H.S. Richardson Golf Course during the winter. G. Lombardo explained the HSR 10-year-plan and the possibility of a new clubhouse, parking lot and cart barn. This rink idea has been discussed as an added part of that plan. All members seemed to be very interested in making the idea work. Mr. Lombardo explained that it would be a few years down the road but it would bring in revenue.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

1. **Review of proposed improvements to Lower Wharf and Ye Yacht Yard area** – Rich White, Dir. of Public Works and Mary vonConta of the Harbor Management Commission were present to show the Commission the work that they are attempting to have permitted at the Lower Wharf and Ye Yacht Yard areas. (see all attachments regarding).

The 6 main items include:

1. Reconstruction of Lower Wharf Pier
2. Construction of Community Sailing Dock
3. Improvement to Boat Launching Ramp
4. Installation of Boat Ramp Service Float
5. Repair of Lower Wharf Sea Wall
6. Dredging of Town Boat Yard Marina Basin

A permit application (200400010-TS) is before the DEEP and it is Ms. vonConta's hope that the Parks & Rec. Commission will contact the DEEP to let them know that they support the work. Ms. Mullady suggested that since a vote was not included on the agenda that a sense of the body would be all that is necessary to go ahead with a letter to the DEEP. Ms. vonConta said that funding will be realized through \$150K that the Town has put aside for this project as well as private donations.

Brian Nerreau *moved*, and Jack Tetreau *seconded* to send the following letter of resolution to the DEEP as a sense of the body.

The Parks & Recreation Commission supports the application of the Harbor Management Commission regarding the dredging, repair and improvement plan for the Lower Wharf area and Ye Yacht Yard as submitted to the Department of Environmental Protection and outlined in permit 200400010-TS.

Motion passed unanimously.

2. **Tunxis Hill Tennis Courts- Funding Request** – G. Lombardo reported that the Tunxis Hill Tennis Courts are in need of renovation and \$50K was budgeted for the project. The bid came in at \$70K. In partnership, Economic Development is going to be trying to get \$15K and they have asked the contractor to hold his price however Mr. Lombardo would like permission to spend up to \$10K from the Revolving Fund to offset the cost.

B. Seirup *moved*, and Jack Tetreau *seconded* to approve up to \$10,000 for the renovation of the Tunxis Hill Tennis Courts. *Motion passed unanimously.*

V. OLD BUSINESS:

1. **To hear a sub-ctte. report on Beach Sticker Recommendations:** Following last month's presentation by the Beach Sticker Sub-Ctte., and their recommendations, Mr. Seirup gave a quick overview:

1. Extend the collection of Daily Parking fees at Jennings and Penfield Beaches from 6 pm to 8 pm. No charge after 6 pm for Fireworks Event.
2. Require Beach Stickers at Jennings Beach on Family Movie Nights and collect at the gate until 9:30 pm from those who do not have stickers.
3. Charge each car owned by a senior 62 years of age or older \$10.00
4. Lake Pass Holders are required to pay for Dump Pass
5. Any Senior (62+) who does not own a car but requires a caregiver to gain beach access must pay \$10.00 for Hand Pass.
6. Handicapped individuals must pay \$10/\$20 (depending on age) per car.
7. Create an "M" sticker to be given free to:
 - a. those purchasing a boat slip at the So. Benson Marina or Ye Yacht Yard.
 - b. those using the Boat Ramps at Jennings Beach or Ye Yacht Yard.
 - c. Those renting boat racks at Jennings Beach.

This sticker would also allow them into Penfield Beach. If they want access to other Town Beaches and/or the Transfer Station, they will be required to bring back the sticker and purchase an "A" Sticker.

Mr. Seirup reiterated the fact that if Seniors (62+) feel burdened by paying \$10 per sticker, they can always gain entrance to Penfield Beach for free. Mr. Lombardo recommended doing only # 1, 2 and 4 of the recommendations for next year and to take no action on #7 because Rich White's Dept. had some

concerns that had not been ironed out. Mr. Lombardo did state that anytime the Dept. does something new regarding rates, there is always some sort of backlash, but it usually only lasts the first year. Ms. Mullady asked if a Public Hearing was required. Mr. Lombardo stated that it was not but that some may feel the charge for Seniors is being “sprung on them”. Mr. Plotkin agreed. Mr. Seirup explained that they are still receiving a 50% discount. Mr. Gallucci felt that “\$10.00 for an entire season is very reasonable.” Following discussion, Mr. Plotkin asked that they vote one item at a time.

1. Jack Tetreau moved, and Dante Gallucci seconded to extend the collection of Daily Parking fees at Jennings and Penfield Beaches from 6 pm to 8 pm. No charge after 6 pm for Fireworks Event.

Motion passed unanimously.

2. Brian Nerreau moved, and Jack Tetreau seconded to require Beach Stickers at Jennings Beach on Family Movie Nights and to collect at the gate until 9:30 from those who do not have stickers.

Motion passed unanimously.

3. Brian Nerreau moved, and Alexa Mullady seconded to charge each car owned by a senior 62 years of age or older \$10.00. Motion passed 5-1 with E. Plotkin opposed

4. Brian Nerreau moved, and Bob Seirup seconded that Lake Pass holders are required to pay for a dump pass. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Bob Seirup moved, and Brian Nerreau seconded that any senior (62+) who does not own a car but requires a caregiver to gain access to the beach, must pay \$10 for a Hand Pass.

Motion passed 5-1 with E. Plotkin opposed

6. Brian Nerreau moved, and Jack Tetreau seconded that handicapped individuals must pay \$10 or \$20 per car, depending on age. Motion passed 5-1 with D. Gallucci opposed.

7. No Action was taken on the “M Sticker” at this time.

2. To hear an update report on the Boys/Girls Little League Fields: Mr. Lombardo reported that Little League is hoping to have the Gould Manor field sodded by next week. They have also been able to secure irrigation for the entire field from Aqua Lawn through a payment plan. B. Seirup suggest that some people believe that the project is being done by the Town and that sodding and irrigation may cause issues. He suggested that perhaps a sign stating that improvements are being done by American Little League would be a good idea. J. Tetreau will call Dave Pierpont and ask him to have a sign erected and also to ask for the newspapers to write an article about the project. G. Lombardo believes that they may be able to play on it in late May or early June.

Mr. Lombardo reported that the Girl’s softball field on the Parsell’s property is now in construction. Approx. 50% of the work is done. You can’t see the field from the road at all. There is still a lawsuit pending and a hearing is scheduled for Nov. 30.

3. To hear an update report on Tennis Center Renovation Plan Report: Mr. Lombardo reported that test pits were done last week and that he plans to meet with Mr. Gocke after Thanksgiving to finalize the contract. He had hoped the building would be down by now. Mr. Lombardo will not be raising the Tennis Center rates this next summer due to inconvenience to the members, but the following year they should be raised because the operation is losing money.

VI. BD. OF EDUCATION REPORT: No Report.

VII. DIRECTOR’S REPORT: Mr. Lombardo reported:

- He will be bringing the budget to the Commission in December.
- He asked the Commission to share their thoughts about an issue regarding Special Recreation bussing to the Summer Playground program. It has come to his attention that the bussing fees have gone from \$23K a year or so ago to almost \$40K this year to bus children with Special needs from their homes or Summer School to the Spec. Recreation Playground Program. While he does not want to change the program in any detrimental way, he believes that \$40K is an exorbitant amount to pay in bussing 40 students. He is having the Sp. Rec. Dir. canvas the parents to see what their needs are; if they would prefer no bussing and start the program at 9am rather than 10am. The Commission members did not

want to stop the bussing which they felt would be a hardship on the families. Mr. Nerreau thought that perhaps the earlier, extra hour might be of more importance to the families than the bussing. A. Mullady felt that she could ask State Rep, Brenda Kupchick about grants and Jack Tetreau felt that he could ask John McKinney. Ms. Mullady also felt that if the program is required in a student's PPT then BOE should be paying the bussing costs. Mr. Lombardo will report back after he has spoken with the BOE and his Spec. Rec. Dir. as well as First Student bus company. For now, he'll budget as though they will be bussed at the Dept's expense as in the past.

- He reported that Penfield Pavilion is renting well. The Jersey barrier on the waterside of the building has been placed there by DPW to prevent flooding and a more permanent solution will be coming in the spring. There are still some issues before the Building Cttee. will sign off on the building, HVAC issues and some acoustical issues. He added that there will be a slight increase in that budget due to the increase in maintenance needed before and after parties. The parking lot will be completed in the spring. Rich White is looking into getting a STEEP grant to assist in that.

VIII. **PROGRAM REPORT:** - No report provided this evening.

Chairman Plotkin reminded the members that next month's agenda will include the budgets as well as the election of officers and approving the yearly meeting calendar. A holiday get-together will take place following the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the Commission, Bob Seirup *moved*, and Jack Tetreau *seconded* to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m. *Motion passed unanimously.*