

TOWN OF FAIRFIELD
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Minutes of December 14, 2011

A meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission of the Town of Fairfield was held on Wednesday, December 14, 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; Barbara Rifkin; Robert Seirup; Alexa Mullady; Jack Tetreau and Jessica Gerber

ABSENT: Brian Nerreau

ALSO PRESENT: G. Lombardo, Director of Parks and Recreation; S. Kiraly, Asst. Director of Parks and Recreation and First Selectman, Michael Tetreau

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

Due to the First Selectman's schedule, the Commission agreed to hear Mr. Tetreau who had come to address the Commission regarding their recent action pertaining to Beach Stickers.

See Old Business 1. Beach Sticker Fees

I. **Act on Minutes of Nov 16, 2011:** J. Tetreau *moved*, and B. Seirup *seconded* to approve the meeting minutes as written. **In Favor:** Ellery Plotkin; Robert Seirup; Alexa Mullady; Dante Gallucci; Jack Tetreau **Opposed:** (None). **Abstention:** B. Rifkin and J. Gerber *Motion passes 5-0-2.*

Act on Minutes of Special Meeting Nov 29, 2011: Bob Seirup *moved*, and A. Mullady *seconded* to approve the meeting minutes as written. **In Favor:** Ellery Plotkin; Robert Seirup; Alexa Mullady; J. Gerber **Opposed:** (None). **Abstention:** J. Tetreau; Dante Gallucci and B. Rifkin *Motion passes 4-0-3*

II. COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Kathy McPadden- Change location of approved Memorial bench - Joan Ryan explained that Ms. McPadden had visited Ye Yacht Yard with Marina, Mgr. Robin Bimmel and both agreed that there was not a suitable location for a bench. She later asked Mr. Lombardo if it would be possible to place a memorial bench on Beach Rd. on the island across from Fairfield East Cemetery. Mr. Lombardo spoke to Rich White who agreed to the location. Mr. Seirup commented that he had recently had a brief conversation with Ms. McPadden and she indicated that she was not really pleased with the alternate location and really preferred to have the bench at Ye Yacht Yard. Commission members felt that they wanted Mr. Lombardo to speak to both Robin Bimmel and Ms. McPadden further.

B. Rifkin *moved*, and A. Mullady *seconded* to table the request until the members receive additional information. *Motion passed unanimously.*

III. PUBLIC INPUT - None

Chairman Plotkin distributed the Standards of Conduct to all the members and went over the basic rules of Commissions and their members.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

1. Skate Rink Proposal at H. Smith Richardson – Craig Curley, chairman of the Golf Commission, was present to discuss a possible partnership that he and Mr. Lombardo had been discussing. The Golf Commission is hoping to renovate the clubhouse, and parking lot at H. Smith Richardson and have requested \$3.3 million in bonding for the possible project. If this eventually is approved, he would like to create an outdoor skating rink at the same time that could be used not only for families and open skate time but hopefully for leagues and school teams. He likened it to the removable Westport rink at Longshore Inn. Because the infrastructure is already there; restrooms, patio, parking lot and restaurant, it

would be a less complicated project. He would also like a cover to ensure use in bad weather. Cost estimates are \$700K. He understands that this project would need to generate revenue and he'd like to partner with Parks & Recreation to make it happen. The present H. Smith Richardson concession, Brennan's Shebeen, is also very interested in the idea. Several schematic plans were distributed for the Commission to see location options. One key to success is having teams/leagues commit to playing there. All Commissioners were very interested in the possible venture and mentioned Scouts, PAL and others who may be pleased with such a project as well. No action was taken.

2. Election of Officers – Mr. Plotkin asked Mr. Lombardo to conduct the election. Mr. Lombardo called for nominations from the floor.

Motion: B. Rifkin *moved*, and A. Mullady *seconded* to re-elect Ellery Plotkin as Chairman.

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion: B. Seirup *moved*, and D. Gallucci *seconded* to re-elect Jack Tetreau as Secretary.

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion: A. Mullady *moved*, and B. Rifkin *seconded* to re-elect Dante Gallucci as Vice-Chairman.

Motion passed unanimously.

3. Approve 2012 Meeting Calendar –

Motion: B. Seirup *moved*, and J. Tetreau *seconded* to approve the 2012 Meeting Calendar as presented (see attached). *Motion passed unanimously.*

4. Review and Vote on 2012-13 budgets – Mr. Lombardo presented all three of the budgets.

Penfield- A 9.4% increase due mainly to seasonal payroll anticipating the year-round pavilion and a .25 increase for summer staff and \$6K for a Winter Director. He anticipates \$325K in revenue from the whole complex.

Parks & Recreation – 6.2% increase The increases are mainly attributed to the Spec. Rec. program that has seen more hours and also in the Rental and Storage line item where the busing for the Spec. Rec. program is paid from. A. Mullady remarked that she had spoken to Rep. Brenda Kupchick regarding the state funding for the busing and was told that there is no money there. She asked that Mr. Lombardo obtain more information as to the possibility that BOE should be paying for the busing of children whose PPT states that they should attend the Summer Camp program. Mr. Lombardo will do so, and will also speak to the Kennedy Center at the suggestion of Rep. Tony Hwang.

B. Rifkin remarked that she remains concerned about the Skate Park and its safety and security. She wondered if more staffing money should be added there. Mr. Lombardo stated that he has staff there into late fall but now will not staff again until spring. While he understands it gets year-round use, he can't justify having someone there on the off-chance that a skater comes to use it during the winter months.

Waterfront- The budget is flat as he moved monies within the budget. He explained that Sue Kiraly has helped to reduce mailing and printing costs through her work in selling the beach stickers online. Mr. Lombardo also credited Steve Berecz the Waterfront Director for his hiring such professional guards who had a few emergencies this summer and responded extremely well. He projects \$1,456,500 in revenue.

He explained that these budgets are still subject to change as the Town bodies review them.

Motion: B. Rifkin *moved*, and J. Tetreau *seconded* to approve the Penfield, Recreation and Waterfront Budgets for 2012-13. *Motion passed unanimously.*

V. OLD BUSINESS:

1. To hear and act upon Beach Sticker Fees: First Selectman, Michael Tetreau addressed the Commission to ask them to reconsider one aspect of the recent vote that they took regarding charging senior citizens \$10 for their beach stickers. He asked that the Commission consider not charging the seniors who are receiving assistance from the Town in the form of tax relief, heat assistance and the like. B. Seirup explained that they did consider this group but felt that Penfield Beach and Lake Mohegan were still free options for them. Mr. Tetreau agreed that it is important to better publicize the free stickers but he felt that the connection to the Transfer Station makes it necessary for them to pay, when in fact the

Town is giving them assistance and this seems counterintuitive. G. Lombardo explained that the Department currently gives a reduced rate to those joining the Fitness Center who go through Social Services and prove need. The department also provides reduced or free programs as well to those who receive free or reduced lunch through the BOE. This policy, if adopted, would be strictly for beach stickers. S. Kiraly provided a report (see attached) showing that 1587 people would fall into this category. She added that she would figure out a way to make this happen if the Commission made the policy. She added that some households have several cars. The members agreed that only one sticker per household should be free.

Motion: B. Seirup *moved*, and A. Mullady *seconded* to reopen the discussion of Beach Sticker Fees. *Motion passed unanimously.*

Motion: A. Mullady *moved*, and J. Tetreau *seconded* to provide one free All Beaches Sticker per household to Senior citizens 62 and older who qualify for Senior tax relief and/or Social Service program relief.

Motion passed unanimously.

2.To hear an update report on the Boys/Girls Little League Fields: Mr. Lombardo reported that the Gould Manor field looks very good and that Scott Bartlett has been very involved in making sure the field is rebuilt properly since his DPW staff will have to maintain it.

Mr. Lombardo also reported that the Girl's softball field on the Parsell's property is moving along and may open to play in August or Sept. He added that the lawsuit being brought against the Town by the neighbors has since been dropped.

3. To hear an update report on Tennis Center Renovation Plan Report: Mr. Lombardo reported that the plan is still moving along. They anticipate removal of the building and ground-breaking in March, or earlier if weather permits. He added that due to the inconveniences of limited parking and possibly one fewer court due to the construction, there will be no fee increases this summer.

VI. **BD. OF EDUCATION REPORT:** Jessica Gerber reported that on the previous night the BOE had voted to do away with the February vacation week and reduce it to a 4 day weekend attached to President's Day. She also reported that the BOE voted to endorse a Parent's Guide to Talking to Kids about Drug, Alcohol and Smoking.

VII. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** Mr. Lombardo reported: The Tree Lighting and the Breakfast with Santa were both great successes this year. Mr. and Mrs. Tom Flynn were nominated and chosen as the first couple to light the tree.

VIII. **PROGRAM REPORT:-** S. Kiraly reported that the next brochure would be mailed on Jan 11, 2012 and registration would take place on Feb. 1, 2012.

Chairman Plotkin let the Commission know that there is a vacancy on the Commission after Bob McMaster decided not to stay on for another term. If anyone has suggestions or knows of someone who would like to serve, please contact him or Mr. Lombardo.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the Commission, B. Rifkin *moved*, and A. Mullady *seconded* to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m. *Motion passed unanimously.*