

TOWN OF FAIRFIELD
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Minutes of October 24, 2012

A meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission of the Town of Fairfield was held on Wednesday, October 24, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. at the Eunice Postol Parks & Recreation Dept. Fairfield, Connecticut 06824.

PRESENT: Ellery Plotkin, Chairman; Dante Gallucci; Alexa Mullady; Robert Seirup; Patti Dyer; Barbara Rifkin; Jessica Gerber and Brian Nerreau

ABSENT: Jack Tetreau

ALSO PRESENT: Gerry Lombardo, Dir., Parks & Recreation,

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

I. Act on Minutes of September 19, 2012: B. Rifkin *moved*, and B. Nerreau *seconded* to approve minutes of 9/19/12 as written. *Motion passes 7-0-1.* B. Seirup abstained.

II. COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Greens Farms Plant Sale -Carol MacDonald, Ms. MacDonald, (1236 Hulls Hwy) asked that they have permission to use the Sherman Green on Sat., May 18, 2013 from 8am-2pm. B. Rifkin *moved*, and J. Gerber *seconded* to approve the request. *Motion passed unanimously.*

2. March of Dimes - Aubrey Keely of the March of Dimes requested approval for their annual walk on Sunday, April 28, 2012. They will leave from Penfield Beach Lot and will rent the pavilion for the day so no rental revenue would be lost. A. Mullady *moved*, and B. Rifkin *seconded* to approve the request. *Motion passed unanimously.*

3. Rabbi Stock- Menorah Lighting-Rabbi Stock was not present. The request will be heard next month.

4. Rabbi Landa- Rabbi Landa was present to request permission to hold their menorah lighting on Saturday, Dec. 8 at the Sherman Green from 6-7 pm.

D. Gallucci *moved*, and B. Rifkin *seconded* to approve the request. *Motion passed unanimously.*

(This request was heard later in the meeting,) J. Gerber was not present for this vote.)

5. Kristen Masterson – Wedding Tent at Greenfield Hill Congregational Church -Ms. Masterson and her fiancé Mark Mager were present to discuss the possibility of having their wedding reception on the Town property adjacent to the Greenfield Hill Church property. After discussion, and concerns about neighbors, liability and alcohol, Mr. Lombardo agreed to meet with them to see the exact location. He will address this issue at the November meeting. No action was taken.

6. Will Mraz Fairfield Youth Lacrosse Request- Will Mraz of 363 Oldfield Rd was present to ask that the Commission recognize a new lacrosse organization that he is spearheading in order that they can be in line to receive blanket permits. He has begun the same process with the Bd. of Ed in order to receive permits for their fields. The league he is proposing would consist of teams for both boys and girls in grades 1-8. There was a discussion as to why there is a need for an additional lacrosse league when Wakeman Boys & Girls Club has always handled this sport. Mr. Mraz stated that he feels that Wakeman's concentrates on their travel teams and often if a child doesn't make "travel" then they stop playing. He would like to be able to offer more access to the sport with more instruction. Mr. Lombardo also wanted to make sure that the league understands that the league will need to provide insurance and rosters and that being the last recognized will also mean the last to get permits after the others are satisfied. Mr. Mraz agreed. There was a short discussion as to the non-residents that Wakeman's allows and the possibility of "grandfathering". Mr. Lombardo stated that Wakeman's told his Department that there were no non-residents in their leagues. He will look into that. Mr. Gallucci let Mr. Mraz know that it would not be a good idea if he lets in non-residents. It would then put him

further down the list for getting fields. Ms. Mullady and Dyer both spoke in favor of this idea stating that the more access to the sport the better.

P. Dyer *moved*, and B. Rifkin *seconded* to approve the request. *Motion passed unanimously.*

III. PUBLIC INPUT – Kate Meyer, 167 Church Hill Rd., asked to speak to discuss overcrowding of Fairfield Beaches, specifically Penfield, which she cited suffers with garbage overflow, foul language and poor habits by some of the users. Ms. Meyer, a realtor in Town, stated that she feels many of the out of Town users are creating these problems. She wondered if the non-resident passes can be limited or if the Commission can raise the price of non-resident passes. Ms. Meyer had been emailing her concerns to Mr. Lombardo, First Selectman Tetreau and Ms. Dyer previous to this meeting. Mr. Lombardo came to the meeting prepared with some information and presented some facts and numbers (see attached) of non-resident usage and he let the Commission know that the hot water in the showers is provided by solar heat in the newly renovated pavilion. The Commission let Ms. Meyer know that since they took Federal money to build Penfield Pavilion back in the mid-seventies, they are required to give access to non-residents and charge them a “reasonable fee” and not more than double that charged to a resident. For that reason they give residents Penfield access for free. The Commissioners were understanding of the overcrowding issues and concerned by the means by which some people gain access to the beaches, but they were not prepared to increase fees without more information and they did not have a good answer for those who try to “cheat the system” by parking at nearby locations and walking in. Mr. Lombardo explained that he and the Police Department are looking to have a better presence at the beach to stop the alcohol use that has become more blatant. While the garbage is an issue, he sees it taking place after the employees go home for the day and that is a difficult problem to address. Mr. Gallucci stated that if they raise the daily fee, people will buy a season pass. Ms. Rifkin thought that the Town attorney needed to be consulted as to whether or not a limit can be placed on the number of non-resident season passes that may be sold. Mr. Lombardo stated that he will put this on the November agenda for further discussion.

IV. NEW BUSINESS – None

V. OLD BUSINESS:

1. To hear an update report on the Boys/Girls Little League Fields: Mr. Lombardo reported that the boys’ fields at Gould Manor are completed and the bond has been returned. The girls’ softball field is 99.9% complete with only the restrooms left to be completed.

2. To hear an update report on Tennis Center Renovation Plan Report: Mr. Lombardo reported that FIT has still not started on the building. They are planning to post a 30-day notification of the removal of the PCBs this week. They hope to have all mortgage documents signed by their bank within a week and then removal of the building happening prior to the end of the year. Commissioners were concerned with another delay and asked that Mr. Lombardo express their concerns to FIT.

3. Seasonal Ice Rink – Mr. Lombardo made a presentation to the Commission outlining the costs of putting in a temporary, rented ice rink as quoted from Magic Ice. (see attached). After seeing that the costs each year for something temporary would not be fiscally prudent, the members asked about the idea of purchasing a rink for the Town. Mr. Lombardo stated that he would investigate that option and address that at the Dec meeting.

V. BD. OF EDUCATION REPORT: J. Gerber reported that the BOE met on Oct 9 and discussed the fine turning of an internet use Policy that had become an issue since more and more students are bringing in their own devices. Ms. Gerber added that McKinley School is once again in racial imbalance and the Board is looking to add a preschool at Dwight with the hopes that some students that might go to McKinley will remain at Dwight. The Board also went over their goals for the year.

VI. DIRECTOR’S REPORT: G. Lombardo reported that he is working on budgets and will bring them to the November meeting.

VII. PROGRAM REPORT- Mr. Lombardo reported that the staff has been working on next summer's programs and would like to make the following recommendations:

- Summer Fun (K & 1) Go from a 4 day program to a 5 day program with a new fee of \$100.00 up from \$75.00 last year.
- Increase the fee for Playgrounds to \$175.00 up from \$160.00 last year.
- Offer an extended morning care for both programs, with a drop-off at 7:30 am. The additional cost would be \$30 per week.
- Offer a Teen Adventure Trip Week following the regular 6 weeks of summer programs. It would be for a limit of 50 students entering grades 6-12 and would include trips to places such as Six Flags, Brownstone Quarry and others. The commission agreed with all the suggestions.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the Commission, B. Rifkin *moved*, and D. Gallucci *seconded* to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m.

Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Ryan, Recording Secretary