

TOWN OF FAIRFIELD  
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
Minutes of June 5, 2013

A meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission of the Town of Fairfield was held on Wednesday, June 5, 2013 following the Public Hearing at the Jacky Durrell Pavilion. Fairfield, Connecticut 06824

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

ABSENT: Alexa Mullady; Jack Tetreau and Brian Nerreau

ALSO PRESENT: Gerry Lombardo, Dir., Parks & Recreation; Joe Michelangelo, Dir. Public Works, Robin Bimmel, Marina Mgr.; Public and Press

Chairman D. Gallucci called the meeting to order at 8:30p.m. immediately following the Public Hearing.

**I. Act on Minutes of May 15, 2013:** B. Rifkin *moved*, and E. Plotkin *seconded* to approve minutes of May 15 with the BOE report amended to read “Vacancies need to be filled” rather than “They need to be replaced” as suggested by J. Gerber. *Motion passes 6-0 0.*

**II. COMMUNICATIONS:**

**1. Chris Lyddy, Fairfield Police Department, Celebrate My Drive-** (see letter) Request for Oct 19 (raindate of 20<sup>th</sup>) at Sherman Green. In Mr. Lyddy’s his absence, Mr. Lombardo recommended approval of this previously run event.

**Motion** B. Seirup *moved*, and B. Rifkin *seconded* to approve the request.

*Motion passed unanimously.*

**2. Chad Czapla- Veteran’s Park Traffic Issue—(see letter)** Mr. Czapla, 350 Edward St. was present to present a petition asking that, Edward St., a street that currently goes through the middle of Veteran’s Park be closed to traffic. He added that this will be going before the Police Commission but he wanted the support of the Parks & Recreation Commission. DPW and Fire are also doing a comprehensive study in addition to the traffic study that the Police are doing. He explained that balls are hit from the softball field into the road, that children are crossing the road from the playground to the field making the area extremely dangerous. He hopes that they can keep the pavement and make it a place for rollerblading, biking, and keep it available to open for incidents and storms evacuations, etc. He is prepared for a long process but wanted to make this his first stop. Ms. Dyer let the Commission know that she went to the area to see the issue and while she was there she spoke to a Police Officer who frequently patrols the area. He mentioned that they Police and Fire use this as a route to get from one side of the beach area to another quickly. Mr. Czapla understood that this was the case but felt that an alternative might be found in light of how dangerous it is presently. Mr. Plotkin agreed that it is highly unusual to have a road go through a park and finds it difficult to believe that it would be such an inconvenience to find another route. He added that the idea of emergency vehicles flying through makes it seem even worse. Chairman Gallucci stated that while it seems like it might be easy to find an alternative, they have to rely on the Police and Fire to keep the area safe, and they have to go along with their recommendation. Joe Michelangelo stated that several roads have been closed for bridge repair and people have found alternatives and made due. Mr. Seirup stated that he was surprised that this issue, pertaining to a public road, would come to the Commission at all. He suggested that they state that the road has no purpose to the park and that they would prefer that it not be open.

**No action was taken.**

**3. James Salce, Boat Launching Ramp Permit for Off-Loading Clams – (see letter)** Mr. Salce of 300 Berkley Rd. was present to request a permit for his commercial business to off load clams at the So. Benson Marina ramp. He complained that oystermen have no access and they can’t run a business. He stated that he has had a ramp sticker for two prior years but this year had been refused. Previously he offloaded at T dock and it took about 35-45 minutes. R. Bimmel, Marina Manager stated that the rules,

see below do not permit such offloading anywhere but Ye Yacht yard. Mr. Salce said this is not an accessible ramp for him. It is too steep and not strong enough.

*(d) Lobstermen and other commercial fishermen may use pertinent Town dock and other related facilities in specifically designated areas upon approval of appropriate application to and the payment of fees established by the Parks & Recreation Commission. Payment of such fees shall be made within 30 days of due date prescribed by the Parks & Recreation Commission. Failure to do so and violation(s) of relevant Commission rules and regulations pertaining to proper use of those Town facilities shall result in prohibition of use of those facilities and/or fines and/or impounding of the offending boat.*

Mr. Bimmel stated that he should not have been given ramp tags previously and it was the keen eye of a staff member this year who noted that it was a 36 foot commercial vessel. She questioned it and brought it to Mr. Bimmel's attention. The Police had also contacted him to question this activity. Mr. Bimmel added that the rules say that the Commission must give approval and set the fee. He feels it will "open a can of worms" to many commercial operations, including fishing and diving boats. He added, "Captain's Cove is a different animal, they can handle it." Mr. Salce said he can't access Captain's Cove at low tide. Mr. Michelangelo remarked that the Commission needs to consider the 600 boaters presently at the Marina and how this might affect them. Mr. Lombardo agreed and added that we don't have a fee for commercial vessels doing business on Town property. Ms. Dyer suggested if this is not something we want to provide then the Rules and Regulations should be revised. Ms. Rifkin was torn as she feels they should assist small businesses whenever possible.

*John Pintauro, 5 Shirley Place – Stated that while he is sensitive to Mr. Salce's situation, the Commission needs to be careful with their decision as it may open the door to Day fishing boat trips, bait companies, netting fishermen, etc. It puts a stress on the Marina. Perhaps he added they may wish to put a limit to how many of these types of permits are sold.*

Mr. Gallucci asked for a sub-Committee to review this. B. Rifkin, E. Plotkin and R. Seirup agreed to be on that sub-committee.

No Action was taken.

**4. Neil Corcoran- In-Water Deadline Exception – (see letter)** Mr. Corcoran of 321 Fogg Wood Rd. asked that the Commission make an exception to the deadline for hi renewal. He missed the deadline but felt that he was not afforded the three opportunities that others receive prior to losing his slip. Mr. Corcoran who had been on the waitlist for 7 years and had had his slip for one year admitted to receiving a renewal letter but did not act on it. He then received a card to pick up a certified letter at the Commerce Post Office. He made some attempts but was not successful and when he did get there the letter had already been returned to the Town. He didn't know what Department it came from and couldn't follow-up. He was told by the Post Office, however, incorrectly, that it would be sent again. Finally he received no phone call, however, Mr. Bimmel assured him that he made a call and was told that the number was out of order. Mr. Corcoran states that he has had this number since moving to Fairfield. For these reasons, he feels he wasn't given all the opportunities afforded to others and hopes that the Commission will make an exception. He added that "each circumstance is different and that's why you are here."

**Motion** B. Rifkin *moved*, and E. Plotkin *seconded* to recognize that Mr. Corcoran has only had his slip for one year, was not completely aware of the procedure and should be given a slip if there is one available after others who have been contacted respond.

*Motion failed 1-5*

Mr. Corcoran accepted the outcome and asked if they would consider placing him at the top of next year's list. Mr. Gallucci stated that he would need to come to another meeting. Finally, Mr. Corcoran added that in this day and age, perhaps, texts and emails might be a more appropriate way of contacting people.

**III. PUBLIC INPUT** – Chairman Gallucci let the Director know that the water fountain at Lower Tunxis Hill Baseball field is once again not working and asks that it be repaired before the hot summer begin.

**IV. NEW BUSINESS** – None

## **V. OLD BUSINESS:**

### **1. Accept Donation of Playground from NJ Firefighters- VOTE Following Public Hearing**

Ms. Dyer stated that while she is pleased with the offer, she is concerned that there isn't another location, but she will go along with the others if they chose to go with this location. She feels the process has been a bit rushed and that they haven't done their due diligence. Mr. Gallucci is concerned that if the Commission votes down the location, they will lose the offer. Mrs. Rifkin believes that it is a great location and the Director has approved it.

**Motion:** B. Rifkin *moved*, and B. Seirup *seconded* to accept the donation of the playground from the NJ Firefighters in honor of Jessica Rekos at the location of Penfield Beach.

**VOTE:** *Motion passed unanimously 6-0-0*

### **2. Deadline for In-Water Renewal – VOTE Following Public Hearing**

**Motion** B. Seirup *moved*, and J. Gerber *seconded* to leave the date of February 15 as the hard and fast deadline for slip renewals for in-water boats.

*Motion passed 5-1 ( B. Rifkin opposed)*

**3. To hear an update report on Storm Sandy Damage:** G. Lombardo reported that he and Joe Michelangelo will be meeting with the hired engineers on Friday, June 14 for a report on the cost options and recommendations. A summary report will then be given to the BOS on June 19 at 4:30. Mr. Lombardo stated that if action is necessary by this Commission in order to get the process moving then he will ask for a Special Meeting,

**4. To hear and an update report from the Ice Rink Sub-Committee** –The sub-committee has not yet met.

**5. To hear an update report on Tennis Center Renovation Plan Report:** Mr. Lombardo reported that the FIT group had evidently hit another obstacle, this time with Conservation but they believed that they will be starting demolition this week. The members expressed their displeasure at the length of time it was taking to get this project starting, considering the fact that it was rushed through the RTM years ago telling them that time was of the essence.

## **V. BD. OF EDUCATION REPORT:** J. Gerber reported:

- The Grade 6-10 Math Curriculum and approved on May 21.
- The FLHS and Riverfield renovations were approved by the BOF and will go to the RTM on June 24.
- Mr. Title presented adjustments to the budget in order to come in line with the approved budget. They were approved.
- A vote on Policies was postponed until the next meeting.

## **VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** G. Lombardo reported:

- Mr. Lombardo let the Commission know that Mother of Jack and Mike Tetreau passed away and services would be at Shaughnessy Funeral Home on Friday with a mass on Sat.

## **VII. PROGRAM REPORT-** No Report

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business to come before the Commission, R. Seirup *moved*, and J. Gerber *seconded* to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 p.m.

*Motion passed unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,  
Joan Ryan, Recording Secretary