

TOWN OF FAIRFIELD
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Minutes of August 21, 2013

A meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission of the Town of Fairfield was held on Wednesday, August 21, 2013 at 7:00pm the Eunice Postol Parks & Recreation Dept. Fairfield, Connecticut 06824

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

ABSENT: Patti Dyer and Jessica Gerber

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

Chairman D. Gallucci called the meeting to order at 7:03p.m.

I. Act on Minutes of July 17, 2013:– Ms. B. Rifkin *moved*, and J. Tetreau *seconded* to approve minutes as written.

Motion passes unanimously.

Mr. James Salce -300 Berkley Rd stated that the June 5 minutes of the regular meeting had noted “high” tide when it should be “low” tide. Ms. Ryan stated that while the minutes were already approved, she would make the correction for the record and send them to the Town Clerk.

****Donation Presentation by the Mom’s Club of Fairfield North-** Three members of a Mother’s Club from Easton and Fairfield made a presentation of a \$1300 check for two new pieces of toddler equipment for Lincoln Park. They will work with Mr. Lombardo to obtain and install the equipment.

II. COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Jane Guenter–Greens Farm Garden Club Plant Sale - Director Approved–No Action Taken

2. Dennis Rocheleau- Beach Sticker Complaint- Mr. Gallucci read the attached letter for the record. – Mr. Lombardo explained that Mr. Rocheleau had other options for getting his sticker such as online and mail. If a person has a new car they can mail in a copy of the new registration along with the application that is online. No Action was taken.

3. Lt. Jim Perez, Fairfield Police – 5K Memorial Run/Walk for Michael Fedak –Mr. Lombardo explained that if approved, this will take place on Sept. 21 at 8am. The Police will supervise at no cost. Ms. Mullady asked where the funds will go. Mr. Lombardo was not sure but felt that the Police would handle it properly.

Motion: A. Mullady *moved*, and B. Rifkin *seconded* to approve the request.

Motion passed unanimously.

4. P.J. Hoffman-Film Screening – Mr. Hoffman of 1735 Fairfield Beach Rd. was present to ask for permission to show a screening at Sherman Green on the evening of Sept 21 of the documentary he made depicting a look at conservation in the Peruvian Amazon. He was asked to place the screen at the corner facing the gazebo so that it would not distract drivers and also the car lights would not impact his film. The purpose is purely educational. He hopes to show it at many film festivals. Electricity is there however he would need to provide audio equipment.

Motion B. Rifkin *moved*, and J. Tetreau *seconded* to approve the event at Sherman Green.

Motion passed unanimously.

5. Marvin Dentz – Request to add Boat Slip Lift at his South Benson Marina Slip. – Mr. Marvin Dentz of 19 Cedarwood Lane and his attorney and family friend, Rick Ross were present to request permission to install a lift to be placed under their boat in the So. Benson Marina. It allows the boat to be up and out of the water and also makes the boat more stable for on and off access. Mr. Ross presented pictures of the apparatus (see attached) and also showed a short company video showing the lift. Mr. Ross explained that the Town has already permitted a lift for another boat several years ago but that this new generation of lifts is smaller, quieter and needs no electricity. It is not permanently fixed to the dock. It doesn't extend beyond the dock and needs no thrust. Mr. Lombardo explained that there is in fact one already at So. Benson that Mr. White and Mr. Bimmel allowed years ago however they were not pleased having it there and have permitted none since.

Officer Grant Dalling spoke stating that the only area he would consider as safe would be I-Dock the larger dock and that if it were there he would have no objection.

Mr. Mike Herrington of the Fairfield Boat Owners Assn. spoke stating that the one that is there was allowed as sort of an experiment and is “absolutely dangerous”. He agreed that none should be permitted anywhere other than I-Dock. Mr. Dentz does not yet own the device but offered to ask the company to allow him to bring it there for them to see. Mr. Gallucci asked that they submit a proposal with everything attached and it would go on the next month's agenda. In the meantime, Mr. Lombardo will examine the one currently at So. Pine Creek and will also attempt to get information from the Police, other boaters and other Harbor Masters to see if their Towns permit these devices. No Action was taken.

III. PUBLIC INPUT None

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Southport Beach Concession- Hunter King, the Southport Concessionaire was present as well as neighbors in the area to be heard regarding the future of the concession. Mr. Lombardo explained that Mr. King Purchased the damaged building for \$450 from the Town and is now asking that it be considered as a mobile concession and allowed to be placed on a trailer that can be moved away at the conclusion of each season. The discussion ensued as to what constitutes a “mobile concession” which is what the Commission agreed they wanted after the hurricane struck in 2012. Mr. Lombardo stated that because everything happened so quickly after the hurricane, there are no specifics or a contract in place regarding vending although Mr. King's contract extends to 2014. He added:

A. We don't know if we want that size of an operation and

B. We want a business that faces the beach, not the street. This trailered building would take up more parking spaces.

Mr. Gallucci remarked that it seems the Commission needs to define what “mobile” is and that they have a right to decide what they want in that location. Ms. Mullady stated that after the hurricane when this was discussed, it was her understanding that it would be a truck/cart that came and left each day. They all agreed that Temporary and Mobile are two different things. Mr. Richard King, the concessionaire's father spoke to say that they are blessed with extra room in the building (lifeguard area) and that they can have a quick disconnect and will meet all the necessary codes. It will be the same building in the same spot that has been there for 66 years.

The Public was invited to speak:

Sharylyn Klammer - 406 Harbor Rd. Asked that the Commission preserve the character and environment of the area. We all thought that a mobile structure meant it would come and go each day. She suggested one concessionaire meet the needs of several beaches and put up a schedule for each.

Lori Hashizume – 1059 Pequot Ave.- asked “that the Commission preserve the openness and the views that are free to all. We do not need a large concession stand, especially one that operates like a restaurant.”

Peggy Brenton – 55 Oxford Pl. – A member of the Sea Lodge of the Sasquanaug Assn. - Spoke in reference to the violations that the Kings Kitchen Concession has committed since it took over. They include:

- Closed many days
- Bright colored chairs and palm trees on the beach
- Illegal sandwich boards
- Hours of operation not posted.
- Prices much higher than what was included in their bid.
- Personal observation of a salad spinner landing on the floor and then being used without being cleaned.

Far beyond the 15 feet that is permitted.

She believes that these breaches in their contract should stand as a reason not to allow them to return the following year.

Ron Klammer – 406 Harbor Rd.- Spoke about a large teepee like structure that UI has placed on the premises.

Mr. Lombardo explained that this was temporary and hopes it is removed prior to next season when all electricity is returned.

*George Russell- 21 Oxford Rd–*reiterated what others mentioned and asked if the Commission had gone down to see what the Kings have created down there.

Mr. Lombardo responded to the neighbors by stating that when the Kings first came on the scene it was a change. “We now need to sit back and see what the Commission recommends for down there. We’ll then put that in the contract and the Kings or any other Concessionaire can see if that’s what they can work with to make a go of it”. Mr. Lombardo asked that, rather than creating a sub-committee for this, he be given the chance to work on the specifics and bring it back to them for their input. No Action was Taken.

2. Palamar Park Basketball – Mr. Lombardo reported that he and Mr. Nerreau had gone to a neighborhood meeting in June after there had been numerous complaints about trash, foul language and speeding cars in the area of the park and basketball hoops. The Police Dept. also sent a representative. Mr. Lombardo had mentioned that he mentioned taking down the hoops for a short time to see if the offending users might go elsewhere. He unfortunately forgot about this plan and then heard again from the neighbors and felt that before he did anything that he should bring the matter before the Commission. Mr. Jim Kucz0- 270 Palamar Dr. was present to outline the issues for the members, noting that the neighborhood mothers and children are now afraid to use the park. Mr. Gallucci remarked that he himself, as President of Ffld. National Little League has had numerous conversations with coaches as to the need for parents to watch their speed in the area.

There was lengthy discussion as to whether taking down the hoops is the answer and if they did that every time there were issues at a park when would it stop?

Selectman Kevin Kiley spoke on behalf of himself as a basketball player as well as a neighbor asking that the Commission give the neighbors some sort of help.

Motion E. Plotkin *moved*, and A. Mullady *seconded* to remove the basketball rims from Palamar Park for a month then place the item back on the agenda to decide on further action.

VOTE: In Favor: Mullady, Plotkin and Seirup

Against: Tetreau, Gallucci, Nerreau and Rifkin.

Motion was defeated.

Mr. Gallucci assured the audience that they are concerned about this issue and that he will contact the Police Dept. and also the Baseball League to enforce the regulations. He added that he believes a bigger Police presence is the answer.

A Sense of the body vote was unanimous giving Mr. Gallucci the authority to contact the Police and ask for assistance with this problem.

V. OLD BUSINESS:

1. Penfield Restoration and Repair Report- G. Lombardo reported that they are working up plans and hope to decide on the best concept and how much it will cost. However there are two teams; our Engineering team and the insurance company's engineering team. They will get together in the next 4 weeks to come up with an idea.

Mr. Gallucci attended a recent meeting with the two parties and remarked that he feels that the lowest priority is getting the building up in 2014 and he sees no sense of urgency. He discussed sending a letter to the Board of Selectmen. He wants to get the public behind it and send copies to the local media. Members were in agreement.

2. To hear an update report on Tennis Center Renovation Plan Report: Mr. Lombardo reported that the Beanery is 99.9% down. Materials are ordered and they are set to start construction in mid-September.

3. To hear and an update report from the Ice Rink Sub-Committee –Mr. Lombardo reported that he and some members of the sub-committee investigated a company that they believed might be a good fit up at HSR to place a rink. However, after that company looked into it further, they decided that it wasn't financially viable for them. The Town is not prepared to take the financial risk to he will continue to pursue this.

4. To hear and an update report from the Commercial Fishing Sub-Committee –R. Seirup reported that the sub-committee met again prior to this meeting and they gathered more information but are not yet ready to make a recommendation. Mr. Plotkin stated that he would like to be able to make a recommendation by October. There was a short discussion as to their issue of allowing a business in a recreational Marina at So. Benson and that Robin Bimmel had stated that with upgrades, Ye Yacht Yard would be an acceptable location for more of a working dock area. They will be meeting again prior to next month's meeting.

VI. BD. OF EDUCATION REPORT: No Report as Ms. Gerber was not present.

VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT: G. Lombardo reported:

- There have been tentative plans made to install the Sandy Ground for Angels Playground on Sept 13-15. Mr. Lombardo is concerned that there may be some issues with the Jacky Durrell events already scheduled and he is looking into changing the date to October after rental season. He will keep the Commission advised.
- There will be a neighborhood meeting to discuss options for repairing the Penfield Pavilion at the Jacky Durrell Pav. on Tuesday, Aug. 27 at 7pm. All are invited.
- He will be meeting next week with the Sasquanaug Neighborhood Assn. regarding the improvements at Ye Yacht Yard.
- He read the end of summer beach schedule to the Commission

- The parking lot lease with Mr. Fischel who has a large Sportsplex business behind the Parks & Recreation building has been renewed for another three years.
- The summer programs were all a huge success. The extended care program before camp was very well received.
- The Police gave a jet ski to be kept at Lake Mohegan for lifesaving reasons. The staff has been training on it and procedural guidelines are being written up.
- Marina Manager Robin Bimmel is retiring on August 30th.

VIII. PROGRAM REPORT- No Report.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the Commission, B. Rifkin moved, and E. Plotkin seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 p.m.

Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Joan Ryan, Recording Secretary