

**TOWN OF FAIRFIELD
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Minutes of February 19, 2020**

A meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission of the Town of Fairfield was held on Wednesday, February 19 at 7:00 p.m. at the Eunice Postal Recreation Center, Fairfield, Connecticut.

PRESENT: Scott Walker, Chairman; Brian Nerreau, Jamie Benton, David Weber, Chris McCoy, Mary Von Conta, Jessica Gerber and Caitlin Schmidt

ABSENT: Bridget McBride

ALSO: Anthony Calabrese, Dir. Parks & Recreation

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

I. ACT ON MINUTES OF: January 15, 2019 – Hearing no objections, the minutes were approved as written. (Ms. Gerber and Mr. Weber were not yet present).

II. COMMUNICATIONS: To hear and act upon:

A. Dylan R. O'Connor – Stratfield Village Assn. Fun Day at Owen Fish Park - Mr. O'Connor of 31 Lola Street was present to request approval for the 3rd Owen Fish Park Four Corners Revitalization Fundraiser on Saturday, September 12 with a rain date of September 13. All aspects of the event will mirror prior years. When asked about the revitalization project, Mr. Oconnor replied they hope to start work in the fall and will have raised close to \$100K. This may be the final year of the family Fun Day. The rain date was not previously requested or noted on the agenda.

Motion: B. Nerreau made a motion, seconded by J. Gerber to approve the request with the addition of a September 13 rain date as confirmed with the Department.

Vote: 7-0-1 (S. Walker abstained)

B. Juliann Hudson – Memorial Bench request - Ms. Hudson was not in attendance and the request was not considered.

C. John Calandriello – Fairfield Half Marathon approval amended to include beer giveaway Mr. Calandriello, 50 Beverly Lane was present to amend a previous request after Two Roads Brewery offered to donate two beers per runner over the age of 21 (see distribution plan). The members asked about the logistics of distribution, and whether or not an exception had ever been given for alcohol at the beach. Ms. Gerber and Mr. Calabrese gave examples of other races that offer beer. Mr. Calandriello stated that the truck will be parked in the circular driveway and will be fenced in for security. Bartenders will be on alert to any underage situations but members asked that runners be alerted to bring IDs just in case. Mr. Calandriello let the members know that he also spoke to the Police who had no issues.

Motion: B. Nerreau *moved*, and J. Gerber *seconded* to approve the request.

Vote: *7-0-1 (Walker Abstained)*

III. PUBLIC INPUT: None

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Parks & Recreation Department request for exception to “no dogs” rule in parks in order to hold “Barks and Recreation event on June 13, 2020 – Mr. Calabrese presented the Department’s plan (see attached) to hold a dog-centered event on the Town Green complex in

collaboration with Pet Pantry. The Town Clerk will also open her offices to renew pet licenses. This will be a free event likened to ones in New Canaan and Westport and there are expectations of very large crowds coming and going. Members discussed the plans for parking and cleanup of pet waste.

Motion: C. McCoy *moved*, and J. Benton *seconded* to approve the request.

Vote: 7-0-1 (*Walker Abstained*)

VI. To hear and act upon information in Reports:

A. Board of Education Report: Ms. Gerber reported that the Board approved the budget from the Superintendent for a 3.9 % increase over last year. It now heads to the other Town bodies. Several non-recurring Capital Projects were approved. Possible redistricting was discussed for the 2022-23 school year in order to address racial imbalance and space issues. There will be a Town Hall Meeting on March 5 for residents to ask questions and give feedback.

B. Director's Report: Mr. Calabrese also reported on marina news from Marina Manager, Justin Cathcart:

2020 Slip Renewal Deadline was today:

At deadline, the Marina office has processed 529 applications.

301 Small

53 Medium

175 Large/Premium.

Three partial applications were accepted and they will be assessed a late fine. Twenty-two are not returning which leaves approximately forty who have not communicated and will lose their slips. This represents a 10% loss in slip holders.

Dredging:

The dredging of the marina channel has been successfully completed. The sand at Jennings Beach will be raked and will blend a little better as beach season gets closer.

Mr. Calabrese presented a written report summarized below:

From the Department: We've recently rolled out our new initiative, the Fairfield Green Team. This new volunteer group will meet once per month for a couple of hours to clean some of our wonderful parks.

A large turnout is expected for these clean ups.

The programmers are also adding three large scale community programs to our repertoire. A Summer Camp Open House is taking place at Penfield Pavilion on March 11th. This event will have over 30 different camp vendors on site. We also have our St. Paddy's Day concert event with the Keltic Kick at Penfield Pavilion on March 17th. The staff is hoping to have local Instagram celebrity "The Shirley Temple King" in next week to help promote this event by reviewing our own green Shamrock Shirley Temple. Finally, looking to create a signature event, we will be hosting our inaugural Beach Bunny 5K and Easter Egg Scramble at Jennings Beach on April 11th. 200 runners have already registered.

The First Selectwoman has requested that we close Gould Manor baseball fields until further notice. Tighe & Bond, the Town's Licensed Environmental Professional has stated we need to remediate much of the ballfields due to finding arsenic at higher than residential levels. The contamination that they are finding elevated levels of does not seem to be fill pile related. Tighe & Bond, has confirmed that the soil samples at Penfield Pavilion and the parking lot across Fairfield Beach Road comply with Connecticut DEEP's cleanup standards. Some debris samples from underneath the building, in an area that is inaccessible to the public, contained asbestos and will require remediation at a later date. Tighe & Bond also performed air-exposure sampling at the Pavilion and concluded there is no public health risk. At this time, there are no plans to complete work that would have an impact on the use of the building or require rescheduling events at Penfield Pavilion.

The First Selectwoman will be releasing her budget shortly. It is not yet known if our budget will be adopted as it was approved in December, or if there will be changes. Mr. Calabrese will keep you posted as it moves through the budget cycle. The two non-recurring capital projects (Tomlinson Tennis Courts and Golf Course 10 year Capital) have been approved by the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance. Mr. Calabrese presented to the RTM last night and they will vote on the projects next Monday evening. In March, he plans to begin the process of presenting the Roger Ludlowe Middle School Turf project as a capital project to the BOS. He already presented to the Board of Education and received their support as a first step in the process. Finally, Mr. Calabrese reported that the HSR clubhouse is moving along nicely and is tentatively ahead of schedule. He also discussed ideas for a Challenger Field, similar to Miracle Field, which could be created with private funding for those with special needs. Mr. McCoy suggested he look into the Adaptive Sports Foundation.

VII. GOOD OF THE ORDER – None

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Joan C. Ryan, Recording Secretary