

**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING  
Minutes of the February 18, 2015 Regular Meeting**

**DRAFT**

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A meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was held on February 18, 2015, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor Operations Conference Room, Stamford Government Center.

**In attendance were:**

Commissioners:            Joe Andreana  
                                      Dave Winston  
                                      Lyda Ruijter  
                                      Althea Brown  
                                      Beth Cooper

Staff:                            Laurie Albano  
                                      Kevin Murray

Guests:                        Rick Redniss – Lione Park  
  
                                      R. Pratt – Lione Park  
  
                                      Mike Cotela – Lione Park  
  
                                      Bob Hartt – Lione Park  
  
                                      Terri Smith – Franklin Street Works  
  
                                      Bonnie Wattle – Franklin Street Works

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:37 p.m. by Joe Andreana, Chair.

**Review of the January 21, 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes.**

Mr. Winston made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Ms. Ruijter

Unanimously Approved

### **Old Business**

#### **Kevin Murray – Fee Increases.**

- Request for approval from Director Orgera for fee of \$10 per vehicle for Special Event parking (Picnic Permits excluded) during the period the parks are open from May 1<sup>st</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup>. No more than 200 vehicles will be allowed at any Special Event.
- Commissioners would like a more detailed plan of how it will be implemented. Who is going to issue the \$10 Special Event Permits and how is it going to be enforced?

Mr. Winston made a motion to send request back to Internal Committee for further discussion.

Seconded by Ms. Ruijter

Unanimously Approved

#### **Approval of Revised Special Event Application.**

Ms. Brown made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Mr. Winston

Unanimously Approved

#### **Rick Redniss – Renovation Plans for the West Side of Lione Park.**

- Mr. Redniss requested the help of the Commission to move forward with the renovation plans for the west side of Lione Park.
- The Boys & Girls Club leases part of the park from the City for parking. Two and a half years ago, Mr. Redniss presented the Commission a plan to expand the parking.
- After doing a study, it was decided that the best way to hold on to teens was to create a separate gymnasium/teen center on the Boys & Girls Club property. In order to do this they will put all of their shared parking with the park. The hours of operation and seasonal operation work perfectly with the public demand for that parking.
- After coming in front of the Commission in 2012, they met with the Mayor and other Boards, extended their lease area and lease thru around 2046.
- In 2012 they proposed two Basketball Courts and one Tennis Court that will overlay with Basketball, so it could go either way. It was also agreed that they would build

two Sand Volleyball Courts and if they had more money they would do more.

- They will be launching a \$12.5 Million campaign to do the new building and to do the renovations in the park. They also received a Grant from the State.
- Tonight they would like to discuss re-doing the parking one more time, expanding their lease area and adding another ½ Million Dollars for the project.
- The proposed layout concept was approved by the Parks & Recreation Commission in 2012 with the understanding that they would come back to finalize the design.
- Mr. Redniss presented the Commission the updated plans.
- The West Side NRZ wants lights.
- The Mayor is very concerned about lights in the small parking lot.
- Cal Ripkin is willing to donate \$200,000 towards an artificial turf field.
- There were discussions about adding a second drinking fountain and benches.
- Mr. Redniss has learned that there are soil issues in the park. The cost for the remediation of the soils is \$100,000 to \$200,000. The City has \$180,000 in an account that could be earmarked for this, at one point in time it appeared to be earmarked for this purpose. Mr. Redniss proposed that the City gives them the \$180,000 and they will do the remediation while they are doing all the work in the park. Mr. Redniss is trying to work this out.
- The original plan called for relocation of the existing playground equipment in order to accommodate the parking. As the shared parking has been expanded larger, they feel it's appropriate to replace all of the playground equipment. They will not have enough money to do the Splash Pad.
- Mr. Redniss presented and discussed the plans with the Commission. There is an area that could be a multipurpose artificial turf area, two Sand Courts, two Basketball Courts. They did not overlay the Tennis, there is no long term people saying that they should have Tennis there, so it was not included, it was left as an open play area, benches, lights and trees were added.
- Mr. Redniss showed the Commission the "Hot Spots" that need remediation.
- The City will identify the green space that it will be using to balance the extra pavement.
- Mr. Winston supports the Boys & Girls Club and thinks this project has potential. We need to figure out when the exchange pave space and green space will be identified

and when will it get accomplished in this process.

- The Commission expressed their concerns regarding artificial turf. The Commission stated that they would prefer grass over artificial turf because of health concerns and for the people that would like to use the park for a picnic and would like to sit on the grass, which you can't do on artificial turf during hot days.
- Mr. Andreana does not see a problem approving all of the plans, except for the type of field, with the provision that the remediation advance. The Commission will make this recommendation that the City proceed with coordinating the remediation plans with the implementation of the Boys & Girls Club program.
- Mr. Redniss asked that the Commission make a recommendation to streamline the process of the remediation of the bad soils in the park.
- City should address the remediation spots immediately. Someone from the Engineering Department should attend the next Parks & Recreation Commission meeting to discuss the remediation of the hot spots at Lione Park.

Mr. Winston made a motion to approve Boys & Girls Club Plan as presented with exception of an artificial turf field.

Seconded by Ms. Brown

Unanimously Approved

### **New Business**

Mr. Winston made a motion to add the Franklin Street Works Flag Project to the New Business Agenda.

Seconded by Ms. Ruijter

Unanimously Approved

### **Bonnie Wattles – Franklin Street Works – Request for Approval for Flag Installation at Columbus Park, Latham Park and Scalzi Park.**

- Ms. Bonnie Wattles requested approval to install art flags by Australian artist Jon Campbell at Columbus Park, Latham Park and Scalzi Park.
- **Latham Park:** will be using decorative lamppost with metal bracket. The banners are going to be vinyl. They have identified 8 lampposts they want to use, 2' w x 3' h (vertical). Date of install March 11, 2015.
- **Columbus Park:** 12 Nylon Flags, 2' w x 3' h (vertical) on 6 lampposts, mounted on existing brackets at Columbus Park. 6 Nylon Banners, 2' w x 3' h (vertical) on Washington Boulevard side of the park, on 3 lampposts with metal brackets. Date of install March 11, 2015.

- **Scalzi Park:** 8 Vinyl Banners 5' w x 3' h (horizontal) attached to fence at entrance facing Bridge Street. Date of install March 11, 2015.
- They will provide the materials and requested help from the City to install. Mr. Murray stated that it was agreed that the City will help with the installation/removal, and get reimbursed the time.
- Ms. Wattles stated that they will not need help from the City to install the Flags at Scalzi Park. Mr. Andreana stated that Ms. Wattles still needs the go ahead from Mr. Murray and needs to contact him.
- Ms. Brown requested that in case of wind they check on the Flags to make sure they are still secure.

Ms. Ruijter made a motion to approve request based on setting up in March 2015 and removal by June 14, 2015.

Seconded by Mrs. Cooper

Unanimously Approved

### **Staff Reports**

- Mr. Andreana stated that Staff Reports will not be mailed out to Commissioners prior to the meeting. Staff will go through the reports and any questions should be left to the end. Commissioners should not be voting on anything during the Staff Reports. Anything that has to be voted on has to go on the Agenda as an Agenda item or the Commission can recommend that it be brought up as an Agenda item for the next meeting.

### **Laurie Albano – Recreation**

- Ms. Albano handed out a copy of the Spring/Summer Brochure.
- Camp Registrations will start on March 2, 2015.
- Working on Lifeguard Training Classes and Recruitment. Will have one class in March before the Westhill pool closes. There is a possibility that they can use the Westhill pool for a week in May.
- RFP is out for Rec Software. Proposals due April 9, 2015.
- Fireworks dates are Thursday, July 2, 2015, Rain Date, Friday, July 3, 2015.
- Fee increases have been submitted. Internal Review Committee came out with a packet of the review of fees. Will attend the Parks & Recreation Committee meeting on February 26, 2015 to discuss the fees for the Rink and Recreation.

Recreation proposed a \$100 non-resident camp fee and \$2.00 Sports Pass Fee. Also requested that the Field Use Fees go up from \$40 a game to \$50 and Lights from \$60 to \$70.

- Added sign language requested to sanctioned users policy document.
- Terry Conners Ice Rink Operator started working.
- Will attend the Personnel Commission meeting on February 26, 2015. Trying to upgrade the existing Cashier's position at Terry Conners Ice Rink to Customer Service Specialist.
- The Terry Conners doors/frames project will be culminating soon. The roof will be held off until the spring of 2016.
- Ms. Albano offered to give the Commission Revenue Reports if they wish to have them. Recreation is up around \$1,900 from last year. The rink is down around \$21,000 due to the loss of the Manhattanville College Program and bad weather.
- Ms. Albano reported to the Commission on the results of the Parks & Recreation Internal Committee meeting on February 11, 2015:

### **Consent Agenda**

George Hallenbeck – Fire Extinguishers & Flares Stamford Power Squadron – Use of West Beach - Monday, June 1, 2015 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. – Set-Up Starts at 5:00 p.m. and Clean-Up Ends at 10:00 p.m. – 85 Adults and 15 Children.

### **Approved**

Rich LoRusso – Stamford Babe Ruth Baseball – Use of Cubeta Stadium for Baseball Jamboree – Saturday, April 11, 2015 and Sunday, April 12, 2015 All Day – Saturday, May 23, 2015 from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. – Saturday, May 23, 2015 and Sunday, May 24, 2015 from 4:00 p.m. – Dark.

### **Approved**

Rich Lo Russo – Stamford Babe Ruth Baseball – Use of Belltown/Barrett for Baseball Jamboree – Saturday, April 11, 2015 and Sunday, April 12, 2015 All Day – Saturday, May 23, 2015 from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. – Saturday, May 23, 2015 and Sunday, May 24, 2015 from 4:00 p.m. – Dark.

### **Approved**

## **Special Events**

Lynne Colatrella – D.S.S.D. – Dinosaurs Rule in Stamford Downtown, Art in Public Places – June – August, 2015 – Use of Latham Park, Columbus Park and Veteran’s Park.

**Approved**

Lynne Colatrella – D.S.S.D. – Artwalk in Stamford Downtown – June 25-27, 2015 – Latham Park, Veteran’s Park and Kiwanis Park.

**Approved**

Lynne Colatrella – D.S.S.D. – Alive @ Five Outdoor Summer Concert Series – Thursday Evenings, July 9, 16, 23, 30, August 6, 13, 2015 – 5:00 p.m. at Columbus Park.

**Approved**

Lynne Colatrella – D.S.S.D. – Jazz Up July – Wednesday Evenings, July 8, 15, 22, 29, 2015 – 6:30 p.m. at Columbus Park.

**Approved**

Lynne Colatrella – D.S.S.D. – Tuesday Kid’s Concert in Columbus Park – Tuesday, July 14, 21, 2015 – New Program in Columbus Park.

**Approved**

Lynne Colatrella – Arts & Crafts on Bedford – September 19 & 20, 2015 – Latham Park.

**Approved**

Lynne Colatrella – Heights & Lights Rappelling Santa and Holiday Tree Lighting – Sunday, December 6, 2015 – Use of Latham Park for Tree Lighting.

**Approved**

Anthony Conte – MarcUS for Change & Stamford Public Education Foundation – MarcUS for Change 5K Run – Use of Scalzi Park – Sunday, October 4, 2015 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. – Set-Up Starts at 8:00 a.m. and Clean-Up Ends at 12:00 p.m. – 300 Adults and 200 Children.

**Approved**

Linda Wallace/Marty Levine – Epilepsy Foundation of Connecticut – Sharon’s Run/Ride/Walk for Epilepsy – Use of Cove Island Park for 3 Mile Walk – Saturday, May

9, 2015 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. – Set-Up Starts at 9:00 a.m. and Clean-Up Ends at 2:00 p.m. – 75 Adults and 25 Children.

## **Approved**

### **Kevin Murray – Parks**

- Mr. Murray provided a written update of Veteran’s Park to the Commission.
- Park employees are helping with snow removal, estimated 55 areas which cover bridge sidewalks, park sidewalks, parking lots and access roads.
- Still waiting on final guidelines for seasonal employees from the Human Resources Department. Anticipating the first wave of seasonal employees for March 16, 2015.
- Attended Field Meeting on February 4, 2015 with Little League and Senior Leagues. Will let the leagues know if fields will be ready for opening day on the second week in April.
- We are targeting 120 stumps after the winter thaw with tree contractor. This will be two zones and will take approximately two weeks to complete.
- Mr. Murray provided a copy of the Budget request for this year.
- Mr. Andreana informed Mr. Murray that the blue tarp used to cover the sign at Vine Road field is not working, it flops around with the wind, making the sign still visible. Mr. Murray will contact the League representatives.
- Interior mechanicals of Heroy Pool to be viewed on Thursday, February 19, 2015 with City staff.
- Getting a lot of calls regarding the gates at Cummings/Soundview. Since there is no money in the Budget to bring someone on the weekend, the gate schedule will be as follows:

#### **Off Season Gate Schedule – October 1<sup>st</sup> thru March 31<sup>st</sup>**

Monday thru Friday – Gates will be open 7:15 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. – Daily.

Saturdays and Sundays – Gates will remain closed.

#### **Park Season Gate Schedule – April 1<sup>st</sup> thru September 30<sup>th</sup>**

Open 7 days a week 7:15 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. daily.

- Mr. Andreana stated that the Commission did not approve the weekend closure of the gate and requested that it be placed on the Agenda for the Commission to vote on it.
- State Park Inventory Grant was denied, will apply again next year.

## **Discussion**

### **Discussion Regarding Parks Policies and Procedures.**

#### **Policy: Role & Policy Regarding Public, Private Park Coalition**

##### **Dave Winston:**

- Commission needs to start to define some of the Coalitions.
- When looking at public and private relationships, how is the Commission going to interact with these groups?
- Commission needs to develop a Master Plan and Policy that can be published and handed out to these groups.
- Commission needs to start by establishing general aspects of our parks usage, like the percentage of active and passive space.

##### **Lyda Ruijter**

- What can the Commission do to make sure that whatever group i.e. private or public, business, not for profit or for little profit will be for the good of the public?
- How does the Commission make sure that Zoning does not give out concessions and the Commission has control of the Policy of green space?
- The common element is what the guideline should be. We need to secure the use for all of the park land.
- Present Master Plan needs to be reviewed. The Commission should look at all of the parks and see how much it adheres to what has been written up.
- Ms. Ruijter stated that what she missed in the current Master Plan is the introduction and this is what the Commission is talking about. The general vision of what a park means for a City.

### **Joe Andreana**

- There are neighborhood groups that have a selfish point of view; they hope that nobody uses the park so that they have a backyard. There are other groups like Friends of Mianus Park where they are physically doing things in the park, beautifying the park, making the park more user friendly. The Commission has to set ground rules as to what these groups really want and what they are looking for. Whether it's very selfish because the park happens to be in their backyard as opposed to coming in with a proposal to beautify the park and fund it.
- Mr. Andreana asked the Commissioners to go over the old Master Plan and see if the Commission wants to propose coming up with a formal Master Plan.

### **Althea Brown**

- Ms. Brown agrees with other Commissioners.
- Ms. Brown agrees that the parks are here for Stamford residents and we do not want to see these groups taking ownership of the parks.
- Need of a broader understanding, what it means to establish requirements, Policy and Procedures so Parks and Recreation is not too strict or too lenient in covering the necessary basis.

### **Beth Cooper**

- Ms. Cooper agrees with everyone's thoughts.

### **Joe Andreana**

- Mr. Andreana asked that Ms. Albano and Mr. Murray do some research and put together a package of various existing policies and procedures, anything that has been published over the last ten years.

### **Role: Clarify P & R Commission in Parks Planning**

#### **Joe Andreana:**

- Review Master Plan.
- Do we need a new Master Plan?
- Should the Commission be looking at obtaining and procuring additional green space or recommending the City procure additional green space?

- Should the Commission look at realignment of the organization, how it affects Parks & Recreation?
- Mr. Andreana asked Mr. Murray to get information on how Stamford is compared to 100,000 to 150,000 population cities.

**Beth Cooper:**

- Everything is different, demographics are different.
- Missing collaboration/partnership.
- What is the Commission's role?
- Ms. Cooper suggested that once the Commission has the City Flow Chart, to invite City Departments and ask them to be a partner with the Commission. Mr. Winston stated that the Commission needs to focus on what is best for the parks and then figure out how to get the Commission's vision moved through.

**Althea Brown:**

- What are the Commission's limitations?

**Lyda Ruijter**

- The Commission does park planning, but the City already has a Planning Department that does a lot of park planning as well. Ms. Ruijter stated that the Commission should have some guidelines, that way it can be presented before the park project goes out to bid.
- Ms. Ruijter requested a copy of a flow chart of City government.

**Dave Winston**

- On Charter, the Commission is to develop such plans as the Commission deems necessary and useful for the preservation and expansion of natural resources in passive recreation areas in the City. By being part of the whole process, it will require more time from the Commission.
- The Commission should be involved in park projects from the beginning. Commission has to clarify its position.

**Vision: Vision of the Parks through 2035**

**Lyda Ruijter:**

- Discuss how parks are related to the wellbeing of the whole City, increasing inventory, better access to the parks and better connections between the parks.

**Dave Winston:**

- Smaller neighborhood parks extend outside of the parks, for example the walking loop at Scalzi Park.

**Joe Andreana:**

- Commission should define throughout the City those buildings and facilities that have public spaces and are blocking the access to those public spaces.
- Interplay with our parks and Mill River Park.
- Identify each of the parks and what roles they play now. What role should those parks be playing in 20 years?

**Correspondence**

No Correspondence.

**The next Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting will take place on Wednesday, March 18, 2015.**

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Mrs. Cooper

Seconded by Ms. Ruijter

The meeting adjourned at 9:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted  
Margarita Arenas  
February 24, 2015