

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
Minutes of the May 20, 2015 Regular Meeting

A meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was held on May 20, 2015, 10th 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: Juan Fiallos – Colombian Independence Day/Columbus Park
 Jesus Bravo – Colombian Independence Day/Columbus Park
 Othniel Dafinice – Light & Life/Jackie Robinson Park
 Arthur Lauture – Light & Life/Jackie Robinson Park
 Chris Lessard – Playground Bell at West Beach
 Bob Pepi – Concussion Policy
 Katherine Snedaker – Concussion Policy
 Lisa Coggins – Friends of Cummings, West and Czescik

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:40 p.m. by Joe Andreana, Chair.

Mrs. Cooper and Ms. Albano will be a few minutes late.

Review of the April 22, 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes.

Mr. Winston made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Ms. Ruijter

Unanimously Approved

Special Events

Jesus Bravo – Asociacion Colombo Hispano Americana – Use of Columbus Park or Scalzi Park for Colombian Independence Day – Saturday, July 11, 2015 from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. – Set-Up Starts at 9:00 a.m. and Clean-Up Ends 8:00 p.m. – 700 Adults and 100 Children.

- Event will not be as big as originally requested on the application.
- New hours will be 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and only 200 people are expected to attend.
- Musical event and food will take place at Gastro Bar.
- **Ms. Cooper arrived at 6:45 p.m.**
- Mr. Andreana explained that from June thru September Scalzi Park is probably the busiest park on the weekends and it will be very hard to have a big event during those months. October will probably be better, but reminded Mr. Bravo and Mr. Fiallos that amplified music is not allowed in Scalzi Park.

Mr. Winston made a motion to approve request from Jesus Bravo – Asociacion Colombo Hispano Americana for use of Columbus Park for Colombian Independence Day on Saturday, July 11, 2015 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. – Set-up starts at 9:00 a.m. and clean-up ends 3:00 p.m. – 200 Adults.

Seconded by Ms. Ruijter

Unanimously Approved

Old Business

Othniel Dafinice – Light & Life Association – Use of Jackie Robinson Park for Evangelical Crusade – Tuesday, September 1, 2015 to Sunday, September 6, 2015 from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. – Set-Up Starts on Monday, August 31, 2015 and Clean-Up Ends on Monday, September 7, 2015 – 500 Adults and 200 Children.

- Mr. Andreana stated that with the modifications made to the calendar dates and the times, Light & Life Association agrees to the conditions and terms established by the Commission last month.

- Mr. Andreana stated that if there are issues with the time and the noise, the event will not be approved in the future.
- **Ms. Albano arrived at 6:54 p.m.**

Ms. Brown made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Mr. Winston

Unanimously Approved

New Business

Christopher Lessard – Petition to Remove West Beach Playground Bell.

- Mr. Christopher Lessard requested the removal of the West Beach playground bell or disabling the clapper from the bell.
- Kids that attend the beach and are left unsupervised, relentlessly bang on the bell. The bell is not a quiet bell and it echoes throughout the whole beach, especially for those on the left side of the beach.
- Mr. Murray will contact Gina Aiello to see what can be done with the bell. Maybe Mr. Murray can do something in house.

Bob Pepi – Concussion Policy and Youth Sports.

- Mr. Pepi is here tonight to make the Commission aware of the things that are going on in the area of concussion education and what Stamford Youth Soccer League and Stamford Youth Sports Coalition do in this respect.
- The concussion issue has become a hot issue in the last number of years; it is a very serious issue, and something the youth sports organizers face all the time.
- Mr. Pepi explained to the Commission how they provide concussion information to the parents. Parents can go on their website and access information, they also provide hard copies if needed.
- Mr. Pepi explained the protocol to come back to play for a kid that has suffered a concussion. The kid cannot come back until the trainer has seen a written approval from a Doctor; at that point even there are very strict re-entry procedures. It takes several weeks and after they come back it can take several more weeks, they cannot do anything that can potentially include contact. They can't go near a ball, they can do very light physical activity for a period of time, then they are approved for the next level, etc. This protocol has been in place for a couple of years in the High School level.

- In 2014 it was proposed to move it down to the lower level. It went to the State Legislature and a Bill was proposed to involve youth sports activities.
- Youth organizers suggested that some of the mandates in the Bill be changed slightly. Youth organizers recognized some potential logistical problems and therefore liability. The original Bill was looking for a written signature by a parent and a player. Youth organizers proposed that the Bill allow for electronic acknowledgement. At the end the Committee withdrew the entire section on Youth Sports rather than deal with it.

This past winter the same Bill was proposed as the first time, but this time Youth Sports were brought to the table, they were allowed to speak at the hearing. Most of the youth organizations are concerned about liability for volunteers in the school system, in the YMCA; some of them were concerned about the broadness of the definitions of youth activity. This time the Committee accepted their language unanimously and made it part of the proposed Bill.

The Bill as it is now stated it would mandate that Youth Sport Organizations will make available this kind of concussion information to parents. The requirement for children to sign it was taken out as well. Youth organizations are supporting the legislation that is there, as proposed.

- Mr. Pepi stated that concussion information has been on their website since 2012. They continue to enhance the appearance of it.
- Before completing registration, parents have to attest to the fact that they've accessed the league's on-line concussion series, if they have not, a hand out will be given to them. Registration forms now have a place on the second page regarding concussion information that must be signed.
- Opponents to the Bill as it was originally proposed specifically asked that the Bill include a specific liability waiver for coaches, this has not been included. The Norwalk Parks and Recreation Department and proponents of the original legislation went to them and came up with a Policy that requires that the written information has to have a signature that shows that the kid and the adult have received it.
- The State law specifically exempts municipalities from the concerns, if all they are doing is making the field available to someone.
- The Bill is out of Committee and waiting to be brought to the floor.
- Mrs. Cooper stated that coaches should attend a safety clinic as well as the parents. Mrs. Cooper suggested that in the future they could have a traveling clinic that would go to all the youth sports.

- Mr. Pepi stated that they should address kids through the Board Education to make sure they reach all the kids.
- Ms. Katherine Snedaker requested permission to speak in regards to this issue and what is being done in Norwalk. Mr. Andreana stated that this is an open meeting not a Public Hearing and that the Commission was not going to vote tonight. Until there is a Public Hearing, Ms. Snedaker is welcome to come then.

Staff Reports

Laurie Albano – Recreation.

- Enforcement meeting went well. Representative Kieran Ryan attended the meeting, Stamford Police Department sent the Patrolman who has been assigned to help patrol/enforce at beach parks this summer, he will try to spend as much time at the beaches/parks as possible.
- There was a subsequent meeting with Director Orgera this morning. Mrs. Cooper stated that there will be another meeting with Director Orgera, Police Department, Ted Jankowski, Kieran Ryan and Marty Levine.
- Ready for Memorial Day Weekend – Tram Operation, Lifeguards on duty 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. at all three beach parks. Weekends only until school is out/some Fridays staff permitting.
- There might not be a Lifeguard at Quigley Beach on opening day.
- Swim lines are out at beach parks.
- Seeking a legal opinion on Lifeguards duty to respond beyond swim lines per safety concerns.
- Beach Volleyball Tournament – Saturday, May 16, 2015 went well.
- Recreation was part of Family Day at Lione Park and went very well.
- All Camp positions almost filled. Camps run June 29 to August 14.
- Working on end of year financials/purchasing for Recreation and Rink.
- Fireworks proposal awarded to Bay Fireworks. Date is July 2nd/rain date of July 3rd.
- Recreation Management software proposals – first meeting with IT to review, narrowed it down to two firms.

- School building use permit meeting was held to address issues/problems with getting those permits processed in a timely manner.
- Softball leagues are up and running – 170 teams this year.
- Beach Volleyball begins in June – 78 to 80 teams.
- Adult Kickball League up and running – 11 teams.
- Spring programs almost over.
- Terry Conners Ice Rink is in spring/summer season with some lessons and ice rentals.
- Terry Conners Ice Rink also very busy scheduling/booking winter season ice which begins in September.
- Rink Mansards all secured. Waiting on doors/frames installation.
- Mandating vendor removed some old/unusable vending machines from rink.
- There was a locker room theft of a cell phone over last weekend at rink.
- Recreation and Rink fees up again Thursday night before Parks & Recreation Committee, not sure of status, this will be the fourth attempt.
- Also at Committee Meeting is the issue of Chelsea Piers using school and Sacred Heart property.
- No Smoking in Parks did not move thru Representatives for Ordinance/fine approval. It is only a Rule now.
- Concussion Survey has been sent to all sanctioned youth sports providers, waiting for some of them to respond. It looks like other than Youth Soccer no one has a formal Policy.
- Results of the Parks & Recreation Internal Committee Meeting on May 13, 2015:

Special Events

Jesus Bravo – Asociacion Colombo Hispano Americana – Use of Columbus Park or Scalzi Park for Colombian Independence Day – Saturday, July 11, 2015 from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. – Set-Up Starts at 9:00 a.m. and Clean-Up Ends 8:00 p.m. – 700 Adults and 100 Children.

Denied – Referred to Parks & Recreation Commission

Jackson Alcide – Sanctification Tabernacle Church – Cove Island Park – Baptize People – Saturday, May 16, 2015 from 8:00 a.m. to 8:20 a.m. – 5 Adults and 3 Children.

Approved

Anna Wang – Use of Cove Island Park for Wedding Ceremony and BBQ – Saturday, May 16, 2015 from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. – Set-Up Starts at 9:00 a.m. and Clean-Up Ends at 5:00 p.m. – 25 Adults.

Approved

New Business

Luis Martin – Audubon – Connecticut’s American Oystercatcher Management Project – Permission for Staff and Volunteers to Conduct Surveys on Any Town Land Where Their Species of Concern are Nesting.

No need for approval. Mr. Dave Winston will contact Mr. Luis Martin

Arthur Goldblatt – Stamford Youth Tennis Academy – Permission to place a 60” X 37” X 38” Job Box at Cummings Tennis Courts.

Approved – Job Box cannot be placed on an area that can cause liability

Tournaments

Stamford YMCA – Use of Scalzi 3 – Second Choice Scalzi 2 – Summer Camp Sport Activities – June 23, 2015 to June 30, 2015 – July 2, 2015 – July 6, 2015 to July 10, 2015 – July 13, 2015 to July 14, 2015 – July 16, 2015, July 20, 2015 to July 22, 2015 – July 27, 2015 to July 29, 2015 – August 3, 2015 to August 4, 2015, August 6, 2015,

August 10, 2015 to August 13, 2015.

Denied

Tim Curry – Greater Stamford Tennis Association – Scalzi Park Tennis Courts – Free Tennis Clinic for Kids 5 to 12 – Saturday, May 16, 2015 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Approved

Michael Waterworth – Royal Bank of Scotland – Lione Park – Annual Company Cricket Tournament – Four Fridays, July 24th July 31st, August 7th and August 14th.

Approved

Kevin Murray – Parks.

- Ready for Memorial Day Weekend with staff. Parks have been busy currently with the extended season of use which started May 1st.
- A lot of improvements have been made to Picnic Pavilions areas as well as the non-official picnic areas, which include picnic table, chained picnic tables together to make it more difficult to move tables around, bolts, wood, ground work grills, etc.
- Gazebo repairs/Boardwalk repairs at Czescik Park. Carpenters have completed work orders for all repairs noted in conjunction with the Friends of Cummings, West and Czescik. Also assisted on the Butterfly Garden with machine work, future work includes solar lights to be installed and tree pruning for visual security into the park. Also planning to organize a community/operations clean-up of Czescik water front with proper approval.
- **Playground Repairs:** 18 Citywide playgrounds have been certified inspected. Currently investigating purchasing guidelines to repair safety hazards. Some units have been closed off for use.
- **Park Lighting Projects:** Cubeta Stadium re-lamp/panels upgrade, Scalzi Little League re-lamp, K-Park field lights to be shielded, screens to be installed per safety hazard; boaters coming in from the harbor are getting blinded.
- **Park Signage:** Met with Operations Staff and will be upgrading signage in the parks which will help the look and assist on enforcement. It will include entryway signage. West Beach is targeted and also will add one at Cummings Beach. Next will be Chestnut Hill.
- **Barrett Park Cleanup:** The Stamford Public Education Foundation (SPEF), in partnership with Deloitte playground and facility improvement project at Stamford's Barrett Park on Friday, June 5th from about 9:00 a.m.to 3:00 p.m. – Improvements involve groundwork, light painting to shelter, park sign, playground repairs and surface.
- **Heroy Update:** Purchase Order in place and pool contractor is working with State closely to address all area of upgrade. Work will be done prior to opening of camp which will have final walk through with Health Department and State. Also painting the pool deck and then the pool.
- **Lione Park:** Mr. Murray provided the Commission with some information regarding organic seed test site and proposal from Mike Papa. Currently there is no funding to perform this fiscal year, will look to scale back test area to see if something can be done next growing season in the fall.

- On April 24th Arbor Day was celebrated at Columbus Park, which was the 27th year in Stamford, it is tied from most consecutive running town in State of Connecticut with Fairfield – 15 new trees were planted.
- **Scalzi Bathrooms:** Final walk through scheduled for Thursday, May 21st at 1:00 p.m. – plans to open for opening day, Memorial Day Weekend.
- Mr. Andreana asked Mr. Murray to find out if the Engineering Department has a standard for playgrounds.
- Mrs. Cooper commended Mr. Murray and Ms. Albano for their work and suggested that the Friends Groups be engaged more, they can help us be a resource.
- Funding for Parks & Recreation Bureau Chief has been removed.
- Mr. Andreana requested that the Co-Chairs of the Parks & Recreation Committee get a copy of the Action Report.

Correspondence

- E-Mail was received from Pat Liotta regarding situations on Soundview Avenue regarding noise, overcrowded parking lot at the pond north of Soundview Avenue, etc. Mr. Andreana stated that the Commission agrees that there is an issue, the Commission has voted to close the park at 10:00 p.m. and to shut the gate at 9:00 p.m. – This is a Police issue and the residents need to call the Police for enforcement, the Commission has done what they can to address the issue.

Discussion

Vision of Parks Though 2035.

- Ms. Ruijter and Mr. Winston have been meeting as a sub-committee regarding open space plan. There is a meeting scheduled with Erin McKenna and Cindy Barber on Friday to integrate what the City has physically in its own database. As the Commission moves forward it will need facts. The sub-committee's goal is to start to develop the relationship with IT and Land Use to try to get the information that the City already has available to the Commission. The focus will be to identify the 64 parks that are under the Commission's jurisdiction. Mr. Andreana stated that by following the Master Plan produced 15/20 years ago, it identifies what it's considered green space.
- Ms. Ruijter and Mr. Winston suggested that the Parks & Recreation Commission hold a special meeting once a year in October, prior to the regular meeting. This will be a public meeting to be held in the cafeteria. The Police Department, Mr. Murray and Ms. Albano will be asked to bring everything that came across their desk with respect to the parks to answer questions from the public. The Commission will then invite

Chief Fontneau or his representative to the regular meeting to discuss and finalize everything.

- Mr. Andreana asked Ms. Ruijter and Mr. Winston to come up with a guideline of what the Commission would want to address at the special meeting.
- Friends Groups will be invited to the next three Commission meetings, they will have to be prepared to answer the following questions:
 1. What has your group done in the past two years?
 2. What is your group planning on doing in the next one to two years?
 3. What are your concerns?
 4. How many active members?
 5. What other groups/corporations you interact/partner within the community?
- A copy of the Bylaws needs to be presented to the Commission prior to the meeting.
- Once the Cummings Master Plan is presented to the Commission, Mr. Andreana wants to know if a joint Public Hearing with the Parks & Recreation Committee needs to be scheduled. Mr. Murray will find out what the procedure is.
- By looking at the Master Plan it looks like they removed the parking spaces by the pond. Mr. Andreana wants Mr. Murray to find out who has to be part of the approval process.

Correspondence

No Correspondence.

The next Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting will take place on Wednesday, June 17, 2015.

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Mr. Winston

Seconded by Mrs. Cooper

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
Margarita Arenas
May 27, 2015