

Review of the June 17, 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes.

Mr. Winston made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Ms. Ruijter

Unanimously Approved

Old Business

No Old Business.

New Business

Amy LiVolsi – Discussion of FOI Issues.

- Amy LiVolsi from the Legal Department attended the meeting to answer any questions regarding FOI issues the Commissioners may have.
- FOI Requests are about open meetings providing access to government and documents. Ms. LiVolsi stated that the Commission does not have to answer questions; they do not have to create a document that doesn't already exist. They do have to be responsive and provide documents that exist; access to meetings must be provided. Even if you are not required to give some answers under the Freedom of Information Act, sometimes is best to do so.
- If the Commission receives a Freedom of Information request for documents, Ms. LiVolsi needs to be informed and she will guide the Commission on what to do.
- Public does not have a right to speak at meetings, whatever the Commission does, needs to be uniform; apply the rules fairly and consistently. Ms. LiVolsi suggested a Policy of Non-Dialog, for example members of the public will each get 3 minutes to speak and the Commission's Policy will be not to respond to the good or the bad. This will be entirely up to the Commission.
- If an issue that is not on the Agenda that may require the Commission to vote on is brought up at a meeting, as long as the meeting is a Regular Meeting, the Commission can vote to add to the Agenda and vote on the issue. New Agenda items cannot be added to Special Meeting Agendas.
- Any Sub-Committee Meetings need to follow the same procedures as a Regular Meeting, notice, agenda and minutes. Sub-Committee Meetings need to be noticed 24 hours in advance.
- The only Commissioners allowed to vote at a Sub-Committee meeting are the Sub-Committee members.

- Ms. LiVolsi stated all Commissioners can attend other meetings, including the Internal Committee for Approval of Special Events/Tournaments chaired by the Director of Operations, Ernie Orgera and his staff. Commissioners can attend, listen and participate as individuals, but they as a Commission cannot take up the business of the Commission. Attending other meetings to be informed about what is going on is fine.
- Mr. Andreana explained that if any Special Events get rejected by the Internal Committee for Approval of Special Events/Tournaments, the applicant has the right to come to the Parks & Recreation Commission to get it overruled. Ms. LiVolsi stated that her best advice to the Commission is if the Commission is acting as the appellate authority on a matter, the Commission should not be participating at all at these meetings.

It is better for the Commissioners not to attend the meetings of the Internal Committee for approval of Special Events/Tournaments. If a Special Event gets rejected and has to go to the Parks & Recreation Commission for approval, the Commissioner that attended the Internal Committee meeting should give up his/her right to vote and to participate at the Parks & Recreation Commission meeting.

- Commissioners should not participate in meetings to discuss projects that will eventually come to the Parks & Recreation Commission for approval. The Commission should be briefed about upcoming projects at their meeting prior to coming for approval of such projects. In the future, if the Commission wants to have some input or wants to be part of the discussion for an upcoming project, the Commission should contact the Board of Representative to write an Ordinance that requires the Commission's approval of a project. If the Commission still wants to participate, a written submission of comments can be sent to people in charge of the project. The Commission can also put them on the agenda during strategic stages in the development for an update.

Erin McKenna and Stantec Consulting Services – Presentation of Master Plan for Cummings Park, West Beach & Cummings Marina.

- Mr. Andreana stated that this is not a Public Hearing. Members of the public attending the meeting who wished to speak relative to the presentation will be allowed 2 minutes.
- Attached to the Minutes is the presentation from Stantec to the Parks & Recreation Commission.
- Ms. McKenna stated that there is funding in place to proceed with the design and to do the detailed drawings for Phase I. They will then go to the Board of Finance and then the Board of Representatives for approval for spending the money to continue the contract with Stantec.

➤ **Master Plan Goals:**

- Engage the community
- Identify needs
- Identify operational and physical improvements
- Restore the Marina
- Prepare for future storms and sea level rise
- Prepare illustrative plans and narrative
- Determine priorities and costs
- Deliver a master plan document

➤ **Community Outreach:**

- Community Meeting 1 – June 2014 (SWOT Analysis)
- Stakeholder Meetings and Interviews (3 days)
- Community Meeting 2 – (Concept Review)
- City Staff Review (December 2014)
- On-Line Surveys (2 Surveys over 500 responses)
- Community Meeting 3 – (April 23, 2015)

➤ **Operational Enhancement:**

- Neighborhood Parking
- Hours of Operation
- Loitering
- Homeless Population
- Park Rules Enforcement
- Traffic Control
- Concessions Access, Offerings and Conditions
- Maintenance
- Snow storage/snow melt

➤ **Enhancement Strategy:**

- **Connectivity/Pedestrian, Bicycle and Vehicular Circulation**
Community connectivity and recreation amenity
- **Natural Environment**
Enhanced landscape diversity, habitat and green infrastructure
- **Beaches and Promenade**
A more family-friendly and enjoyable park experience
- **Food and Recreation Concessions**
Better offerings, greater use and year-round destination

- **Parking**
More efficient, better managed with enhanced landscape
 - **Play Fields**
Improved playability, safety and park integration
 - **Marina**
Rebuild with additional user amenities
 - **Restrooms**
Renovate, improve security and locate for convenience
 - **Playground Environments/Destination Play**
A more enriching play experience year-round
- Members of the public had asked questions and expressed their concerns.
 - Ms. Ruijter asked about any changes on the entrances to the parks, Stantec representative responded that Stantec has no authorization to move beyond the limits of the study.
 - Mr. Winston asked Ms. McKenna to provide him with information on the lighting that will be installed at the field closer to Soundview entrance.
 - Mr. Andreana mentioned the issues with opening and closing the gate at Soundview and asked if it has been discussed the closure of Soundview to the east. Ms. McKenna explained that the plan will call for making that section of roadway One Way in, the section next to the Tennis Courts, will be One Way out, this will probably eliminate the need for a gate.
 - A field will be eliminated at Cummings Park.
 - New field will be a natural turf field.
 - Mr. Andreana stated that since the number of parking spaces remains the same as currently exist; Mr. Andreana asked if consideration was given to the potential increase in population for Stamford. The number of spaces are essentially the same as when the City had 105,000 people, we are now at 130,000 and where will we be in 2035? Will parking be adequate?
 - Commissioners requested a hard copy of the presentation for their review.
 - Mr. Andreana invited Erin McKenna to attend the August Parks & Recreation Commission meeting to answer questions on Cummings Park, West Beach and Cummings Marina.

Ms. Ruijter made a motion to move Kislene Boss – Optimus Health Care Center up on the Agenda.

Seconded by Mr. Winston

Unanimously Approved

Special Events

Kislene Bosse – Optimus Health Care Center – Optimus Health Care Center Celebrates National Health Week with a Wellness Fair – Latham Park or Columbus Park – Saturday, August 15, 2015 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. – 250 Attendees.

- Would prefer approval for Latham Park.
- The Internal Committee was concerned with the size of the event and the impact it would have on the downtown. Mr. Winston contacted Emely at the D.S.S.D. and their response was that this will be a wonderful addition in Latham Park. The Farmers' Market will be going on at the same time and the D.S.S.D. had no issue with the combined events.
- The application requests permission to use a Bouncy House. Ms. Bosse stated that an employee from the Bouncy House Rental Company will be at the event to monitor the activity that go on during the Health Fair.

Ms. Ruijter made a motion to approve request at Latham Park.

Seconded by Ms. Brown

Unanimously Approved

New Business – Continued

Sue Sweeney – Scalzi Riverwalk Nature Preserve Presentation.

- The City of Stamford has spent \$5,000 in addition to what is normally done for mowing, snow removal and repairs.
- Six years ago the benches were broken, there was graffiti all over the place, people were afraid to go there, today they have traffic jams with baby strollers.
- There is a total of 6 ½ acres, the riverwalk is four tenths of a mile long.
- First year and a half was spent cleaning the area, so people would feel safe going there. Work very well in conjunction with the City's Parks Department.
- Second priority is to work on area that has been turned from turf into a meadow.
- Ms. Sweeney mentioned the area that has been turned into Science Fair Projects.

- Riverwalk itself is now under very good invasive control, but there is more work to do, which can be done in about 4/5 hours a week in season.
- Friends of Scalzi have green house space at the Bartlett, they just produced 2,000 native, local plants, sold 1,000 of them at the Bartlett Plant Sale, bringing in \$5,000 for the Bartlett.
- They have over 75 species of birds that they have scientifically accurate documentation on; of them they have 20 species that they have documentation that they are nesting there. Their total is probably in the 125/150 species of birds.
- They have 5 kinds of turtles.
- They are planning on continuing the work they have been doing on the river walk for the next couple of years.
- Ms. Sweeney stated that they have a very good relationship with the Parks & Recreation, Laurie Albano, Ron D'Amico, they have been very helpful to them. They also have good local community relations.
- The wildlife is doing great and it's expanding.
- They have a very solid working relationship with the Bartlett Arboretum and the Master Gardening Program there.
- Ms. Sweeney mentioned the fact that there is no Park Police presence. The only way they can make this work is by building a culture among the people who go there. It's about what the community standards are and by keeping it in a neighborhood level among people who stake in what is there. They have been able to maintain that culture so far and they are trying to keep a low profile.
- They have a website and almost 500 people on the Facebook page.
- They have 3 core world class photographers and half a dozen part-timers.
- They are not a 501 (C) (3) or have By-Laws, they are just volunteers for the City of Stamford.
- They have safety rules. Supervision is required by a trained Supervisor at all times.
- They are running a very active Internship Program.
- Last year they had 2 Master Gardeners and 2 NCC, this year they have 3 Master Gardeners and one community.

- They will have to continue to monitor for invasives.
- Ms. Sweeney stated that they would want a contact when she needs to call the Police. Mr. Andreana suggested contacting Captain Tom Lombardo to find out who the Sector Commander in the Scalzi Park area is.
- The walkway is not safe for bicycles. There is no safe alternative to give to bicycle riders. There are discussions for a corridor down from North Stamford along Washington Boulevard. Ms. Sweeney asked the Commission to support this project as well as the extension in the park for bikes.
- Ms. Sweeney also mentioned the problems they are having with the deer population. Sooner or later the City will need a deer population control plan.

Althea Brown – Review of Invitation Letter to Stamford Police and Enforcement to Attend August 19, 2015 Meeting.

- Invitation letter to Stamford Police and Enforcement to attend the August 19, 2015 meeting was discussed. Mr. Andreana suggested that it would be better to wait for October after the season is over.

Staff Reports

Kevin Murray – Parks.

- Fireworks on July 2nd were a big success, thanks to all Operations employees that participated.
- Vine Little League foul poles to be installed by league – Stamford American would like to order foul poles for Northrop and Vine to match what is at the rest of the City fields. This was approved by the Commission last year without measuring, it was estimated/approved for Northrop and Vine to put 12' poles in. The proposed height would be 20' foul poles at Vine and Northrop, consistent with the other fields in Stamford. Job to be done in the fall. Mr. Andreana doesn't have an objection as long as it's the same as other fields. Mr. Murray will check other fields.
- Cove Island – Vending Machine has been removed by vendor.
- Baseball/Softball Tournaments – Parks Department have been busy keeping all fields safe and useable for upcoming tournaments.
- Kane Avenue Little League complaint from Mr. Ottaviano. Mr. Murray addressed the league on his own and sent a letter to Team Managers in regards to what he expects. L Screen to the batting cage needs to be chained or put away in the shed. Copy of complaint and letter were given to the Commissioners. The net will be

purchased by the league.

- Victor Stanley Garbage Cans to be added in beach parks/athletic sites.
- Pet waste signs and dispensers to be added to parks per pet waste compliance.
- Garbage coral stations also to be added to picnic permit areas.
- Mr. Murray provided the June, 2015 beach parking report.
- Results of the Parks & Recreation Internal Committee Meeting on July 9, 2015:

Consent Agenda

No Consent Agenda.

Special Events

Tiffany Sanders – RF Youth Boxing, Inc. – Use of Kosciuszko Park – 5K Run and Walk Beginning and Ending at Harbor Point – Saturday, October 24, 2015 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. – Set-Up Starts at 7:30 a.m. and Clean-Up Ends at 1:00 p.m. – 200 Adults and 50 Children.

- Not allowed to charge admission, OK to ask for a donation.
- Contact Kevin Murray regarding route at Kosciusko Park.
- Needs approval from Traffic Advisory Committee.

Frank Fedeli made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Kim Gerbert

Unanimously Approved

Pastor Giovanni Rivera – Iglesia Apostólica Renovación Emmanuel – Mass Evangelization – Jackie Robinson Park – Saturday, July 25, 2015 from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. – Set-Up Starts at 2:00 p.m. and Clean-Up Ends at 8:30 p.m. – 50 Adults and 30 Children.

Frank Fedeli made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Kim Gerbert

Unanimously Approved

Franklin Desravines – Schilo SDA Church (AKA Stamford French SDA Church) – Annual Reunion – Scalzi Park – Sunday, September 6, 2015 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. – Set-Up Starts at 8:00 a.m. and Clean-Up Ends at 2:00 p.m. – 30 Adults and 10 Children.

➤ Pavilion is not available.

Frank Fedeli made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Kevin Murray

Unanimously Approved

Kislene Bosse – Optimus Health Care Center – Optimus Health Care Center Celebrates National Health Week with a Wellness Fair – Latham Park or Columbus Park – Saturday, August 15, 2015 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. – 250 Attendees.

Kevin Murray made a motion to deny, request needs Parks and Recreation Commission approval.

Seconded by Frank Fedeli

Unanimously Approved

Tournaments

Prakhar Mansukhani – ASHA for Education – Cricket Tournament – Lione Park – Saturday, August 22, 2015 to Sunday, August 23, 2015 from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Frank Fedeli made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Kevin Murray

Unanimously Approved

Al D’Elia – Stamford Bocce League – Bocce Tournament – Scalzi Park – Saturday, August 8, 2015 from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Laurie Albano made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Frank Fedeli

Unanimously Approved

Charles Pia – Girls Babe Ruth Regional Tournament – Cummings 4 & 5 – Thursday, July 16, 2015 to Friday, July 17, 2015 from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Frank Fedeli made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Laurie Albano

Unanimously Approved

Frank Fedeli made a motion to suspend the rules.

Seconded by Laurie Albano

Unanimously Approved

Fortunato Daniele – Stamford Italia Club – Charity Tournament – West Beach – Saturday, July 25, 2015 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

➤ There will be a \$40 field rental fee.

Frank Fedeli made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Laurie Albano

Unanimously Approved

Discussion

Vision of Parks Through 2035.

- Ms. Brown distributed a summary of what the Commission has discussed so far regarding Policy and Procedure including enforcement, open space, goals, etc.
- Mr. Andreana stated that the Commission needs to discuss what the Commission is going to produce and set a time line for it.
- Mr. Andreana proposed that from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. the Commission dedicates that hour to the Policy and Procedure discussion, then start the rest of the business after 7:30 p.m.

The next Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting will take place on Wednesday, August 19, 2015.

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Mr. Winston

Seconded by Ms. Ruijter

The meeting adjourned at 9:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
Margarita Arenas
July 22, 2015