

**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING  
Minutes of the January 21, 2015 Regular Meeting**

**DRAFT**

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A meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was held on January 21, 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:                        Erin McKenna – Gerli Park  
  
                                      Gregory Kruger – Men’s Senior Baseball League  
  
                                      Chris Pepe – Men’s Senior Baseball League  
  
                                      Dee Smith – Resident  
  
                                      Margarita Xistris – Resident  
  
                                      Kathleen Mathews – Resident  
  
                                      Lisa Coggins – Resident

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 p.m. by Joe Andreana, Chair.

## **Review of the December 17, 2014 Regular Meeting Minutes.**

Mr. Winston made a motion to approve.

Seconded by Ms. Ruijter

YES: Mr. Winston  
YES: Ms. Brown  
YES: Mr. Andreana  
YES: Ms. Ruijter  
ABSTAINED: Mrs. Cooper

Mrs. Cooper abstained because she did not attend the December 17, 2014 meeting.

Mr. Winston made a motion to move agenda item regarding impact of State Project No. 135-307 on Gerli Park to the beginning of the Agenda.

Seconded by Ms. Ruijter

Unanimously Approved

Mr. Winston made a motion to move Old Business item to discuss Policy and Procedures to the end of the Agenda. In the future this discussion should be placed last on the Agenda, not under Old Business or New Business it should have its own place.

Seconded by Ms. Ruijter

Unanimously Approved

### **Paul Ginotti – Impacts of State Project No. 135-307 on Gerli Park – Weed Avenue.**

- Erin McKenna presenting for Paul Ginotti. The State is replacing the Route 1 (East Main Street) bridge over the Noroton River on the Stamford Darien border. The project requires the elevating of the road which impacts Gerli Park located on the Corner of Route 1 and Weed Avenue. When the bridge is replaced it will be 2 ½ feet higher than it is now, this will necessitate making a transition from the bridge to the Post Road, and then from along Weed Avenue to the Post Road to accommodate the new height.
- The impact on Gerli Park will be:
  - The new height will require a steeper slope.
  - Maple tree might be impacted.
  - All of the roadway will be out of the park.
  - Easement for construction of sidewalk: Approximately 2 square feet. Sidewalk will be within the park boundary.
  - Easement to install Metal Bridge Guide Railing: Approximately 10 linear feet.
  - Easement to install Traffic Signal Equipment: Approximately 515 square feet.
  - Easement for Fill Slopes for the support of the roadway: Approximately 2025 square feet.
- The State is requesting concurrence from the City that the impacts to the park are minimal so that it can proceed with the design.

- Mr. Andreana wants to make sure that the Engineers at the State Department of Transportation have considered drainage, he wants to make sure that the park will not get any flow from the streets into the park, Mr. Andreana would like to make sure that a study has been done. Ms. McKenna contacted Paul Ginotti from the Engineering Department and he stated that the State will be installing curbing along Route 1 and down Weed Avenue. Mr. Andreana asked Mr. Ginotti to take another look at it to re-assure that they are not going to increase any runoffs into the park and make it any worse than it is right now.
- Since the Park will be used as a staging area, Mr. Winston would like to make sure the plantings will be restored to the condition it was before.
- As far as the plantings, Mr. Winston stated that they can lift everything and store on site to be re-used or they will have to give the Neighborhood Association enough advanced notice so that the volunteers can do it, if not, everything will have to be replaced. Neighborhood Association will do an inventory.
- The existing utility box has been painted by an artist, Mr. Winston would like the Neighborhood Association to be reimbursed (\$300) if the utility box is replaced, this way they can hire the artist again to paint the new utility box and restore as it is today.

Mr. Winston made a motion to approve Engineering's request for State Project No. 135-307 and allow State contractors have access to Gerli Park. The approval is with the understanding that there will be an inventory of plants, which will have to be either protected or replaced as for the inventory and the Norway Maple tree may be removed. The Drainage Study must be doubled checked to make sure that the park does not get any additional flow from the street into the park.

Seconded by Ms. Ruijter

Unanimously Approved

### **Staff Reports**

#### **Laurie Albano – Recreation**

- Ms. Albano reported to the Commission on the results of the Parks & Recreation Internal Committee meeting on January 14, 2015:

### **Consent Agenda**

Jon Stellwagen – Kids In Crisis – Use of Cummings Beach – The Navigators Stamford KIC IT Triathlon – Sunday, June 28, 2015 – 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. – Set-Up Starts on Friday, June 26, 2015 and Clean-Up Ends on Sunday, June 28, 2015 – 900 Adults and 100 Children.

**Approved**

Jon Stellwagen – Kids In Crisis – Use of Cove Island Park – The Navigators Stamford KIC IT KIDS Triathlon – Saturday, June 27, 2015 from 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. – Set-Up Starts on Friday, June 26, 2015 and Clean-Up Ends on Saturday, June 27, 2015 at 11:00 a.m. – 250 Adults and 250 Children.

### **Approved**

Gerard Gasparino – ARI of Connecticut, Inc. – Use of Cove Island Park for 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Walk for Independence – Sunday, May 3, 2015 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. – Set-Up Starts at 7:30 a.m. and Clean-Up Ends 2:00 p.m. – 75 Adults and 25 Children.

### **Approved**

- Ms. Albano presented to the Commission the revised DRAFT final version of the Special Event Application and asked the Commissioners to review and approve.
- Both the Terry Conners and Recreation Services Budgets are done and have been submitted.
- Recreation Services - \$2,226,586 expense request and the anticipated revenue is \$994,841.
- Terry Conners - \$855,632 expense request and the anticipated revenue is \$809,750.
- Mayor requested a Budget Report, Ms. Albano will provide copies to the Commission.
- Recreation has seven and can probably end up with ten Statewide Adult Softball Tournaments; they are planned for Saturdays throughout the course of the season - \$2,800 to \$4,000 in revenue.
- This year we will be moving the summer playground from Cove Island Park to Barrett Park.
- Met with Board of Education regarding Summer School use for camps, Stillmeadow may not be available.
- There is an RFP out for new Recreation Management Software/open proposals in March.
- There will be 2015 Fireworks.
- The Rink Operator interviews are done and the selection was made, the new Rink Operator will start on February 9<sup>th</sup>.
- Met with Director Orgera, Legal and Engineering regarding Terry Conners Rink Floor. Original contractor, Arena Systems, is willing to make a remedial repair; Ms. Albano thinks this will be our best bet at this point. They will be removing the ice

and remove what is breaking underneath and then put a new overlay over the milled surface. The question is if it will adhere? Work will be done around April/May once Legal finalizes all conditions with input from Engineering.

- The doors and door frames at the rink are underway and so is the roof.
- Ms. Albano reiterated how important it is for Recreation to have the Heroy Pool.
- Terry Conners Ice Rink is busy in the prime season, all is going well. Revenue wise, even with the loss of Manhattanville it's actually up \$34,000 to date over last year.
- Recreation Services is up almost \$3,000 in revenue from last year.
- Winter season is going well, prepping for spring/summer, recruiting staff.
- Annual Field Permit/Sanctioned User's Meeting will take place on February 4, 2015. Commissioners welcome to attend the meeting if they want.
- Mr. Andreana asked Ms. Albano to reiterate at the meeting the Policies regarding Commercial Signs and the fact that if the signs are not taken down or covered over they will be removed and discarded. Any permanent signs that are not covered, the City will paint them over white. Signs have to be removed or covered by October 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **Kevin Murray – Parks**

- **Park Signage Update** – 10:00 p.m. closure signs to be installed in all parks. Mr. Murray met with the Signs and Lines Division in regards to signs to be added and to start a plan to clean-up some of the signs in the park system, some of them are outdated, not straight, etc.
- Troy Field Signs were removed.
- **Fence on Vine Road property:** Mr. Murray spoke to Jeff Goodman and nobody knows how the fence got up, with the switch of league Presidents, maybe Mr. Goodman was not aware of the fence being put up. Mrs. Cooper will try to get some information.
- Opening of Delaware Avenue/Lione Park will be scheduled to open following the winter months per the Commission's approval prior to park season.
- **Sign Measurements at Northrop** – Sign was measure at 4' x 20', Little League will make new sign at 3' x 8' and will cover remainder board with a neutral vinyl.

At last month's Commission meeting, the Commission approved a 3' x 8' sign at Northrop Field for Stamford American Little League. If the existing sign was within limits or slightly larger, the Commission will approve an overlay sign based on staff's determination of suitability that is not over 10 feet. The sign is bigger than 10 feet so the proposal for vinyl covering will not work; old sign needs to be replaced with a 3' x

8' sign.

- Mr. Andreana stated that the Commission agreed that moving forward the signs need to be consistent, 3' x 8' in size, existing signs are grandfathered in.
- **Playground Assessments Citywide** – Mr. Murray is working with certified playground Inspection Company to get this year's report. The Commission would like a list of the different playground manufacturers.
- Working on plan for stump removal in City parks, this is a bigger plan in regards to City streets. Mr. Murray applied for a Grant to implement a maintenance plan for our parks; the final product will be citywide.
- **Department Review** – Submitted transformative projects planned and ideas to reduce cost while improving service delivery. Also submitted key drivers that impact operations.
- **Fort Stamford Mason Project** – 24 new balusters replaced and grouted areas refinished. Working with company for other areas to be done going forward.
- **Dorothy Heroy Park** – There was an on-site meeting. Renovations to be done, size of pool cannot be increased due to wetland area around it. Discussed were the current set-up in regards to the mechanicals that service the pool and the building, drainage areas of concern. Anticipating a good summer with the new filters that have been replaced, there might be some mason work in regards to the pool infrastructure.
- Operating Budget was submitted on January 9, 2015. Will be going in for appropriations and over time for seasonals, we are in the red right now. Currently there is no seasonal staff, there is about a \$70,000 balance to open, will be requesting more funding. There is a UAW increase in pay for regular and overtime pay. Mr. Andreana requested that whenever Mr. Murray presents Budget numbers to the Commission to indicate what is specifically park related.
- Veteran's Park kick-off meeting was on January 8, 2015 with Beta Group. Meeting was in regards to project expectations and also approach. Off to a good start. Mr. Andreana hopes that they incorporate the Brian Bill Memorial into the design.

## **New Business**

### **Kevin Murray – Fee Increases.**

- Director of Operations Ernie Orgera requested approval from the Commission to approve an increase in Special Events Application fees from \$25 to \$100.

Mr. Winston made a motion to approve the increase for Special Events Application fees from \$25 to \$100.

Seconded by Ms. Ruijter

Unanimously Approved

- Director of Operations Ernie Orgera also requested approval for a fee of \$10 per vehicle for Special Event parking during the period the parks are open (May 1<sup>st</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup>). No more than 200 vehicles will be allowed at any Special Event.
- Ms. Brown stated that even though Boccuzzi Park is a permitted park, there is no attendant present, and wants to know how this will be enforced there. Mr. Winston explained that even though there is not an attendant present, the Police will enforce.
- Item tabled to the February 2015 Commission Meeting pending more clarification on the Special Events versus the Family Picnic Applications, and how it will be enforced in parks that don't normally have an attendant.

### **Gregory Kruger – Request for Expansion of Men's Senior Baseball League to Create a Third Team.**

- Mr. Gregory Kruger, President of the Fairfield County Men's 28 and over Senior Baseball League requested approval to add a third team to the league. In addition the league's name has always been Men's Over 30 Senior Baseball League not Over 28.
- Ms. Albano explained that the two teams that are already grandfathered in and sanctioned have the Sunday morning time slot at Cubeta Stadium when the kids are not playing. There is no available time to give to a third team.
- Mr. Andreana stated that typically the Commission has never approved new teams. The Commission does not have any control over the school fields and suggested that Mr. Kruger contact the Board of Education.
- The only way the Commission would consider this request is replacement of a team.

Mr. Winston made a motion to deny the request.

Seconded by Ms. Ruijter

Unanimously Approved

### **Old Business**

#### **Discussion Regarding Park's Policies and Procedures/Category Ranking.**

- Mr. Andreana handed out a list of priorities and asked the Commissioners to look at the highest ranking by composite with a general vs dedicated funds, and role of Policy regarding public/private park coalitions. These are the top priority items by consensus, these items will be addressed first. The next will be restricting park usage permit only. Synthetic vs natural grass fields and tree policies.
- The role that the Commission plays: the top priority would be clarifying the Park Commission's role in park's planning. The next one would be field usage across all

sports venues.

- Next meeting, Mr. Andreana would like to take the top three for each section and then define what the Commission needs and what the Commission wants to address in each of these issues.
- Mr. Andreana would also like to discuss additions to parks and fields, regarding approvals and permits. A notice will have to be sent to the Building Department stating that the Building Department shall not issue a Permit unless the request has been approved by the Commission.
- Mrs. Cooper stated that due to time restrictions the Commission needs to address the issue with the conveyance of Cubeta Stadium, the lease expires on July 2015.
- Mr. Murray stated that a letter from the Commission may help with this issue. Mr. Andreana asked Mr. Murray to generate the letter and he will sign it.

### **Correspondence**

No Correspondence.

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

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Mrs. Cooper

Seconded by Mr. Winston

The meeting adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted  
Margarita Arenas  
January 30, 2015