

At the last meeting the Commission asked for a list of all the athletic fields and who is sanctioned to use them, which leagues, sports or activities are the actual sanctioned users of those fields. Ms. Albano e-mailed the information to the Commission.

Mr. Andreana stated that at the end of the meeting there will be time allowed for guests that would like to say a few words.

Ms. Albano stated that she received a call from the Law Department stating that they are working on the answers to the list of questions provided to them by the Commission. Ms. Albano will contact the attorney at the Law Department to see if we can get those answers before the April 15th regular Commission meeting. Ms. Albano stated that the Staff Attorney did tell her that the Commission does have the right to set Policy and that any of our day to day operational rules, policies, do not need to be brought to the Board of Representatives.

Mr. Macari discussed the need to look at the 13/14 fields that are currently permitted to the Youth Baseball programs, with an eye on potentially consolidating these properties as the Little Leagues consolidate. By doing this we will be able to find some fields for the soccer teams and lacrosse teams that keep coming to the Commission.

Ms. Albano stated that the Commission needs to re-evaluate and finalize who the providers are and then support them. Youth Sports providers should be partners with us. There has been a huge growth on youth sports and the demand is very high.

Mr. Andreana stated that baseball is the biggest user of fields; however, the Commission needs to look at not only baseball, but all of the sports. One of the things that need to be done is setting the priorities, who is our first customer? Is it youth leagues, adult leagues, industrial leagues, etc.? Once a policy is set on whom the users are, first, second, third, fourth priorities need to be set, then within those groups look at what sports we have to accommodate.

Is the Commission looking at setting a priority on High School sports and accommodating the High School sports? The problem is how are we going to accommodate them and where are we going to put them, with keeping in mind the changing scene of all Stamford sports. The Commission needs to look at the whole scenario, where we are going today and where we are going in the next 10 years. We have the ability of looking at new parks; Scofieldtown is going to become a park.

Ms. Albano stated that allocation of fields is based on enrollment. Ms. Brown expressed her concern about the way the fields are being used without proper supervision or notification; the fields need to be policed. Ms. Albano stated that this is one of the issues she would like the Commission to discuss, off season pick up play. Ms. Albano also reported that Lione Park has become a little bit of a problem, Ms. Albano has been told that there are groups that use the field that are having their own little mini leagues, and people doing private instruction. Ms. Albano suggested revisiting Lione Park and maybe considering permitting the field. Mr. Andreana suggested putting this issue on

the Agenda of the next Special Meeting.

Mr. Macari stated Representative Jim Caterbone told him about a parcel of land that abuts Woodway Country Club, which is about 11.4 acres, sort of between the Golf Course and a neighborhood. Representative Caterbone wanted to know since this is City land can we use it for something.

Mr. Winston stated that the Commission needs to start to put into perspective the analysis of what we have, what kind of kids do we have, what kinds of demands we have and what kind of space do we have. The Commission has to know who their customer is and what we can provide.

Mr. Macari would like to know how many kids are playing soccer, baseball, etc. Ms. Albano will provide the information requested. Ms. Albano agreed that we need registration numbers and suggested possibly doing a trend analysis of our demographics vs. the national trends and growth rates in different sports. We also need to factor in some of the soft stuff, the intangibles of what's been well loved in Stamford and what is continued to be cherished and valued.

Ms. Brown suggested that the Commission meet with the leagues from the different sports so that they can give the Commission an understanding of their needs.

Mr. Macari stated that the Permitting and Sanctioning documents that were reviewed at the last Special Meeting are 95% right on, they only need very small changes. The Commission needs to add to those documents to be able to communicate to leagues and get them to agree and sign off and have everyone on the same page including the Commission, the Law Department, Board of Representatives and the leagues. Mr. Macari will work on the changes and will discuss at the next Special Meeting.

Representative Jim Caterbone

Representative Caterbone asked the Commission to be very careful and use discretion about pulling fields from leagues. There has already been a shrinking of leagues within Stamford, if you go back in years it was a 10, 11 and 12 year old league, then a Minor League program was implemented for 8 and 9 year olds, then another Minor League program started for 7 and 8 year olds and as the years progressed more divisions were added on. When you are losing at the 10, 11 and 12 year old age bracket you are getting new kids coming in, now there is a 4 and 5 diaper league. This means that the numbers are actually up overall in baseball, if you take in from age 4 to 12.

Little League has given up Softball, it's an existing program in Stamford, 50/70 is off the board, there is no 50/70 league sanctioned by Stamford. There are no Little League Travel Teams, so they are back to the program that was instituted ten years ago with the addition of the diaper league. Little League is ready to cooperate. Mr. Andreana stated that the Parks and Recreation Commission will look at any activity that relates to field usage, field conduct, field maintenance, field care, but the Commission will not get

involved with internal league or team issues, it is not the Commission's purview or responsibility, it is up to the District Administrators.

Representative Caterbone stated that he has received complaints from ice hockey people that they are having difficulty in arranging more ice time.

Attorney Joe Sargent

Mr. Sargent stated that he is of an opinion that the Commission has to have the Field Use Policy and the Moratorium go to the Board of Representatives. Section 175 of the Ordinance is very clear that in order for the Commission to pass rules and regulations to have legal effect, you are allowed to adapt them, but they have to go by resolution to the Board.

Mr. Sargent is concerned with the Moratorium. The Moratorium does not give the Commission the feedback to find out what the public really wants. There are others sports such as Lacrosse that are growing, but because of the Moratorium the Commission cannot get the feedback from the public. Mr. Sargent feels that it is important to revisit the Moratorium; everyone should have a fair and equal opportunity to use a field.

The second concern Mr. Sargent has with the Moratorium is that there is only one sanctioned men soccer league. Mr. Sargent feels that the Moratorium does not allow the Commission to get feedback from the youth programs and it may give preferential treatment to certain programs and teams on the adult level.

Mr. Macari stated that the Moratorium that has existed for years is directly related to our new idea about architecting. Since the Commission has been turning down so many people, the Commissioners felt that the Moratorium is limiting to them, because they are not allowed to give fields or give use to new organizations. The new architecting policy that is being discussed has to do with the new way of looking at it including the Moratorium.

Ms. Albano asked the Commission that the next Special Meeting take place after the busy season is over.

Mr. Winston stated that the Commission needs to narrow things down, determine who the users are and what space we have. Until we have all of the data, the Commission should look at all of the permitted users and how efficiently they are using the fields.

Commissioners would like Matt Nordt, new Assistant Superintendent of Recreation, to attend the next Special Meeting. The Commission would also like Mr. Nordt to look into numbers of participants in the organizations we are permitting, so the Commission can build a use/participation matrix.

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Mr. Macari

Seconded by Mr. Winston

The meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Margarita Arenas

May 9, 2013