

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE NEWTOWN PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
TOWN HALL SOUTH
JULY 10, 2012

These minutes are subject to approval by the Newtown Parks and Recreation Commission.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Marks called the meeting to order at 5:12 pm.

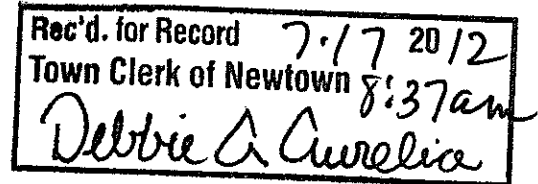
Commission Members present: Marks, Brookes, Crick Owen, Yanni Jr., Boritz and DiNicola (Mr. Yanni Jr had to leave the meeting early.)

Commission Members absent: Barczak

Staff present: Mangold, Samuelson and Reggiano

Staff absent: None

Public: Kendra Bobowick from the Newtown Bee



ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

(m/s/c: Crick Owen/DiNicola) "Motion to accept the minutes from the June 12, 2012 meeting as amended". Under Public participation in the 6th & 7th line from the bottom, the sentence should read "Chairman Marks noted that Babe Ruth By Laws place some restrictions on eligibility for travel play". And Under New Business the 6th line from the bottom, the sentence should read "But in return we use the Board of Education's plumber and electrician in a cooperative function." The motion was carried unanimously.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- None

CORRESPONDENCE

- Director Mangold received a nice email from a couple who loved the new tennis courts at Dickinson Park and wants to buy benches for the tennis courts. Director Mangold explained that there is a group of people in town that are trying to raise money for a bench at the tennis court in honor of Suzanne Gardner and that they may want to donate the rest of the money needed for that bench.
- Two donations were received for the Camp Scholarship Fund one check was for \$500.00 and the other was for \$1,000.00.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

- Chairman Marks reported that First Selectman Llodra asked Director Mangold and Assistant Director Samuelson (along with Public Works) to put together a report on the progress of the Oakview Field Project. There has been some displeasure with the progress of the project from a member of the Legislative Council. Director Mangold and Assistant Director Samuelson will present this report to the Legislative Council tomorrow night at the Council's meeting. The meeting will take place Wednesday, July 11 at 7:30 pm at the Booth Library.
- One item that will be explained is that it is not tax dollars being used on the project but surcharge money.
- Chairman Marks asked Director Mangold and Assistant Director Samuelson to keep the focus on the Oakview Project.
- Assistant Director Samuelson has been working on the report and will send a draft to the First Selectman in the morning. She can then forward to the necessary people. The bulldozer that was purchased by Parks and Recreation to do jobs like this and so far has logged approximately 350 hrs.
- Chairman Marks reported that the Parks and Recreation budget this time around has been untouched.
- Chairman Marks and Director Mangold are scheduled to meet with the First Selectman to discuss Community Center options.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Director Mangold reported that we are very busy with summer projects and with the day to day workings of the department.
- Director Mangold reported that the pool has been very busy. She said the pool was very busy today when the Commission members were on their tour. Assistant Director Reggiano told the Commission that Education Connection uses the pool 2 times per week from 2:30 – 4:30 pm and they bring around 50 children. They use

the pool from the end of June – mid August. They pay \$600.00 for pool usage. Last week the lifeguards had to stop people from entering the pool because we were at capacity. Assistant Director Reggiano has worked with Misty Morning on their pool usage request and they now use Eichler's Cove Beach. They bring in about 30 – 35 kids. Director Mangold and the Commission brought up that their might need to be a compromise with the day care groups to deal with the overcrowding.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PARKS – PARKS AND FIELD REPORT

- See attached report.
- We are super busy with camps going on especially the bathrooms and locker rooms.
- We have completed an awful lot of work for baseball.
- We have started putting topsoil down at Oakview Field.
- Low voltage wire installation is ongoing at the Fairfield Hills Maintenance Garage.
- Construction on the Band Shell at Dickinson Park was started today.
- 248 hrs of vacation/sick/personal/injury hours were used this past month. We are down about 1.5 persons per day. Perhaps this would be a good benchmark for Carole Ross to keep track of for the department where a labor crew is involved. First Selectman Llodra addressed an attendance issue with an employee of the Parks crew.
- Marc Kenney from Newtown High School Girls Soccer team put in a request for a Jamboree on September 1, 2012 from 8:00am – 2:00pm. The Commission discussed the possibility of a policy for school Tournaments/Special Events requests. The Commission also discussed that for the high school requests for events that there could be one waiver per group per year. They would also have to provide insurance from the high school/Board of Education. There would be a separate light fee that would have to be paid if lights were required. The Commission agreed not to charge for the Jamboree.

(m/s/c: Boritz/DiNicola) "Motion to approve the request from Marc Kenney, Newtown High School Girls Soccer Jamboree as long as they can demonstrate that they are covered under the Board of Educations' insurance." The motion was carried unanimously.

- Assistant Director Samuelson has talked with Gregg Simon, Athletic Director at the high school about the many Saturday games that were scheduled for our fields. This requires overtime on our part to have the field groomed that morning for a game. Mr. Simon was not aware of this issue and promised to adjust the schedule next year so there aren't that many Saturday games.
- After a brief discussion regarding fees for tournaments/special event the Commissioners agreed on the following motion.

(m/s/c: Brookes/Crick Owen) "Move to charge \$400.00 for a field request for Special Event/Tournament Request for a tournament/event lasting 3 day, the fee for 4-6 days is \$600.00 and any event/tournament last more than 6 days will be \$800.00. No Event/Tournament will last longer than 10 days."

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF RECREATION REPORT

- This past Rooster Run was the largest ever. We had 489 runners and took in \$6,000.00 for the Newtown Scholarship Fund in the name of Lee Davenson.
- Assistant Director Reggiano is working with Newtown Youth Basketball on their schedule for the 2012-2013 season.
- Day Camp numbers at Treadwell are low this year. Only about 7 -15 kids per group and about 6- 7 late stays campers per day.
- Assistant Director Reggiano had a meeting today with All Star Bus Company to go over what the Parks and Recreation needs are for the summer of 2013. She also requested a price for a trip this year that we had a bus driver cancel on. It is a trip to Mountain Creek Water Park in Vernon, New Jersey. The price was \$845.00. Which is very high. She explained the Teen Camp to the representative and he said he would see what he could do. The rate they charge is \$65.00 per hour. There is also a \$50.00 cancelation charge if they have to cancel a bus. She also asked if they would be willing to make stops on the way to and from some of the longer trips. Ten owner operators from town will be working with All Star this year. Assistant Director Reggiano expressed her interest in using those drivers for our trips. Brookfield Parks and Recreation pays \$60.00 per hour. Chairman Marks would like Assistant Director Reggiano to contact Ron Beinkowski, Business Director, to try and get the Parks and Recreation contracted rates when they negotiate the next bus contract.
- First Selectman Llodra received a complaint about Eichler's Cove Beach hours. Due to the budget cut Eichler's Cove was opening one hour later per day. It will now close one hour earlier to effect less users. The hours for Eichler's Cove Beach are 11:00 am – 6:00 pm daily.

OLD BUSINESS

1. DOG PARK

- Plans are in the works for the Halloween Party and the Haunted Hayride.
- Either Assistant Director Samuelson or Operations Supervisor John Moore or both will attend the next Dog Park meeting to discuss the Dog Park details.
- The Animal Control Center had its Grand Opening this past Sunday (although the facility is not quite complete yet.) First Selectman Llodra took time to recognize Dr. Silverlieb for his dedication to the Town's animals.
- The Town Clerk donated 2010 metal dog tags to the Dog Park Committee to be used for the Dog Park. The tags are in the shape of a bone which is their logo and it has 2010 imprinted on the tag which is the year the fundraising began. The Committee is thinking of some type of sayings to be engraved on the tags once the park opens.

2. SHORT PLAYGROUND SUMMARY

- Director Mangold shared with the Commission members a Concept Plan for Dickinson Park/Playground designed by Billie Cohen. The idea was to keep the Park unique and natural but modernizing it at the same time. Conservation requirements must be met. The playground equipment material has a long life expectancy. The product is safer and free from splinters with minimal maintenance. Chairman Marks asked if we could get a price for using Trex for the equipment. Commissioner Boritz suggested maybe some sculptures or artwork for the park. Director Mangold told the Commission she could contact the Cultural Arts Commission. The Commission would like Billie Cohen to come to a Commission meeting possibly in September when we are closer to the funding.

3. HIGH SCHOOL LIGHTING PROJECT

- Superintendent of Schools, Janet Robinson asked that Director Mangold and Chairman Marks attend the Board of Education meeting next month to go over this project and ask for their support. They will attend the meeting next month, August 14th at 7:30pm.

4. OTHER

None.

NEW BUSINESS

1. PARKS AND RECREATION PERCEPTIONS

- Chairman Marks and Director Mangold are concerned when they hear comments or complaints that come from First Selectman, Pat Llodra about the progress of Oakview Field. Chairman Marks is concerned with us losing our credibility when we miss deadlines. Director Mangold has not received any calls about Oakview Field directly. There have also been complaints from Babe Ruth Baseball about how long it took to complete the batting cage at High Meadow Field. Chairman Marks would like Director Mangold and Assistant Director Samuelson to give expected completion dates but with a cushion to cover delays due to unforeseen circumstances. Chairman Marks suggested that there be some type of way to keep the town updated on the status of our projects. Commissioner Brookes reminded the Commission that they had talked about doing a brochure for Eichler's Cove Beach/Marina.
- Assistant Director Samuelson told the Commission that the sports groups are expecting a lot and that they have been catering to Babe Ruth Baseball for a year and that other groups are complaining that their stuff is not getting done. He stated that there have been 60 projects over the last 10 years that have been completed on or close to time and budget. He will have more men in the fall to dedicate to Oakview Field. The project is slated to take 1200-1400 hrs and so far they have clocked 450 hours. In the fall Assistant Director Samuelson stated that he is planning on 60 – 80 hours a week toward Oakview as opposed to the 40 that is being spent now.
- Assistant Director Samuelson stated that we are good at doing projects, but not so good at keeping the public informed, perhaps a blog. The First Selectman is looking at software with a mechanism that would help to show progress on projects. Public Works has tried and the public gets frustrated if it is not up to date. On the Communication issue residents who sit on various boards in Town do not always have long term history on the department or projects. Commissioner Brookes suggested that Assistant Director Samuelson Park and Field monthly report be posted on the Parks and Recreation website. We need to market the department better. We also need a venue for residents to communicate back to us. Chairman Marks will do a quarterly newsletter for the public with status updates on the project. Information will be gathered from Director Mangold and Assistant Directors Samuelson and Reggiano.

- Parks and Recreation does too much for Babe Ruth Baseball. We need to tell them one major project at a time. As long as we give them a realistic sense of how long the project will take. We need to establish a deadline with the worst case scenario. Chairman Marks would like to see us pull back and know our limits. We might have to start telling sports groups that they will have to do more of their own work.
- The Commission discussed putting a weekly update for Oakview on the website so the First Selectman would have somewhere to send residents when they have questions. This information would also be helpful to the Board of Selectman, Legislative Council and the Board of Finance.

2. OTHER

- **None**

(m/s/c: Crick Owen/ Brookes) **"Motion to adjourn". The motion was carried unanimously.** The meeting ended at 7:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,
Donna Benson
Clerk

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CARL SAMUELSON
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, PARKS

TOWN OF NEWTOWN

PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

PARKS AND FIELDS REPORT

TO: Newtown Parks and Recreation Commission,
Amy Mangold, Director

FROM: Carl Samuelson, Assistant Director – Parks

DATE: July 10, 2012

RE: Monthly park update and field report

The extremes continue as the past month has been hot and dry. Oakview field is moving along and summer camp is in full swing. Camps and summer programs as well as the pool and beach being open require greater day to day input to keep the facilities clean and in good operating order.

The following is a highlight of items completed this past month, aside from our normal day to day tasks of mowing, cleaning and grooming at our facilities:

- Completed batting cage installation at FFH.
- Bid opening and award for Dickinson Stream Daylighting.
- Opening of Eichlers Cove Beach for the season.
- Spray all fields for late summer grub control. Apply herbicide to FFH baseball to remove invasive Poa Annua. Aerate and overseed FFH field following herbicide kill.
- Cleaned up and seeded waterline install project at Glander.
- Cleaned up and seeded scoreboard install project at Liberty.
- Groomed and lined fields for approved baseball tournaments.
- Basketball court coating and lining complete.
- Backstop construction for PeeWee 1 is complete.
- Oakview drainage swale and tree removal is complete.
- Installed safety mulch in playgrounds at both parks.
- Cleared trails from SHS and Adventure center to Treadwell for summer camp use.
- Mulched beds at Eichlers Cove and Dickinson Park.
- Assisted BOE with emergency sewer line repair at NMS.
- Set up and breakdown for annual Rooster Run.

Items we have started/continued work on:

- Oakview sub grade creation followed by topsoil.
- Low voltage wire installation ongoing at FFH shop.
- Band shell construction breaking ground this week.
- Pool controller upgrades at Treadwell.

On the horizon:

- Lining and grooming for baseball State Tournament next week.
- Tick spraying at all parks.
- Sign installation for “High Meadow” field
- Band Shell construction.
- Sign installation at Dickinson Park and maintenance garage.
- Handicap lift installation at Treadwell pool.

Staff:

- 224 hours of vacation/sick/personal/injury hours were used out of 1600 potential work hours. This represents a 14% loss in workforce or 1.4 employees per day.