

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE NEWTOWN PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
TOWN HALL SOUTH  
AUGUST 14, 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 6:05 pm.

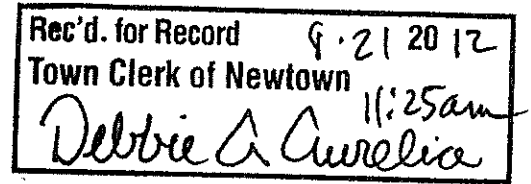
Commission Members present: Marks, Brookes, Crick Owen, Boritz, and Barczak

Commission Members absent: Yanni Jr and DiNicola

Staff present: Mangold, Samuelson and Reggiano

Staff absent: None

Public: Joseph Vazques, 10 Saw Mill Ridge Road, Newtown and Kendra Bobowick from the Newtown Bee



**ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

(m/s/c: Crick Owen/DiNicola) "Motion to accept the minutes from the July 10, 2012 meeting as amended".  
**Under New Business Section 1 – Parks and Recreation Perceptions, fourth bullet should read "Parks and Recreation expends considerable resources on Babe Ruth Baseball." The motion was carried unanimously.**

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

- Joseph Vazques of 10 Saw Mill Ridge Road, Newtown – Mr. Vazquez was registering a complaint about one of the coaches that schedules time through Parks and Recreation for track and field time. His daughter worked for Coach Eileen Fish and was told she would be paid this year (last year she volunteered) only to have her paychecks bounce (checks are written from her personal checking account). Mr. Vazquez reported that he is going thru the proper steps to report this to the Newtown Police Department. Chairman Marks explained that Ms. Fish does not work for the Parks and Recreation Department and assured Mr. Vazquez that necessary steps will be taken to stop scheduling time for Ms. Fish if in fact these circumstances are confirmed with her. He also stated that Parks and Recreation would make sure that safeguards are in place to assure proper payment procedures. Commissioner Barczak suggested that maybe she be required to post a bond. Chairman Marks would like Director Mangold to check into Ms. Fish's business status (non-profit/private). He also does not want us scheduling field time for her until this matter is resolved. Mr. Vazquez told the Commission that Ms. Fish has 8 days to respond to the police complaint or they will issue a warrant for her arrest. Chairman Marks asked that Mr. Vazques keep Director Mangold updated as this matter proceeds.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

- Director Mangold received a nice note from Rita Crana with a check for \$3,036.62, the balance of Jack Honan's estate. Mr. Honan is a former employee of the Parks and Recreation Department. They would like the funds to go toward the Park Gift Fund. Director Mangold sent a Thank You note to her.
- Email from Babe Ruth Baseball thanking the department for all their help and hard work this past season. Director Mangold reminded them that they still have an outstanding Tournament Fee and camp surcharge fee that is due.

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

- Chairman Marks, Director Mangold and Assistant Director Samuelson answered questions at a Legislative Council meeting in regard to the Oakview Field project. They were able to clarify some of the details of the project. One item that was clarified was that the money for the project is coming from the Parks and Recreation Surcharge Fund, not from taxpayer's money. The project is on course for opening in the fall of 2013. There will be a project update on the Town Website hopefully over the next couple of days. The Legislative Council and the First Selectman were pleased with the information presented to them. Director Mangold is currently working on getting signage for the Project that will include a rendering and project details.
- Chairman Marks and Director Mangold were asked by the First Selectman to contact to Pete D'Amico, owner of the Newtown Youth Academy, to find out what his plans are for the Youth Academy. They met with Mr. D'Amico on August 1<sup>st</sup> where they reviewed his plans for the Academy. The renovation on the Academy will be complete by November 1, 2012. The renovations include flipping the surfaces of both wings and adding office space. There will be new surfaces for the basketball courts and tennis court. Mr. D'Amico is open to the possibility for the Town to purchase the Academy or part of it in the future for a Community Center. The

Academy is more viable to expand the footprint of if necessary. There may not be enough space to satisfy our needs and the needs of the Seniors. Another option that might be available is the reuse of one of the schools. Director Mangold will report back to the First Selectman.

- The Capital Improvement Plan – Chairman Marks reported that the Board of Finance has taken both Park and Recreation projects slated for next year and put them on hold. These two projects included the Dickinson Playground and the tennis/basketball courts at Treadwell Park. On August 21<sup>st</sup> at 9:00 am there will be a meeting with the First Selectman that Director Mangold and Chairman Marks will attend to discuss the plans for the CIP. The Treadwell pool house repair is scheduled for this fall and will be proceeding as planned. The Dickinson playground may have to come down if the project is put out past next year.

## DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Director Mangold showed the Commissioners a color copy of the sign that will be going up at Oakview Field. She has been working with Stantec on this sign project. The First Selectman is requiring that a rendering of the completed field be included on the sign. The cost for the sign was \$600.00 for the rendering and \$400.00 for the sign. The sign was not budgeted for with this project. After a discussion with the First Selectman and the Finance Director it was decided that \$500.00 would come from the Parks and Recreation Surcharge Account and \$500.00 would come from the First Selectman's account. All visual projects will need signage from now on. The sign will be ready this Friday. Parks and Recreation will have to supply the post as they were too expensive to purchase with the sign. The Commission agreed that this was not the proper use of the Surcharge Account. In the future the cost for the sign will have to be incorporated in the price of the project. There is already a sign at the Dog Park and additional information can be added to that as needed.
- The Victory Garden Harvest Fest will be held on Sunday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> from 1:00 - 4:00 pm. Director Mangold and Mr. Pessin will discuss the future movement of the garden due to the ambulance garage construction. Director Mangold will get an update on that project from Bruce Herring.
- On the evening of August 21<sup>st</sup> Chairman Marks was asked to address the Commission on Aging about combining the Community Center with a Senior Center. We will need a space concept from the Commission on Aging for both separate and shared space. He will explain to them where Parks and Recreation is in the process. Commissioner Brookes told the Commission about information she received from the First Selectman that 75% of homes in Newtown do not have children in them.
- On August 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm Director Mangold and Chairman Marks will go to a Board of Education meeting to discuss the lighting project for the high school back practice field. Parks and Recreation has committed to pay for the lights out of surcharge money to have lights installed in three years. Gregg Simon, Athletic Director for Newtown High School will be in attendance as well as Sean Dunn from Newtown Youth Football and Cheer. Newtown Youth Football may ask for a concession stand and equipment storage at the field. Parks and Recreation will only be advocating for the lights.
- The Trail Committee – Director Mangold is encouraging the Committee to do an outline and mark off the trail at the Fairfield Hills Campus that is in the Master Plan. This way if grants or funding come along they would be ready to go.
- Transition Newtown has had their Lexicon of Sustainability photos up at various locations in Town. They will be up at the Harvest Fest. The next meeting is August, 29<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 - 6:30 pm in the Town Hall South Conference Room
- The skateboard lessons that were held during Dickinson Day Camp were a huge success. Director Mangold and Assistant Director Samuelson spoke with Adam Mangiafico and asked if he will be continuing his efforts for recycling at the skate park, and he agreed to continue. When asked what if anything he would like to see added to the skate park he replied a half-pipe and a water fountain.
- Park Safety Issues – Treadwell Park Camps, which all start at 9:00 am, pick up and drop off has had traffic issues this summer. The police have been at the park with radar and the highway department helped out with speed limit signs, Kendra Bobowick from the Newtown Bee has written an article about the traffic concerns and a letter was sent out from Director Mangold. The parking issues will be addressed. One concern is that there are no sidewalks in the parking lot. Once the Day Camp is using the old maintenance building they will have parking on that side of the park for the employees.
- There has been a group of residents trying to raise money for a bench at Dickinson Park, by the tennis courts, dedicated to an individual who has been very active in tennis. They have raised \$560.00. Director Mangold is requesting that the balance for the bench be taken from the Park Gift Fund. The Commission discussed buying the same bench to be placed in Jacks Grove in Dickinson Park in honor of Jack Honan. The bench will have a plaque for Jack Honan.

**(m/s/c: Crick Owen/Brookes) "Motion to use \$500.00 from the Park Gift Fund toward the purchase of the bench for Dickinson Tennis Courts and \$1,000.00 from the Park Gift Fund for a bench for Jack's Grove in Dickinson Park." The motion was carried unanimously.**

- Director Mangold has received a request to reserve Eichler's Cove picnic area and beach for a birthday party. Donna Benson, Secretary of Parks and Recreation has amended the pavilion rental forms for Eichler's' Cove. The party will be off season in September. The renter will have to pay for insurance. The fee for rental is \$100.00 for the beach and the picnic area or \$50.00 for just the picnic area. Lifeguards fees are \$24.00 for a

two guards and \$12.00 for each additional guard per hour. The funds generated by rentals would go toward a pavilion. The Commission discussed different fees. The Commission suggested a two hour minimum for lifeguards and to limit the time for a party to four hours, and that the beach should close a half hour before dark. The Park Warden would also need to be present for the party. There has also been a request to have a small wedding at Lake Lillinonah Boat Launch next year. The wedding would be during the week. Director Mangold will come back to the Commission after a couple of party rentals and tell the Commission what works and what doesn't.

#### **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PARKS – PARKS AND FIELD REPORT**

- See attached report.
- The Oakview Field Update should be on the Town Website tomorrow. Town Clerk, Debbie Aurelia will be setting it up. There has been a lot of progress made this week on the field. The subgrading is complete and the top soil is being placed now. Then it will be graded and seeded. Chairman Marks spoke with Soccer to see if they wanted to sod the field and upgrade the irrigation system. They will hold up with the irrigation and proceed with seeding.
- High Meadow Field is coming along.
- The lightning detection devices all have strobe lights that flash during the lightning warning event. We need to have a lightning protocol. The window for the lightning warning is 24 minutes from the last strike. Assistant Director Samuelson will research the protocol in other states. There are lightning detection devices at Treadwell Park, High Meadow Field, Eichler's Cove and the High School. This would be helpful to have at a lifeguard in-service to show the guards how the detection equipment works.
- The recycling is working well at the parks. The clear bag containers seem to help with the recycling. Thanks to Director Mangold and a couple of park rangers as well as the site directors from the camps. Associated Refuse helped with the recycle containers.
- The swings have been removed from Fun Space because they were unsafe. There was a swing set that was purchased for Eichler's Cove that is in storage at Dickinson Park. The question was asked if they should install the swing set at Dickinson Park instead of Eichler's Cove. The Commission agreed not to install the set at Dickinson Park since it would be temporary. The set will be installed at Eichler's Cove as planned. Depending on how far out in the Capital Improvement Plan the new playground at Dickinson is, Fun Space may have to be taken down before a new playground can be installed due to safety reasons. We will have to keep evaluating the equipment. Chairman Marks suggested that there be a summer celebration for one summer before the playground comes down. The Commission decided to table this item until the September meeting.
- The AT & T dedicated phone line has been installed at the Fairfield Hills Maintenance Facility.
- The air conditioning repair at the Teen Center is complete.
- Musco Lighting has been wonderful in their response to a lighting strike to the field lighting system. The Controller was damaged and they overnighted the parts to us. The parts were under warranty.
- Concrete was poured for the band shell at Dickinson Park. The framing will go up on Thursday.
- Babe Ruth Baseball went to Rob Sibley, from Land Use, to apply for a permit for irrigation at Walnut Tree Field. Parks and Recreation has researched this at this field in the past and it would have cost between \$50,000.00 - \$70,000.00 for the infrastructure that would be needed. Rob Sibley indicated to Babe Ruth Baseball that they first need to get permission from Parks and Recreation. Assistant Director Samuelson explained that there is a possibility of using a large water tank at the field for infield use.
- Dickinson Stream Day Lighting Project was awarded to Nagy Brothers. They will proceed with the alternate plan. The concrete box was ordered. Nagy will begin the third or fourth week of September. The road and driveway may not be in until the spring.

**m/s/c: Brookes/Barczak) "Move to approve \$600.00 additional dollars from the Surcharge Account to buy the sign with a rendering for the Oakview Project." The motion was carried unanimously.**

#### **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF RECREATION REPORT**

- Teen Adventure Camp was fabulous this year. Small World Adventures conducted a raft building event at Eichler's Cove Beach that was enjoyed by all. There were 25 campers that week. There were also two boating trips during this camp.
- Day Camps ended this past Friday. At Dickinson Park Day Camp there was a stunt bike rider who performed and also talked of safety, respect and honesty while performing. He also signed autographs for the campers. We received a discount since he did two shows at the park. The last day of camp is Carnival Day – both camps brought in bounce houses and cotton candy machines. Director Mangold and Assistant Director Reggiano were at Dickinson Park making fruit smoothies. The kids had a blast and it is a great way to end camp. There are only a few small camps running this week.
- The Fall Preview should be out the first week of September.
- Assistant Director Reggiano met with Kathy Brophy from the Newtown Youth Academy to view the new flooring that will be put down in the facility. The only drawback is that drop in soccer and flag football do not have use of the facility during renovations. She will look at using the green at Fairfield Hills for flag football.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **1. DOG PARK**

- Last month the Committee met with Operations Supervisor, John Moore to go over the plans for the dog park construction. There is the possibility of additional space for the park coming through an extension of an easement. Assistant Director Reggiano and Katharine Simonds of the Dog Park Committee visited the New Milford Dog Park. The park contained trees and fencing. Our park will have that plus water and benches. Assistant Director Reggiano has read the book "Are You Ready to Build a Dog Park". A schematic of the dog park will be ordered. There will be two sections to the park. One section at a time will be completed and then seeded. The planned completion date is November 2013.

### **2. CAPITAL IMPORVEMENT PLAN (CIP) UPDATE**

- See Chairman's report.

### **3. OTHER**

- None

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. OTHER**

- None

**(m/s/c: Brookes/Barczak) "Motion to adjourn". The motion was carried unanimously.**

The meeting ended at 8:27 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Donna Benson  
Clerk



## 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:** August 14, 2012

**RE:** Monthly park update and field report

Summer Camp has just ended and most of the summer extremes are behind us. Although weather is still affecting construction progress we seem to be firing on all cylinders and moving in the right direction.

We have started to lose our summer help, which always presents challenges, however after a few more weeks when the pool and beach close things become more manageable.

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:

- Groomed and lined fields for approved baseball tournaments.
- Oakview sub-grade is complete topsoil being spread.
- Treadwell pool controller upgrade complete.
- Handicap lift installed at Treadwell pool.
- Aerated and overseeded High Meadow field following invasive removal.
- Emergency Exit door alarm install at Treadwell Pool.
- Lightning detection strobe installation at all horn stations.
- Lightning detection horn station installation at NHS and High Meadow Field.
- Implemented recycling program working better than any previous attempt.
- NHS irrigation repairs following lightning strike on 8/5.
- Cleared Eagle Scout Picnic Area at FFH.
- Brush hogged solar field install site at sewer plant.
- Removed unsafe swings at FunSpace.
- Installed water fountain at FunSpace.
- AT&T dedicated phone installation done at FFH Shop
- Failed A/C condenser replaced at Teen Center
- Repaired lighting controllers at Treadwell Park that had been struck by lightning.
- Aerated and overseeded NMS softball field

Items we have started/continued work on:

- Spreading/grading topsoil at Oakview.
- Low voltage wire installation ongoing at FFH shop almost complete.
- Lightning detection horn station installation at Liberty.
- Band shell construction going well, slab was poured today, structure frame will be placed on Thursday or Friday.
- Tick spraying at all parks.
- Fall fertilization of all fields.
- Final school site field clean ups before opening.
- Overseeding of all athletic fields
- Replacement of rotted fencing at Liberty Fields with concrete fencing

On the horizon:

- Invasive removal and overseeding at NHS baseball.
- Sign installation for “High Meadow” field
- Sign installation at Dickinson Park and maintenance garage.
- Treadwell pool building renovations.
- PeeWee Field construction

Staff:

- 296 hours of vacation/sick/personal/injury hours were used out of 2520 potential work hours. This represents a 11% loss in workforce or 1.1 employees per day.