

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE NEWTOWN PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
TOWN HALL SOUTH
OCTOBER 8, 2013**

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 6:01 pm.

Commission Members present: Marks, Boritz, DiNicola, Yanni Jr., Crick Owen, and Barczak

Commission Members absent: Brookes

Staff present: Mangold, Samuelson and Reggiano

Staff absent: None

Public: Kendra Bobowick

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

(m/s/c: Boritz/Barczak) "Motion to approve the minutes from the September 10, 2013 meeting as amended." Under Correspondence the sentence should read "He removed the benches from the school and is looking for a new home for them if they can't be used at the new school or by the Board of Education". Under the Assistant Director – Recreation Report, third bullet item - correct date should read "Saturday, October 26th". The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Director Mangold received an email Thank You from Stephanie Byrnes (Sandy Hook School PTA President). She was very appreciative to Director Mangold for letting the PTA members put the red cups in the fences that spell "VOTE" at some of our facilities. She gave them permission as long as they returned to take the cups down after the vote. The Commission agreed that that was alright as long as our crew did not have to clean them up afterwards.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

- The Dickinson Park Playground project is moving forward with the Ground Breaking Event scheduled for Tuesday, October 22, 2013 at 11:00 am at the park.
- Chairman Marks and Director Mangold met with the Chairman of the Commission on Aging, Kurt Symes and Bob Geckle. This meeting was to give both men the background on previous work that had been done to try and work with the seniors on a Community Center. They all agreed to take another look and to revisit the shared use of a Recreation /Senior Center. It would be a true Community Center. They are set to meet again next week on October 16th.
- Chairman Marks will send the Commissioners copies of a presentation that he has prepared that included the original Fairfield Hills Master Plan, the 2005 revised Master Plan and the current plan that Stantec has been working on. All three Master Plans are very similar to each other as far as the needs of Parks and Recreation.
- 26 Benches update - Chairman Marks will meet with Assistant Director Samuelson and Director Mangold to discuss the details of placing the benches. He will also meet with a liaison for the 26 families to see if they would like inscriptions for their loved ones placed on the benches.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Director Mangold reported that at the last Department Head meeting Jackie Jacoby, a retired local School Superintendent, was introduced as a member of the Search Committee for a new school superintendent for Newtown. Director Mangold was asked for her input on what she would like to see in a new superintendent. She explained that she would like a strong partnership with Parks and Recreation and that they understand the department's needs for use of the schools/fields and a working relationship between Board of Education and Parks and Recreation. The Committee has held two public focus group meetings with a third one yet to come. Director Mangold will find out the next date. Director Mangold would like Assistant Director Reggiano to also speak with Ms. Jacoby. All are invited to participate. There is also an on line survey that can be taken.

- The Aid-Matrix data from 12/14 is in the process of being closed out. Elizabeth Rallo is working on this. Director Mangold reported that when she saw the report there were some items on it that she was not aware of. So she reviewed the report with Ms. Rallo before closing them all out. There will be a new way to accept donations in the future. There will be a form that will be emailed directly to the donor to complete and return to the Town. Parks and Recreation will be also using this form for any incoming donations.
- The 12/14 One Year Anniversary Committee has decided that there will be no formal Town planned vigil or event for the anniversary. First Selectman Llodra will be making a public statement to the world asking for privacy for the families and the Town so that we can continue to heal in a quiet and reflective way. Her message will also let the world know that we are a kinder, friendlier town and that will now be passing along that kindness to others in need. If there are other independent groups that wish to do something at our facilities they will have to go through the regular channels for anyone who might want to book a facility.
- Last Saturday there was a Skate Competition at the Skate Park run by Tom Capozziello. It was a great event. Director Mangold reported that if this is done again next year she will be more involved with the fundraising aspect of the event. All the money raised this year went to pay for the event expenses.
- Also on Saturday one of the baseball fields at Watertown was reopened since its renovation. First Selectman Llodra was present and honored each of the donors with a proclamation and thanked them for their time and effort.
- Stewart Frankle and his two sons, who made a large donation to the Dickinson Park Playground project, came to visit the site and to see the Town as well as to meet with the First Selectman. Mr. Frankle and his sons will not be able to make the Ground Breaking Ceremony but asked that they be invited to the ribbon cutting when the project is complete.
- Dickinson Park Playground Ground Breaking will be held Tuesday, October 22 at 11:00 am. Bob Geckle facilitated the event. State and local authorities have been invited. First Selectman Llodra would like one of the Commissioners to make a short speech at the event. Director Mangold is available to help with the writing of a speech if necessary. Chairman Marks will try and work on a short speech and give it to Director Mangold as he is not available to deliver it personally. There will be light refreshments afterwards in the pavilion.
- This past Saturday was the Harvest Fest. Also taking place at the Harvest Fest was the planning of 27 fruit trees. August Hoffman, Cem Akinand, Barb Curchalk and 9 students from Invers Hills College and Metropolitan State University came from Minnesota to help with the planting. Director Mangold described the event as very therapeutic. Mr. Hoffman also brought a plaque for the garden. This will not yet be placed in the garden. She would like to wait until spring to see if it could be added to the garden.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PARKS – PARKS AND FIELD REPORT

- Some of the Commission members went on a facility tour this afternoon. Chairman Marks commented that the basketball courts at both parks need benches. We could use surcharge money for that next year. He also noted that a foot bridge should be installed over the new day lighted stream at Dickinson Park, again the funds would come from surcharge or possibly an Eagle Scout project. Assistant Director Samuelson suggested selling the portable basketball hoops and using the money for benches at the basketball courts. The Commission agreed and they will be advertised.
- The department is in seasonal mode.
- There is a broken glass backboard at the new basketball courts at Treadwell Park. Assistant Director Samuelson will be looking into possibly replacing them with acrylic backboards. The Lexan does not fit the poles so the poles might have to be replaced. The company who installed the backboards recommended the glass backboards because they were stronger.
- Musco Lighting will be swapping out the lights at the Treadwell Basketball courts for LED lights as planned.
- Rob Sibley from Land Use asked Assistant Director Samuelson to remove two trees from the Sandy Hook School site. The plantings were replanted at Dickinson and Treadwell Parks. They also removed large ornamental grasses. Everything had to be removed by this past Friday.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF RECREATION – RECREATION REPORT

- Open swim at the high school started last night. So far we have sold 7 family passes, 13 individual and 10 senior passes.
- Assistant Director Reggiano is now preparing for the upcoming Halloween Parties. The 8 yr olds and under - Oct. 24, the 5/6 graders - October 25 and the Howl-A-Ween dog party - October 26.
- We are starting to prepare the Winter Preview for 2014. At the November meeting the Commission will have to set the fees for summer 2014 this includes Eichler's Cove. Assistant Director Reggiano and Director Mangold will discuss the rates before the next meeting.
- The boats have to be out of Eichler's Cove Marina on Monday, October 14 by 10:00 pm.

OLD BUSINESS

1. DOG PARK UPDATE

- Assistant Director Reggiano told the Commission that Assistant Director Samuelson has been great to work with on this project. She also showed the Commission members the samples of the brick colors that will be placed at the Dog Park. Some of the bricks have been sold and will have inscriptions on them. The bricks measure 4"x8" and 8"x8". The bricks are grey or red. The Dog Park Committee favors the grey. Assistant Director Reggiano told the committee the colors might be mixed. They will be located by the entrance to the park. The splash pad and the concrete dog bone pad have been installed. She is still waiting on a few pieces of agility equipment to come in. Assistant Director Reggiano will also have dog park rules for the Commission to review next month. If the weather cooperates the park could be open by late fall.

2. EICHLER'S COVE MARINA SURVEY

- Tabled.
- The Commission agreed that when the rental letters go out in late December that it would include a letter addressing some of the items in the survey. They also agreed that no survey would be sent out this next season (2014). Commissioner Brookes has the survey responses.

3. NEWTOWN YOUTH BASKETBALL – Spring Use Request

- Tabled. No one from basketball was present with a request.

4. FAIRFIELD HILLS MASTER PLAN

- Chairman Marks reported that they will present the plan to the Fairfield Hills Authority on October 16th. He also mentioned that the trail portion needs to be addressed and supervised.

5. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

- Tabled.
- Director Mangold reported that all departments have turned in their CIP's to Finance Director Robert Tait. The next step is for the First Selectman and Mr. Tait to meet with each department to review their request before it goes to the Selectmen. This meeting will be scheduled very soon. Chairman Marks would like Director Mangold to let him know if they need the priority list before the next Commission meeting. If necessary he would call a Special meeting. Director Mangold and Assistant Director Samuelson will send Chairman Marks the information needed to update the spread sheets.

6. SURCHARGE DISCUSSION

- Tabled.

7. COMMISSIONER'S OUT AND ABOUT

- See Assistant Director – Parks report.

8. OTHER

NEW BUSINESS

1. SET 2014 SUMMER FEES

- Tabled until November Commission meeting.

2. OTHER

(m/s/c: Yanni Jr. /DiNicola) "Motion to adjourn." The motion passed unanimously.
The meeting ended at 6:53 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,
Donna Benson
Clerk