

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE NEWTOWN PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
TOWN HALL SOUTH
APRIL 8, 2014**

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

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Marks called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm.

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

Commission Members absent: Yanni Jr.

Staff present: Mangold, Samuelson and Reggiano

Staff absent: None

Public: Tom Colville, Brandy Jacobs, Sonal Chand, Brian Uhlik, Juli Pankow, Matt Crebbin, Deen Kemsley, Todd Brown, Dale Pankow, Madhwri Jerfy, Sue Duval, Luke Duval, Susan Filan, Mee Mee Filan, Hallie Filan, William Camp, Eileen Boyle, Sharon Gaynor, John Spies, Lynn Vazquez, Beth Davis, Brendan McKinley, Bill McNerney, Jim Filon, Brian Roche, Michael Svensson, Will Svensson, Anthony Morano, Donna Shaw.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

(m/s/c: Crick Owen/Barczak) "Motion to amend the minutes of the March 11, 2014 meeting as follows: (first item under Directors Report) Director Mangold reported that the Newtown Hawks track team is requesting time on the High School track and has submitted criteria for review. Director Mangold indicated that she had reason to believe that although the application for field time does not specifically note it, the previous program Director continues to be affiliated with the program, which was denied access to track facilities as a result of alleged financial improprieties ultimately resulting in many complaints and eventual legal action against the Hawks Director. Commissioner Yanni Jr. then shared with the Commission a list of legal issues associated with the Hawks Director, including at least one related to check fraud. The Hawks are requesting use in the next couple of weeks. The Commission would like Director Mangold to send an email that the request was denied because of the nine month notification/request period. The Commission would also like the request and the email to go to the Town's attorney, David Groggins since it was Attorney Groggins who drafted and signed the previous letter notifying the Hawks Director that her requested access to town facilities was being denied. Donna will send the request packet to the Commission members, who may wish to discuss the matter further at the April meeting after reviewing the request packet." The motion passed unanimously.

(m/s/c: Barczak/Crick Owen) "Motion to approve the amended minutes of March 11, 2014 meeting." The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- Eileen Boyle, 4 Fawnwood Road, Sandy Hook. Ms. Boyle is the coach of the Newtown Hawks Track Program. She is asking the Commission to try and work out a solution so that the program can once again be run on the High School Track. This program is open to all children.
- William Camp – Board Member of the Newtown Hawks. Mr. Camp will be handling the finances of the program. He is there to give assistance and support to the program. His son has worked in the program over the years.
- Todd Brown – Vice President of Newtown Hawks. His son started the program last year and it really brought him out of his shell. This program is a good primer for the high school program.
- Sharon Gaynor – Ms. Gaynor's oldest son has been in the program since the beginning. She also has twins that couldn't wait to be in the program. She was upset that the Commission meeting on the Hawks website was posted to begin at 4:00 pm and then was changed to 6:00 pm.
- Sue Duval, 4 Sunset Hill Road, Newtown. Ms. Duval as a parent is not concerned about the safety of her child with Ms. Boyle.
- Mr. McNerney, 20 Fawnwood Road, Sandy Hook. Mr. McNerney asked whether there are other complaints from other organizations. He has been involved with other sports organizations and there are always complaints.
- Deen Kemsley, 14 Merlins Lane. The parents here want to testify that this has been a great program and he would like to see issues worked out so that we could move forward. He is very pleased with the program he has three children in the program.
- Brandy Jacobs, 8 Bramble Trail. She would like to see everyone work towards a resolution. Her son has benefitted greatly from the program.

- Julie Pankow, 6 Hosey Coach Road. Echoes the feelings of others. Her son loves the coach, running and using the track. The program is now running at Newtown Youth Academy.
- Luke Duval, 4 Sunset Hill Road. Mr. Duval asked what steps could be taken to get the program up and running?
- Lynn Vasquez, 1 Stone Terrace. Ms. Vasquez had brought charges against Ms. Boyle/Fish last year. Her daughter worked as a counselor for Ms. Boyle last year and had multiple paychecks bounce. Her daughter was paid in cash at one point some of what she was owed. They felt the children were used to run the program without being properly paid.
- Michael Svensson, 7 Lovell Lane. Coach is wonderful. He would like the structure of who owns the fields and what the entity is to the schools?
- Matt Crebbin, 20 Valley View Road. Town owns all the schools. Parks and Recreation are responsible for the fields. He would like to see a board meeting with a clear structure that meets all criteria. The board should be responsible for who coaches the program.
- Susan Filan – She feels they have been very well served by Coach Boyle/Fish. She asked that criteria information be emailed to board members ahead of the meeting so they can be prepared.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Thank you card from Linda Bradley- Gillette for her gift card from the Commission and the department.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

- Chairman Mark's response to the public participation above. Chairman Marks explained the process for an organization to request a Town sports facility. One item is that the request be in place nine months before the start of the program. The application from Mr. Camps request was received two days before the March Commission meeting. With a starting time of March 2014. The request was denied. The Commission is not comfortable with all the information/personnel that were on the application as far as members of the organization. After further research as to who was involved in the organization both Chairman Marks and Director Mangold became concerned about past issues that concern the safety, supervision and financial goings on of the organization. The public present asked for specifics. Chairman Marks could not give details but did read a letter from the Town's Attorney denying Ms. Fish access to Town facilities due to charges brought against her.
- Chairman Marks told those present that he would entertain the idea of a new track program if there was a new board with members that are committed to being on the board for the Hawks. They would have to meet all criteria and have solid procedures in place to deal with the financial aspects, safety of participants and policies in place to deal with complaints. Ms. Boyle/Fish stated that she would be willing to relinquish all duties if she could just coach.
- Chairman Marks committed to a meeting with the Hawks board members and two other Parks and Recreation Commissioners to see what the Board can come up with as far as organizing themselves. This is in no way a guarantee that permission will be granted to the Newtown Hawks for use of the High School Track. As it stands not they have not been granted permission to use the facility as an organization. The facility can be used by individuals to bring their children to run, but no organized practices/events can be held.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Director Mangold reported that she and Assistant Director Reggiano attended two PTA/Parent Forums held at the Reed School. These forums were to let the public know what resources are available to them in the Community during the summer, Director Mangold and Assistant Director Reggiano were able to highlight the programs/camps available to the community.
- Director Mangold has received approval for funds from Mercy Core to continue training for our Day Camp Counselors this year.
- Camp Scholarships – Jennifer Barahona from the Newtown -Sandy Hook Community Foundation is working on a mechanism to approve funding for at least the children who were at Sandy Hook School on 12/14.
- Director Mangold and Assistant Director Reggiano met today with Newtown Youth and Family Services who have confirmed that we will once again have social workers at the day camps this summer.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PARKS – PARKS AND FIELDS REPORT

- See attached report.
- All 26 benches have been ordered. We will need to reach out to families to ask if and what they would like the plaque for their bench to say. All plaques are to be ordered at the same time. If the family does not want an inscription, Chairman Marks will come up with a message to place on the bench.
- Director Samuelson, Parks Operations Supervisor Moore and three maintainers all attended a two day Certified Pool Operator class on Tuesday and Wednesday of this week.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF RECREATION – RECREATION REPORT

- Flashlight Egg Hunt is Friday, April 11th at Dickinson Park.
- Spring Egg Hunt is Saturday, April 12th at 10:00 am at Dickinson Park.

OLD BUSINESS

1. DOG PARK UPDATE

- May 3rd at 11:00 am is the Grand Opening of the Dog Park.

2. 2014/15 BUDGET

- Director Mangold reported that First Selectman Llodra is sending on the “One and Done” message for the budget. She would like the Commission members to know that if the budget fails they cannot put money back into the budget since no funds had been reduced from the budget before the vote.

3. COMMUNITY CENTER UPDATE

- Chairman Marks reported that the Committee has met a couple of more times and that the First Selectman feels that plans are moving forward. First Selectman Llodra is working on “Question and Answer” information document. The project will proceed in three phases. 1. Stand alone dedicated Senior space (10,000 sq. ft) with two pools. 2. A connection piece between the Town and Newtown Youth Academy. 3. Purchasing rights to the Newtown Youth Academy.
- First Selectman Llodra will be meeting with the Selectman to discuss the plan for the donation. The issue will now move on to the Board of Finance. Mrs. Llodra has a very aggressive plan for moving the project forward.
- In the next week and a half the profit & loss financials will be done for Parks and Recreation.
- All members of the Committee will be involved in choosing an architect as well as Public Building and Site.
- The Community Center Committee meets every two weeks.

4. BABE RUTH BASEBALL/GLANDER FIELDS FENCING

- Assistant Director Samuelson requested up to \$2,500.00 from surcharge to put privacy fencing at Glander Fields.

(m/s/c: Barczak/DiNicola) “Motion to authorize up to \$2,500.00, from the surcharge account, to purchase and install privacy fencing to hide porta potties and garbage receptacles at Glander Baseball Fields.” The motion passed unanimously.

6. COMMISSIONER’S OUT AND ABOUT

- No report.

7. OTHER

- No report.

NEW BUSINESS

1. DONATION PLAQUES

- Director Mangold reported that Bob Geckle has been working with one of the large donors for the Dickinson Park Playground as far as how large donors will be recognized for their contribution. Two donors would like their own plaques. All other donors would be noted on one large plaque. The plaque size in the Donation Policy is 2.5” x 6”. The Commission agreed that these two plaques not be bigger than 8 1/2” x 11” with name, phrase and date. They would like the plaques not to reference the 12/14 tragedy.

2. OTHER

- No report.

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

The meeting ended at 8:37 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,
Donna Benson
Commission 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: April 8, 2014

RE: Monthly park update and field report

April is typically one of the busiest months of the year, this year has been no exception. Although our tasks this year have been much different than normal, we have still focused on getting seasonal facilities opened and fields prepared for spring sports. Much effort has been on winter clean up and repair.

- 5 Staff members attended “ Certified Pool Operator” license training.
- Snow bank removal and drain clearing.
- Stump removal for Treadwell tennis court project.
- Skating rink removals at FFH and Dickinson Park.
- Large tree deadwood removals at Dickinson Park, Eichlers Cove.
- Bathroom openings at Dickinson and Treadwell Parks.
- Spring cleanup of FFH campus.
- Lime application to all athletic fields.

Items we have started/continued work on:

- Spring field prep on all athletic fields.
- Dock repair and inspection for spring installation.
- Drain installation at Liberty trail.
- Continued operator training program for Park Maintainers.
- Brush clearing at Treadwell.
- Parking lot pothole repair.
- Began contractor cemetery tree work.

Staff:

- 344 hours of vacation/sick/personal/injury/discipline hours were used out of 1600 potential work hours in the past month. This represents a 21% loss in workforce or 2.1 employees per day.