

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL BY THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION.

**May 12, 2015**

The Parks and Recreation Commission held a regular meeting on Monday, May 12, 2015 in the conference room located at 3 Main Street in Newtown, CT.

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Patrick Barczak, at 6:02 pm.

**Present:** Patrick Barczak, Vincent Yanni, Jr., Maureen Crick Owen, Warren Spencer.

**Absent:** Chairman Edward Marks, Thomas DiNicola, PJ Yochum.

**Staff Present:** Amy Mangold, Carl Samuelson, RoseAnn Reggiano

**Public:** James Twitchell

**Public Participation:**

*James Twitchell, President of Newtown Fastpitch Softball Organization*

Mr. James Twitchell came before the board to request a field waiver for the Newtown Fastpitch Softball Association. They are an organization of 1 team originally part of the Babe Ruth travel team until this season. They are looking to get a field for practice time, this summer. Assistant Director of Parks Carl Samuelson, stated that all the fields are booked for the spring season and that he would have to take a look at the summer schedule. Mr. Twitchell stated he is looking for a field to use for practice once a week, preferably Wednesday evenings. Mr. Twitchell went on to explain that the team is currently an U11 team and plays in an U12 division. Assistant Director Carl Samuelson stated that they would be looking at the smaller fields (Liberty, Reed) to practice on. Commissioner Spencer inquired if this application was just for the summer season? Mr. Twitchell responded that they will take anything they can, starting now through the fall. Commissioner Spencer stated that the policy will be changing this fall, but for the summer season they would need a waiver and that the application should have started 9 months prior to field use. Mr. Twitchell responded that the team is made up of 100% Newtown players, paying Newtown taxes. The original plan was not to utilize Newtown fields, however, the current field they are using is under dispute between owner of the place and the owner of the property, which leaves Fastpitch in limbo. Mr. Twitchell understands the waiver, but because of the current situation is asking for leniency. Assistant Director Mr. Samuelson suggested that switching their practice day from Wednesday to Friday, might make it easier to fit them into the summer schedule. Commissioner Spencer stated that there are some criteria qualifications on approving a waiver and inquired on Fastpitch uniqueness? Mr. Twitchell responded that Fastpitch was unique, because they have year round training and is made up of 100% Newtown residents. It is a group of players that moves up together and stays together, year after year. This team is like a family and not based on winning, but on development. Commissioner Spencer asked why the team is not part of Newtown Softball? Mr. Twitchell responded that Fastpitch wants to stay as one team and when they asked Newtown Softball if they can keep the same team, they were denied. If they continued to be part of the Newtown Softball organization, they would be at risk of being separated each year. Mr. Twitchell went on to explain that this was the team's third year together as a travel team. Commissioner Barczak suggested that this waiver request be discussed again at next month's (June) commission meeting, when there is more information on field schedules and more commission members in attendance.

**Acceptance of Minutes:**

**Tabled until June 2015 commission meeting**

**New Business:**

*26 Memorial Benches:*

Tabled until June commission meeting.

**Correspondence:**

None

**Chairman's Report:**

None

**Director's Report:**Assistant Director of Recreation Report, RoseAnn Reggiano:

- Sugar Hill Basketball was canceled due to lack of interest.
- Assistant Director RoseAnn Reggiano stated that all summer 2015 staff has been hired (camp counselors, water front, gate guards, park rangers). This includes 2 new park wardens for Eichler's Cove and 2 new site directors at day camp. A lot of returning counselors as well as 10 newly hired counselors. Staff training for the counselors and counselors in training is scheduled for May 20, 2015.
- Eichler's Cove is scheduled to open May 15, 2015. There will be a total of 5 wardens on staff this summer. All the wardens have been trained and ready to start.
- Gate attendants will begin Memorial Day weekend. The staff has been trained and ready to start.
- Assistant Director Reggiano and Director Amy Mangold had a meeting with Jennifer Bullus with the Newtown Youth and Family Services. Ms. Bullus is the on-site social worker and will be working closely with our camps. The social worker is being paid by a grant from Newtown Youth and Family Services.
- Mad Dash and Mini Dash are scheduled for June 13, 2015, with early registration until May 21<sup>st</sup> at reduced fee. Mad Dash has added Super Hero teams (Fire Dept., EMT, etc). Mini Dash will be for 5-8 year olds.
- Rooster Run is scheduled for June 20, 2015.
- The spring master swim program was a great success, with positive feedback. Parks and Recreation will be offering the program again this summer at Treadwell Pool.
- Assistant Director Reggiano and Jennifer Arnold had a meeting with Carminuccio's about giving back to the community. Carminuccio's donated a gift certificate for Strutt Your Mutt and will also tape Parks and Recreation flyers to their pizza boxes.
- Assistant Director, Director Mangold and Assistant Director Samuelson met with Joe Ziegler, with Leaps of Faith. He is offering a free Adaptive Ski program, to Newtown residents only, to be held on June 27, 2015. This will be a water ski, fun packed program for ages 7 to 16.
- Kevin Clark, Parks and Recreation summer office staff, started this week.
- Strutt Your Mutt is Saturday, May 16, 2015 from 11-2pm, at the Dog Park.

Director of Parks and Recreation Report, Amy Mangold:

- Earth Day Festival was on May 2, 2015. Director Amy Mangold stated that this is always a good way to meet and talk with the community. Director Mangold handed out Parks and Recreation summer concert fans. These fans are a good way to promote the summer concert series.
- Director Mangold will have a table at Destination Newtown, with Chamber of Commerce at Rock Ridge on Wednesday, May 21, 2015.
- Rita Pavia-Loomis is now working in the Parks Department as an Assistant to the Assistant Director of Parks Carl Samuelson. Ms. Pavia-Loomis has been instrumental in helping with the field scheduling and day to day administrative work.
- Director Mangold will continue to hold staff meetings in her office once a month. She feels it is a good way to keep the staff informed and connected. It is also a good time to show appreciation to the staff. Assistant Director Samuelson suggested more interaction between staff and commission.
- Projects: Director Mangold stated that Phase II of the Fairfield Hill Trail is coming along fantastic. Very pleased with the work and progress. Assistant Director Reggiano stated that one can see the Victory Garden from part of the trail. Assistant Director Samuelson added that the contractor has 6 months to complete, but feels that it should be completed on or before the deadline. Director Mangold is looking to add outdoor gym fitness stations along the path and will be looking for sponsors.
- Director Mangold and Assistant Director Reggiano have been invited by First Selectman Pat Llorda to attend the Community Center meeting and meet the new Commission on May 26, 2015.

Assistant Director of Parks and Fields Report, Carl Samuelson:

Assistant Director of Parks Carl Samuelson stated that 1/3 of the Park's staff has been out for various reasons in the past month. It's been a bit of a struggle, however moving forward despite the setbacks. Assistant Director Samuelson went on to say that they are still behind as the late snow cover has kept them off the fields. They are prioritizing their efforts to get fields open and main facilities cleaned up. The following have been completed or started in the past month:

- Fields all open, prepped, lined. Currently on regular grooming schedule.
- Concrete drain install at Treadwell Tennis Courts.
- All irrigation systems up and running for season.
- Acid injection systems up and running at NHS and Oakview.
- Treadwell daily tree watering and gator bag installations.
- Treadwell bathroom repairs. Jetter full plumbing system, camera inspection of pipes and install higher gpm flushometers.
- Dog Park water repair and wash station hook up.
- All artificial fields groomed and painted.
- Maintenance facility HVAC work 100%.
- Tilson Field lighting repair complete.
- Docks installed at Eichler's Cove and Lake Lillinonah.
- Staff attended Electrical Safety and Awareness class.
- Staff completed OSHA required Crane Safety training.
- Treadwell kiddie pool plastering and opening.
- Daily watering at Treadwell with SHVFR Tanker.
- All fields fertilized.
- All seasonal tasks on regular schedule at this point including mowing, grooming, cleaning and lining.
- FFH Campus trail. Additional drainage and grading due to water concerns.
- Treadwell tennis courts surround work. Topsoil placement and fencing completion before final color coat. Treadwell pools uncovered and running for anticipated season opening.
- Sandy Hook School water booster pump installation prep.
- 5 of the 10 survivor 9/11 pear trees that have been donated have been planted.

Staff:

424 hours of vacation/sick/personal/injury/discipline hours were used out of 1440 potential work hours in the past month. This represents a 31% loss in workforce.

Commissioner Barczak inquired about the status of the new docks at Eichler's Cove. Assistant Director Samuelson responded that the docks are scheduled for production.

Assistant Director Samuelson received a phone call from Linda Hess, with Newtown Soccer Club, with complaints of a men's soccer team playing on a field that was already scheduled for a Newtown Soccer Club game. The Men's over 30 soccer team refused to leave the field, which forced Newtown Soccer to cancel a scheduled game. Assistant Director Samuelson fined the men's soccer team \$250.00 and Ms. Hess is billing them \$90.00 as reimbursement for referee fees.

Assistant Director Samuelson also stated that they are in the process of placing the Memorial Benches and that 9 of the 26 bench locations have been sited. LRM will start installing this week.

Assistant Director Samuelson proposed purchasing a ProCore Processor, which is an attachment for a tractor. A Core Processor: sweeps, processes and disperses aeration cores in one pass; Reduces time and labor; Returns the turf to playable condition in less time; Reduces stress to the turf. Samuelson stated that to purchase a brand new ProCore Processor with tow hitch and wheel kit it would cost \$24,005.73. Samuelson went on to say that he had budgeted to purchase these items 4 years ago and because of budget failures had to cut it out of the budget. He now has the opportunity to purchase a used ProCore Processor from the town of Darien for \$9,500.00. The unit has 76 hours of use and can last for over 2000 hours. Parks Department would put approximately 300 hours on the ProCore Processor a year. Darien is selling this equipment because they were using it on a golf course and was not conducive to the uneven grounds, as it was scalping the grounds. Samuelson suggested that they take the funds out of the surcharge. There was \$10,000.00 in surcharge for irrigation system, which they will end up using \$4,000.000. They would take additional monies from surcharge. He feels that there would be a savings in labor time and efficiency. The equipment will be added back into the capital budget.

**Motion:**

**Commissioner Warren Spencer made a motion to authorize up to \$9,500.00 to purchase the ProCore Processor from the Town of Darien. Commissioner Vincent Yanni, Jr. second the motion, which was carried unanimously.**

**Old Business:**

Maintenance of permanent memorial:

Table until June commission meeting

Field Rules/Regulations Manual:

Commissioner Pat Barczak stated that we need to get real clarification of the Field/Rules and Use before fall 2015. Commissioner Warren Spencer suggested that we have true definition of Legacy vs. Regional teams and list the legacy teams by name. Assistant Samuelson stated that in the Field Rules/Regulations Manual it does define Legacy Organization and suggested adding that a Legacy Team has been in existence (for example) 15 years. Commissioner Barczak suggested that the Manual also have a definition of Regional teams and list the Regional teams by name. Under the Regional Organizations category, the number of Newtown residents wouldn't count. Commissioner Barczak asked if the category piece of the Field/Rules Guide be removed and converted into a separate appendix, to cut down on the number of pages in the handbook. Assistant Director Samuelson responded that the request from the different organization is to have it all in 1 package. Assistant Director Reggiano suggested that when we change the wording under the User Organization Categories, to include the word "and" and "per team", under category A and B; and include the word "or" and "per team" under category C, D and E.

Commissioner's out and about:

Commissioner Barczak went to see the new Fairfield Hills Trail Phase II and stated that LRM is making good progress and looks great.

Commissioner Barczak inquired about the current year CIP amount and suggested that we take the \$5,000,000.00 CIP and combine it with the \$10,000,000.00 from the General Electric Grant to make it a total of \$15,000,000.00 to put towards the building of the New Community Center.

**Motion:**

**Adjournment:**

**Commissioner Maureen Crick Owen made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:32 pm. This motion was second by Commissioner Warren Spencer, which was carried unanimously.**

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 9, 2015 at 6:00 pm at 3 Main Street, Newtown, CT in the conference room.

Submitted, Gabriella Chernoff, clerk