

**Town of Newtown, CT**

3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT

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

The Parks and Recreation Commission held a regular meeting on Tuesday August 11, 2015 in the conference room located at 3 Main Street in Newtown, CT.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ed Marks, at 6:04 pm.

**Present:** Edward Marks, Patrick Barczak, Vincent Yanni, Jr., Maureen Crick Owen, PJ Yochum

**Absent:** Thomas DiNicola, Warren Spencer.

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

**Absent:** Amy Mangold,

**Public:** Tom Harrison, Jim Swift, Josh Hull, James Haynes, James Twitchell, Linda Hess

**Public Participation:**

**Jim Swift, Fairfield County Captains Baseball**

Mr. Swift came before the commission to inquire if there was a formal policy on Field Use and Regulations. Mr. Swift is concerned that the commission will give precedence to an Established organization over another Newtown organization, solely because they've been existence. Chairman Marks explained that an Established team is a team that has had a presence in Newtown and has contributed to capital projects and field maintenance. The genesis for coming up with the original Field Use and Regulations was to make sure that any new organizations had structure, a board of trustees and fixed rules. Mr. Swift feels that the Captains are equal to an Established team in terms of structure and fixed rules and inquired on why they are not being treated equally in terms of fees? Babe Ruth is categorized as an Established team meets the Newtown residency requirements and is non-profit. Chairman Marks went on to explain that a non-profit team should produce a 501c3 letter. Mr. Swift explained that it could costs thousands to be a 501c3. Chairman Marks stated that some teams piggyback other National organizations, which makes the 501c3 less expensive. Mr. Swift inquired on what the Established teams do in terms of investments and maintenance. Mr. Marks explained that these teams have provided their own rakes, speedy dry and purchased equipment and invested in capital improvements (i.e.; batting cages). Assistant Director of Parks Carl Samuelson stated that he has looked at policies used in many towns in Connecticut and Massachusetts. Mr. Samuelson went on to explain that our fields in Newtown are being overused and it is becoming tough to regulate. There was an inquiry on the usage of indoor gym space by other towns? Assistant Director of Recreation RoseAnn Reggiano responded that the use of gym space is not allowed by other towns.

Linda Hess, Newtown Soccer Club, Newtown, CT

Ms. Hess came before the commission to express her concern with the limited time she has to put together a soccer schedule for multiple teams, for the Fall Season 2015, and how to implement the new policies. Ms. Hess inquired if the new Field and Regulations manual will be ready in time for the 2015 Fall Season? The Newtown Soccer season starts in 2 weeks. Ms. Hess also wanted to get clarification on how the new policy will affect Samba/CFC Premier teams? Chairman Marks stated that CFC is not Newtown based and is for profit and even though they are affiliated with Newtown Soccer, in his opinion, should be secondary to Newtown based organizations. Mr. Samuelson stated that the new policy does not mean less field time, but the policy will be used for prioritizing schedules. Mr. Marks told Ms. Hess that Parks and Recreation will contact her within the next week to go over the new policy and assist with scheduling.

Jim Twitchell, President of Newtown Fastpitch Softball Association

Mr. Twitchell came before the commission to get clarifications on the *User Organization Categories* in the new Field Use and Rules Regulations manual. Mr. Twitchell wanted to know why under Category C it was 90% or greater "Newtown Residents" per team and not 80% or greater "Newtown Residents"? And that there was a discrepancy with the fee structure.

Tom Harrison, American Legion Admirals Baseball

Mr. Harrison came before the commission to request a copy of the new Rules and Regulations manual and to inquire how the commission can vote on this without the public having a chance to see the manual. Mr. Marks responded that the new Field Use and Rules Regulations manual is a draft that has not been shared with the public. The original draft was shared with Newtown based organizations at a field use meeting. The draft document has been discussed and worked on at several commission meetings and will be voted on tonight, but will be open to changes going forward. Commissioner Patrick Barczak stated that this new policy has been in process for close to a year. Mr. Harrison inquired on when his paperwork is due for spring 2016 field time. Mr. Marks responded that it is due by October 1, 2015.

**Old Business:**

Field Rules/Regulations Manual:

The Commission reviewed the modifications made to Field Administration and Facility Use Manual. Some changes were discussed and made. Rule #46: The surcharge fee for the year is now \$25.00 per player, Newtown Resident and \$50.00 per player, Non-Resident. The commission changed the verbiage to rule #52: *All user groups are required to submit financial record once every two years.* This change will be voted on, but can be subject to change in the future, once there is clarification from Financial Director Bob Tait. Under the *User Organization Categories* the word *Legacy* was changed to *Established*. Category C is entirely new: \*New Newtown based Organization qualified for field usage under the "Field Administration Policy" and; \*80% or greater "Newtown Residents" per team and; \*Pays double currently established surcharge rates for a period of five years and; \*Approved by the Parks and Recreation Commission as a qualifying organization for a period of one year prior to issuance of field time. The

commission also made changes to the graph under the Fee Structure. The category C was moved within the graph to reflect per player/per season vs per hour. Chairman Marks explained that the Category C teams will pay double surcharge rates for a period of 5 years in order to build equity for capital projects. Commission Patrick Barczak stated that the commission decided on 5 years, to distinguish an Established organization, which has invested, from a newer organization. Chairman Edward Marks inquired on what the policy was if a non-established team wanted to buy in and pay off surcharges early and donate big capital items. Assistant Director of Parks Carl Samuelson stated that would be displacing an Established organization that has been part of the community for a long time, making investments toward capital projects. Commissioner Maureen Owen Crick added some language to clarify some of the rules and definitions and the commission agreed to the changes.

**Motion:**

**Commissioner PJ Yochum made a motion to approve the changes made to the Field Administration and Facility Use Manual. Commissioner Patrick Barczak seconded the motion. Discussion followed. Commissioner Maureen Crick Owen amended the motion to include that the Field Use Manual, as revised, was effective immediately and to be implemented for the Fall 2015 season and for every season thereafter. Said amended motion was seconded by Commissioner Yochum, which was carried unanimously.**

Department Capital Improvement Projects Summary Worksheet

For the Five Fiscal Years 2016/2017 to 2020/2021 Working Draft

(2016-2017)

- 1. Community Center Phase (2 of 3) \$10,000,000
- 2. Treadwell Park Parking \$ 550,000

(2017-2018)

- 3. Community Center Phase (3 of 3) \$ 5,000,000
- 4. Eichler’s Cove Improvements Phase 2 of 2 \$ 500,000

(2018-2019)

- 5. Dickinson Park Phase III \$ 1,300,000
- 6. Fairfield Hills Field Plan Phase 1 of 2 \$ 900,000

(2019-2020)

- 7. Waterfront Improvements \$ 500,000
- 8. Rail Trail Extension \$ 700,000
- 9. Tilson Artificial Turf Replacement (Not Bonded) \$ 500,000
- 10. Duplex Remediation near Victory Garden \$ 750,000

(2020-2021)

- 11. Treadwell Improvements \$ 1,000,000  
(Pavilions, Bleachers, Playgrounds)
- 12. Maintenance Yard Improvements \$ 670,000  
(Green House, Cold Storage Building, Landscaping, Wash Water Recycler)
- 13. Treadwell Pool Renovations \$ 1,500,000

Assistant Director of Parks Carl Samuelson presented the commission with a copy of a map to show the Fairfield Hills Field Plan to support #6 in above CIP. Chairman Marks stated that the Canaan House, as of right now, is the first one on the list to come down. If this is the case, phase 1 can be done on site. The field can be used for baseball field or a multi-purpose field. Mr. Samuelson suggested that the open field could possibly be used for future community space for events. These fields would however, alleviate the use of school fields, which are becoming more and more difficult to maintain. There was also discussion amongst the commission members regarding turfing the back High School Fields. There was a concern on the turf replacement intervals and the amount of time the High School Fields are used by Parks and Recreation. Mr. Samuelson stated that the fields are available for use from 5-10pm and can be used for football, lacrosse and soccer. Chairman Marks explained that #7 in above CIP is improvements to Lake Lillinonah (80%) and Alpine Drive (20%). For #8 (see above) Rail Trail is the extension of Monroe trails off Pepper Street. For #9 the Tilson turf replacement will be using surcharge. The Duplex Remediation (#10) budget was increased from \$500,000 to \$750,000 to include outside access bathroom facilities as well as extension from current walking trail.

**Motion:**

**Commissioner Patrick Barczak made a motion to accept the Capital Improvements Projects Summary Worksheet. Commissioner Vincent Yanni, Jr. seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.**

Long Term CIP Project List

The commission had compiled a *Long Term CIP Project List* of 20 items at the July 12, 2015 commission meeting. Chairman Edward Marks requested that each commissioner prioritize the list on what they feel they would like to see done first to last and submit list to Secretary Gabriella Chernoff by Friday August 21, 2015.

Alexandra Toth, Girl Scout

Ms. Toth had proposed fencing on the soccer field A at Fairfield Hills campus at the July 11, 2015 commission meeting. Mr. Samuelson has followed up with Ms. Toth regarding this project and she will supply commission with map of proposed area for fencing. Ms. Toth will also supply a suggested fence type and material needed to complete the project.

**Acceptance of Minutes:**

**Motion:**

**Commissioner Vincent Yanni, Jr. made a motion to approve Minutes from July 12, 2015 Commission Meeting. Commissioner PJ Yochum seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.**

**New Business:**

None

**Correspondence:**

**Chairman's Report:**

None

**Director's Report:**

Assistant Director of Parks, Carl Samuelson presented his monthly park and field report. The parks department staff continues to work at a 54% loss of workforce, due to injuries and illnesses. The following items have been completed or started in the past month: Treadwell trees replaced, sidewalk to tennis court completed; 30 Arborvitae planted to screen portable toilets; Dog Park trees installed; Dog Park drain complete, splash pad reprogrammed; Treadwell "Adventure Quest" sign removed, \$1800 to replace; Weeding of all planting beds at Treadwell; All seasonal tasks on regular schedule at this point including mowing, grooming, cleaning and lining. Items that have been started/continued to be worked on: FFH Campus trail - signs and bollards to go in; Treadwell tennis courts surround work. Curbing/island to be formed and planted once irrigation running; 26 bench installs have begun. 12 of 26 benches have been installed; Eichler's additional docks were delivered; Temporary water hook-up for Treadwell Park.

Mr. Samuelson has received 10 phone calls in the last week, regarding the need for more Pickle ball courts. He suggested to the commission that Parks and Recreation paint pickle ball fields within the tennis court fields. It will cost \$750.00 per pickle ball court. Mr. Samuelson requested for two pickle ball courts to be painted for a total of \$1,500.00.

**Motion:**

**Commissioner PJ Yochum made a motion to approve painting Pickle ball lines on one tennis court at Treadwell Park and one tennis court at Dickinson Park, for a total of \$1,500.00, from the Parks and Recreation Gift Fund. Commissioner Patrick Barczak seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.**

**Motion:**

**Adjournment:**

**Commissioner Vincent Yanni, Jr. made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 pm. This motion was seconded by Commissioner PJ Yochum, which was carried unanimously.**

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 8, 2015 at 6:00 pm at 3 Main Street, Newtown, CT in the conference room.

Submitted, Gabriella Chernoff, clerk