

**Stonington Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting
Monday, April 25, 2011 at 6:00 PM
Human Services Room**

Present: Chairman C. Michael Crowley, Vice-Chair Frank Prachniak
Commissioners: Joe Ciriello, Joe McKernan, Beth Quesnel, and Paulla Solar.
Recreation Administrator Joseph Mendonca, Jr.
Absent: Commissioner Larry Theadore

I. Publics' Opportunity to Address the Commission
No comments.

II. Secretary's Report

A motion was made by Commissioner Quesnel to accept the Secretary's Report. Motion seconded by Vice-Chair Frank Prachniak and approved.

III. Budget Report

- a. General Fund
- b. Special Activity

A motion was made by Commissioner McKernan to accept the budget reports. Motion seconded by Commissioner Quesnel and approved.

IV. Stonington Rocks

First Selectman Edward Haberek, Jr. in attendance to discuss "Stonington Rocks", a proposed summer concert series to be held in Donahue Park in Pawcatuck, CT. First Selectman Haberek stated the following information to the Commission: "Stonington Rocks" is a proposed summer concert series to be held in Donahue Park that he hopes to include as part of an overall initiative to revitalize downtown Pawcatuck. The proposed concert series will be structured similarly to sponsor based concerts at Esker Point in Groton, CT and Misquamicut Beach in Westerly, RI, and held on Friday nights so as not to conflict. The Westerly-Pawcatuck Downtown Business Association will be assisting & providing personnel. Three bands have been booked; each scheduled to perform on a Friday evening as follows: Bad Medicine (a Bon Jovi tribute band) on July 15th; Sugar on August 5th, and another local band on August 19th, for two hours, 6pm – 8pm. He has met with Director of Human Services Beth-Ann Stewart, Director of Public Works Joe Bragaw, and Chief of Police J. Darren Stewart to discuss the event, and he has put together a Sponsorship Opportunity Form, with 5 sponsorship levels. The First Selectman stated that he has confirmed his first sponsorship from the Westerly-Pawcatuck Downtown Business Association for \$1,500.00, and that CC O'Brien's and a downtown bistro are expected to contribute. The projected cost for the three concerts, including sound, stage, police and any type of administrative cost is expected to be approximately \$12,000.00. He is hoping to have \$4,000.00 by the end of the week to secure the first concert, and is hoping to speak to Lisa Konicki regarding vendors similar to those present at the duck race. The First Selectman stated that everyone he has spoken to so far is excited about an opportunity for an event like this in Pawcatuck. He will be sending a letter out, and proposed to the Commission highlighting Recreation Administrator Joseph Mendonca Jr., tasking Administrator Mendonca as a key leader,

responsible for reaching out to prospective donors to obtain the smaller sponsorships, while the First Selectman will reach out to the big donors. The First Selectman stated that in his planning meetings with key departments it was decided to market this event as presented by Stonington Human Services/Recreation Commission, however he feels it should be presented solely as a Recreation Department event, as the Town is known for sports and recreation and he wants to take advantage of the opportunity to highlight the Recreation Department, but he will leave that decision up to the Commission.

Chairman Crowley confirmed with the First Selectman that this will be a non-alcoholic event, and then asked each Commission member to state how he/she felt about the proposed event.

Vice-Chair Prachniak confirmed the cost of \$12,000.00 for the three concerts, and stated he believes it is a good idea to have community events like this, however he hopes sponsorships come through, as his main concern is the amount of money this will cost.

First Selectman Haberek stated he hopes to put a deposit on the bands after this meeting and that if there is some money fronted out of Recreation, it would hopefully get replaced by sponsorships.

Commissioner Solar stated she believes it is a great idea, but thinks it is a lot of money and will involve a lot of fundraising.

Chairman Crowley stated he agrees that it is a lot of money, but if it is successful the taxpayers are being given something back. Chairman Crowley asked the First Selectman about advertising.

First Selectman Haberek stated that he has not announced anything publicly yet, but that The Westerly Sun will profile each band, there will be flyers, a banner put up by the Highway Department, and that should resonate through.

Commissioner Quesnel stated she thinks this is a good idea, and likes what the First Selectman suggested about Recreation getting the publicity, and does not want to be under the umbrella of Human Services.

Commissioner McKernan stated it is a good to use of Donahue Park, and he would like to try.

First Selectman Haberek stated he needs \$2,500.00 to reserve the bands, and is looking for leeway in using Recreation funds that will hopefully be replaced with sponsorship funds.

Commissioner Ciriello stated he thinks it is a great idea and that since the First Selectman has done most of legwork, he would like the Commission to provide \$4,000.00 seed money, with Recreation getting reimbursed. Commissioner Ciriello further stated he believes this should be a Recreation function, not Human Services, as it's a recreational event and has nothing to do with family services, youth services or human services.

First Selectman Haberek stated he will keep Administrator Mendonca abreast of all charges.

Chairman Crowley stated he would like to see the event presented by Recreation/Joseph Mendonca.

Administrator Mendonca stated that Recreation is a division within Human Services, and that teamwork comes from the entire staff at Human Services. Administrator Mendonca further stated he believes this event should be presented by Human Services, in coordination with Recreation, as none of the programs he runs can be as excellent as they are without the help received from Human Services' staff. Administrator Mendonca explained to the Commission that he does understand about getting Recreation "out there", and believes they should work harder at branding Recreation, however the Recreation Division is a part of the Human Services Department, and in order to make this event work he needs the help of all staff at Human Services.

Commissioner Ciriello made a motion to support the "Stonington Rocks Concert Series", and offer \$4,000.00 seed money to move forward. Motion seconded by Commissioner Quesnel and approved.

First Selectman Haberek stated that Human Services' staff does work as a team, however when budgets get tighter all staff are examined closer, and when people identify Recreation they should have something to tie back to.

Chairman Crowley stated he is concerned with how closely things are getting looked at, and wants to provide notifiable services, and wants to get Joe out there more to protect him and show what is done.

V. Communications
None

VI. Programs - Update
a. This month
b. Next Month
c. Planning continues for summer programming

VII. Recreation Administrator's Report

VIII. Other Business

a. Updates/Future Projects Sub Committees Progress

- Beach Volleyball Courts
- Hailey's Way Playground
- Walking Exercise Trail

Inland wetlands application required, which includes hiring a certified soil scientist and surveying, which will add approximately \$3,000.00 to the cost, and significantly add to the amount of time required to complete the project. After Commission discussion it was determined a walking lane on the road is an option that will be investigated.

- Pavilion
- Restrooms

IX. Chairman's Comments

None

X. Meeting Adjourned

A motion was made by Commissioner McKernan to adjourn. Motion seconded by Commissioner Quesnel and approved. Meeting adjourned at 7:28PM.

Respectfully Submitted



C. Michael Crowley, Chairman