

Minutes  
Coe Memorial Park Advisory Committee  
February 3, 2010

**Mission Statement**

***To create within the downtown area of Torrington a first class horticultural oasis in accordance with and strict adherence to the intent of the Coe Godfrey benefactors and the Coe Family Trust.***

**Present**

Parks and Recreation Superintendent J. Brett Simmons  
Parks and Recreation Chairperson Patricia Fairchild  
Parks and Recreation Commissioners: Dan Lovallo and Jim Pescatore  
Coe Memorial Park Advisory Committee Members: Margaret Keywan, Susan Coe Holbrook, Marc Trivella, Frank Pennington, Dr Isadore Temkin, and Mary Zbell

**Absent**

Coe Memorial Park Subcommittee Member Emeritus Robert Driscoll

Patricia Fairchild opened the meeting at 5:15 p.m.

Discussion of the January 6, 2010 meeting minutes began with Ms. Coe Holbrook referencing page 2 of the minutes, "...following continued discussion and resolution, a motion to accept the minutes as corrected was made....." Ms. Coe-Holbrook disputed that there had been resolution, and further stated that she had objected then to the changes proposed to the December minutes and still objected. Objection was also made to the elimination of "in a show of hands, Dr. Isadore Temkin, Mary Zbell, Margaret Keywan, and Frank Pennington would not support contract renewal with Still River Gardens for the forthcoming year." Ms. Holbrook cited Robert's Rules of Order regarding a show of hands and the affirmations of the other Committee members to her statement, although not verbally made and heard on tape. Commissioner Pescatore commented that he did not see all Committee members raise their hands. Ms. Fairchild stated that in listening to the tape, only Ms. Coe Holbrook's intentions were verbalized, but she [Ms. Fairchild] would again listen to the tape of the December meeting.

Committee member Margaret Keywan questioned the gaveling of Dr. Temkin as he was speaking and cited Robert's Rules of Order. Ms. Fairchild replied by stating that as Chairman, she had the right to gavel in order to keep the meeting on agenda. Ms. Keywan also commented that the minutes are the responsibility of the secretary only. Discussion continued, with Ms. Fairchild responding that the changes to the minutes

were in response to the discussion at the meeting. A motion to restore the original minutes of the November 4, 2009 and December 2, 2009 meetings was made by Margaret Keywan, seconded by Sue Holbrook and approved. Marc Trivella abstained as he was absent from the December 2, 2009 meeting.

Ms. Holbrook also referenced the previous meeting's discussion regarding the disposal of the stove at Coe Memorial Park, and stated that the minutes do not state that the Committee discussed the possibility of scrap metal proceeds from the disposal of the stove.

No action was taken to approve the minutes of the January 6, 2010 meeting, and Ms. Fairchild stated that she would be conferring with the City Clerk to discuss the subject of the posting of unapproved minutes.

### **Citizen's Comments**

None

### **Park Operations**

Superintendent Simmons referenced the materials he had emailed to the Committee members. Dr. Temkin complimented Mr. Simmons on the presentation of the materials; then commented that the Coe Memorial Park budget should stand alone and not be part of the Parks and Recreation budget since it is funded by Trust money, not tax money. Superintendent Simmons responded by stating that as a Department Head, he had the responsibility to submit the budget as part of the review process. Discussion continued with Dr. Temkin stating that the Coe Memorial Park budget was not subject to a public hearing, but rather to the Trustee, Judge of Probate, and the Attorney General.

Superintendent Simmons presented the following handouts:

- December 2009 financial report. January 2010 report was not available.
- Calendars for February and March 2010 for Coe Memorial Park.
- Proposed 2010-2011 Budget

Brett Simmons began discussion of the proposed 2010-2011 budget by stating that it was prepared in line with the 2009-2010 budget with no increases and was largely due to contractual obligations and utilities. He explained that with the uncertainty on the Trust and the income, sooner or later there are some defined expenses that must be looked at in order to offset the expenses. Dr. Temkin commented that the money from rentals should be put back into the budget. Sue Coe-Holbrook questioned why the budget was being revisited when at the January 6 meeting, the Committee had passed a motion that the 2010-2011 budget remain the same as the prior year budget, with no line item increases. Superintendent Simmons explained that at the last meeting, he had

distributed the 2009-2010 budget and was looking for input to the 2010-2011 budget preparation process. Now that budget preparations have been completed, Mr. Simmons was looking for a formal vote. Following discussion, Sue Coe-Holbrook moved to approve the budget at \$177,215 for the 2010-2011 budget year. The motion was seconded by Mary Zbell and approved unanimously.

Ms. Coe-Holbrook questioned the Commission's approval at the January meeting of the capital improvement plan which included a \$35,000 amount for planning despite the Committee's tabling of any capital improvements for Coe Memorial Park. After verifying that the capital improvement plan did, in fact, include this line item, Ms. Fairchild then requested that Mr. Simmons remove this budget item from the capital improvement plan.

Superintendent Simmons asked the Committee for their thoughts on switching over to LED lights in the Park. He informed the Committee that to switch the lights on the fleur-de-lis and the buildings to LED's would cost approximately \$4,000. The cost to switch the lights on the Christmas tree would be made after the height of the tree is determined, as there is a formula that estimates the number of lights on a tree based on the dimensions of the tree. Discussion was held on phasing in the switch-over to LED's, the color options of the LED lights, the cost savings that could be obtained, and the possibility of beginning the switch to LED's with the street poles within the park. Mr. Simmons will continue to look into this matter and report back to the Committee.

Mr. Simmons asked the Committee about the old light pole fixtures that are stored in the Coe Carriage House. Disposal options were discussed and the possibility of using Public Surplus was suggested. It was noted that photos of the stove have been given to the Purchasing Department to begin the process of disposal through Public Surplus. Following discussion, a motion was made by Sue Coe-Holbrook to try Public Surplus for disposal of the stove and the light fixtures. The motion was then seconded by Frank Pennington and approved unanimously.

With regard to Still River Gardens, Superintendent Simmons informed the Committee that the Commission has been working with the Mayor's office and Still River Gardens to finalize the contract, which will then go before the City Council. When questioned if the Committee would have any input or see a draft of the contract, Mr. Simmons responded that the Mayor's office had the contract and that he [Mr. Simmons] would be advised when it could be distributed.

Superintendent Simmons began discussion regarding the spruce trees in the Park. Sue Coe-Holbrook informed the Committee of her discussions with the Winchester Board of Selectmen, Pat Hague, Acting Director of Winchester Public Works, and Wayne Dove, Interim Winchester Town Manager relative to the proposed donation of Coe Memorial Park spruce trees to the Town of Winchester. Ms. Fairchild stated that City Council approval must be obtained for this donation as they are responsible for the donation of City property and that the terms of the Trust state that all money spent stays in the Park. Ms. Coe-Holbrook responded that the Probate Court could also make this decision.

Mike Zaharek then advised the Committee that the spruce trees needed to be dug before they began budding and that there should be a plan for the trees before spring. If no decision on the spruce trees is made going into June, the digging should be put off until the fall. Following continued discussion on removal and/or transplanting of the spruce trees, with Mike Zaharek offering his suggestions as to the proper placement of the trees within the Park, a motion was made by Sue Coe-Holbrook to table action on this matter. The motion was then seconded by Mary Zbell and approved unanimously.

Superintendent Simmons thanked Mr. Zaharek for his attendance at the meeting and for his help with the Coe Memorial Park Tree Inventory.

A motion to adjourn was made by Marc Trivella, seconded by Sue Coe-Holbrook, and approved unanimously at 6 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Rategan  
Parks Department Secretary