

Minutes  
Coe Memorial Park Advisory Committee  
July 7, 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, Dr. Isadore Temkin, Marc Trivella, and Frank Pennington

**Absent**

Mary Zbell

Chairperson Patricia Fairchild opened the meeting at 5:20 p.m.

A motion to approve the minutes of the June 2, 2010 Coe Memorial Park Advisory Committee meeting was made by Sue Coe-Holbrook, seconded by Margaret Keywan, and approved unanimously.

Margaret Keywan then stated that as she had been duly elected the recording secretary for the Coe Memorial Park Advisory Committee, she would resume doing the minutes. Discussion on Ms. Keywan's comments followed, and Patricia Fairchild stated that Lynn Rategan would also continue to do the minutes. Both sets of minutes will be reviewed at the next meeting for any discrepancies. Ms. Keywan objected that the Parks and Recreation Commission did not have the right to take this duty away from her. Dr. Temkin suggested that the Mayor decide the matter as he would be making a determination of exactly what the Committee was to be doing in relation to the Commission.

**Citizen's Comments**

None

**Park Operations**

Mr. Simmons handed out copies of the meeting packet and financial information that he had emailed to Committee members. Dr. Temkin expressed his objection to the term "as built" as referenced by Still River Gardens in their report, and stated that this was a plan that would become an "as built" at the end of the season. Mrs. Fairchild stated that this is the language in the contract and that there was nothing that could be done about it now.

Mr. Simmons reported that Artistic Irrigation has been doing its scheduled walk-thru's, and other than a few minor repairs, the system is running well. The new controller, clock, and remote were installed and all are operating satisfactorily. In response to a question by Mrs. Keywan, Mr. Simmons stated that access to the irrigation system controls is through his office. Mrs. Keywan explained the problems they had encountered in the past with too many individuals having access to the system and Parks employees making repairs to the system. Mr. Simmons explained that Parks personnel and Still River Gardens will have access to the system for watering purposes, but no repairs will be completed by Parks personnel. Following this discussion, Margaret Keywan made a motion that if there are any breakages or repairs due to negligence by Parks and Recreation employees, the Coe Trust would not pay for them. This motion was seconded by Sue Coe-Holbrook and approved unanimously.

Plans to divide the park into zones to develop a systematic plan for tree management are being discussed with Mike Zaharek. A draft of the plan will be presented to the Committee, hopefully by the end of the summer. A proposal by Mike Zaharek for one day of pruning at a cost of \$800 to raise the canopies of the trees in the Park was presented for approval by the Committee. Mr. Simmons explained that low-hanging limbs are encroaching on the walkways within the Park. Although they possibly could pose a hazard to those walking through the Park, this would not be classified as safety pruning. A motion to approve this one day of pruning was made by Dr. Temkin, seconded by Margaret Keywan, and approved unanimously.

Sue Coe-Holbrook mentioned that the birch glade was pruned in the past by the prior gardener. Mr. Simmons stated that he thought it was the Committee's wishes to only have Mr. Zaharek handle the pruning, to which Ms. Coe-Holbrook stated that they were happy to have Mike doing all of the work on the trees. Mr. Simmons will ensure that the birch glade is maintained.

Mr. Simmons presented an invoice and accompanying receipts from Still River Gardens: Briarwood Nurseries, \$2,847.70; Silverleaf, \$2,479.45; Kurtz, \$2,470.90; Camp's, \$1,389.05; Planter's Choice, \$1,388; Kogut, \$86.75; and Artefact Architectural Antiques, \$775. Said receipts totaled \$11,436.85, which after subtracting the initial payment of \$5,000 for materials, leaves a balance due Still River Gardens of \$6,436.85. Some additional annuals and compost have yet to be invoiced. Discussion followed regarding the planning and selection of plants for the Park as well as the initial \$5,000 that Still River Gardens had received for materials. During the discussion, Ms. Coe-Holbrook stated that her comments were met with a tone of disrespect.

Mrs. Keywan then stated that the Committee had specifically requested that Still River Gardens plant no geraniums or red, white, and blue flowers within the Park; but noted that there were red, white, and blue plants in the outer circle of the Civil War monument. Discussion concluded with Mrs. Fairchild mentioning the many compliments that she has been receiving about the flowers and how beautiful the Park looked.

With regard to the subject of rental income for Coe Memorial Park, Mr. Simmons noted that revenue had not been posted as of the date of the last meeting, but that all of the revenue received to date has now been posted. Rentals for the fiscal year amounted to \$5,600.

It was questioned as to why there were bills from Yankee Gas, CCM, and another company that were paid within the fuel line item. Mr. Simmons did not know, but will research this. It was noted that Yankee Gas had disconnected and capped off the pipe for gas when the stove was removed.

It was reported that all of the folding chairs have now been stenciled with "property of Coe Memorial Park."

Discussion was held regarding the rental of the Civic Center for the Education Connection feeding program, with no fees being paid. In response to questions, Mr. Simmons reported that the bathrooms were being used and that a cooler was stored in the kitchen for the program. It was stated that during the program, it was noticed that the door to the conference room was left open while the air conditioning was on. It was questioned why the Education Connection did not use another location. Mrs. Fairchild responded that other locations in addition to the Civic Center were used for this program. Frank Pennington requested that the Coe calendar indicate which programs are sponsored by the Parks and Recreation Department.

With regard to the budget, the \$7,000 grounds maintenance line item was questioned. Mr. Simmons explained that this was the account used for payments to Zaharek Landscaping and for items such as fertilizer. No payments for Parks staff are taken out of this line item.

### **Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:00 p.m. was made by Sue Coe-Holbrook, seconded by Margaret Keywan, and approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Rategan  
Parks Department Secretary