

Minutes  
Coe Memorial Park Advisory Committee  
September 1, 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, Mary Zbell, Dr. Isadore Temkin, Marc Trivella, and Frank Pennington

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

A motion to approve the minutes of the August 4, 2010, meeting was made by Mary Zbell, seconded by Marc Trivella, and approved unanimously.

A motion to change the order of the agenda allowing Old Business to be discussed first was made by Dr. Temkin, seconded by Mary Zbell, and approved unanimously.

**Old Business**

Dr. Temkin, referencing the Probate Judge's request that the Coe Trust Fund be separate from the City, made a motion that the Coe Memorial Park Advisory Committee meet the day before the monthly meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission at the Coe Memorial Park Civic Center. This motion was seconded by Margaret Keywan, and discussion followed. Dr. Temkin commented that this action would show the Judge of Probate and Trustee that the Advisory Committee and the Commission get along, but that they are separate. Patricia Fairchild stated that she had thought a meeting was to be called by the Mayor. Sue Coe-Holbrook stated that when the Committee was first established, separate meetings were held and that the Chair of the Advisory Committee was supposed to act as a liaison between the two committees. It was noted that this has changed over the last couple of years and that now members of the Commission are also in attendance at the meetings. Discussion continued, with Ms. Fairchild stating that this would be discussed at the Commission meeting. Following discussion, the motion was approved unanimously by the Committee.

**Citizen's Comments**

Mike Banzurik noted that in 1998, 40 tables were purchased for the Coe Memorial Park Civic Center, and questioned where those tables were. It was stated that some of these tables were seen at City Hall; however, Purchasing records indicate that the only tables purchased by the City from Mity-Lite were for the Coe Memorial Park Civic Center. It

was also noted that chairs were still leaving the Park. Following discussion, Mr. Simmons stated that an inventory of tables and chairs would be conducted.

## **Park Operations**

Superintendent Simmons distributed his email/handout containing the minutes and City-produced financials, and reported that the Treasurer's Office was delayed in their reporting and that they would attempt to provide the most up-to-date Coe financials to him by the Monday preceding the meeting.

Mr. Simmons reported that Mike Zaharek had been in the Park recently doing some canopy raising of the trees; and with the additional workers that accompanied him, a significant portion of the Park had been covered. Mr. Simmons noted that Still River Gardens was appreciative of this work as some of the low-hanging branches were starting to impact the garden beds as well as the walk-ways. Mr. Zaharek has been requested to submit some type of a proposal to establish a long-term contract for care of the trees within the Park, which will then be distributed to Committee members. Mr. Simmons reported that all work that had been contracted with Mr. Zaharek has been completed and invoiced.

A walk-thru of the Park with Still River Gardens was held on August 18, at which time plans for the fall were presented for review. Purchasing of mums for the Park from Briarwood Nurseries is planned. Still River Gardens' quarterly report was emailed, but not received, due to the size and type of the document. They will be dropping off a copy of their report on disk which Mr. Simmons will attempt to convert to a PDF for emailing to Committee members. The second week in October is being considered for the final walk-thru to review the existing conditions, bulb planting, and putting the gardens to bed for the winter. Still River Gardens would like to discuss splitting some of the perennials, such as the hosta, with the Committee. Also, Still River Gardens has proposed moving some of the perennials to a bed along the parking lot as a temporary holding area, which would also dress up that area of the Park. It was noted that there being no existing irrigation in that portion of the Park, hand-watering of this garden would be necessary.

Mr. Simmons reported that \$501 was received for the sale of the stove. A print-out of gas usage from October through July was handed out to Committee members. It was noted that the roof-top heating units were gas-fueled. Ms. Coe-Holbrook questioned the fuel line item, to which Mr. Simmons responded that there were no oil-fired units in the building.

Discussion was then held regarding the creation of signs at the Coe Memorial Park. Mr. Simmons stated that at the prior meeting, the Committee had authorized him to speak with Gary Giordano regarding a suitable sign for Coe Memorial Park using the wrought iron poles that were in the Carriage House. Following his meeting with Mr. Giordano, Mr. Simmons emailed out some preliminary ideas to the Committee. Mr. Simmons noted that a short time after he had emailed the ideas out, he received an email from Margaret Keywan, signed as from the Committee, stating that the drawings were unacceptable. Ms. Fairchild questioned whether a Committee meeting had been held as the email was stated to have been from the Committee. Committee members indicated that they had discussed the drawings amongst themselves over the telephone. A sample of the font that the Committee would like was given to Mr.

Simmons. Suggested colors for the sign were black, with gold lettering; the material should not be shiny. Ms. Coe-Holbrook questioned why Giordano Signs was being forced upon the Committee as the vendor for Coe Memorial Park signage, to which Ms. Fairchild responded that for the record, there was no preferred vendor for this project.

Margaret Keywan brought up the gardens at Coe Memorial Park, stating that from the inception of their contract, Still River Gardens was informed that the Committee wanted a turn-of-the century Victorian garden; but what they presently have is a cottage garden. She further noted that invoices submitted by Still River Gardens indicate a significant amount of annuals have been purchased, but that they had previously indicated that they would be purchasing more perennials than annuals. Ms. Keywan also questioned the purchase of additional boxwoods and the splitting of the hostas.

### **New Business**

Frank Pennington expressed his concerns regarding the condition of the Carriage House and its need for care before winter.

Questions were raised about the \$1,300 charged to Dr. Pagano for the 2009 Tour of the Litchfield Hills. Mr. Simmons will look into this.

Discussion resumed on the Carriage House and its need for painting and roof repair. A motion that the proposals for painting the carriage house go out as soon as possible was made by Sue Coe-Holbrook. Following brief discussion, Ms. Coe-Holbrook then moved that the roof should be done first and then repairs and painting. Mary Zbell seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Ms. Coe-Holbrook then asked for the superintendent's report five days in advance of the meeting, if at all possible, to allow sufficient time for review of the report by the Committee.

### **Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:00 p.m. was made by Marc Trivella, seconded by Mary Zbell, and approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Rategan  
Parks Department Secretary