

Torrington Parks and Recreation Commission
Minutes of June 2, 2010 Meeting

Parks and Recreation Commission Chairperson Patricia Fairchild called to order a regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission at 6:05 p.m. on Wednesday, June 2, 2010, at the Armory. In attendance were Secretary Dan Lovallo, Commissioner Jim Pescatore, Superintendent of Parks and Recreation Brett Simmons, and Recreation Director Donna Winn.

On a motion by Jim Pescatore, with a second by Dan Lovallo, the Commission voted unanimously to accept the minutes of the May 5, 2010 meeting.

Correspondence

Correspondence was read from Ron Romaniello of Cumming, Georgia, with regard to the Romaniello name being omitted from publicized reference to the Babe Ruth field. It was stated that more attention would be given to ensuring that the correct name of Romaniello Field is used in future references, and that the local newspapers would be notified as such.

Correspondence was read from Big Al's Breakfast and Lunch of Plymouth, Connecticut requesting permission to vend at sporting events held at the City parks. Mr. Simmons informed the Commission that a similar request had been received from Q-Buns of Torrington. Discussion followed, and it was decided that vending in the City Parks would be decided as part of a RFP for next year.

Correspondence was read from Mary Rogalski, a student from Yale, who was conducting a survey of ponds across Connecticut and was interested in obtaining samples from Besse Pond. Mr. Simmons stated that he had consulted with Corporation Counsel and that a liability waiver was done for Ms. Rogalski to conduct her sampling. On a related note, Mr. Simmons reported that he had been speaking with an individual from Fairfield with regard to the use of carp to control weeds and vegetation in the Pond. A permit from the State DEP would be required, and Mr. Simmons will continue to look into this process.

Citizen's Comments

None.

Facility Use

- Friendship Baptist Church addressed the Commission with requests to run a soccer camp at Alvord Park and a basketball camp at any available location as an outreach to disadvantaged families. Following discussion, a motion was made by Dan Lovallo to allow Friendship Baptist Church to use Joe Ruwet Field

for a basketball camp July 26 – 30, 2010. Jim Pescatore seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

- On a motion by Dan Lovallo, with a second from Jim Pescatore, the Commission voted unanimously to deny without prejudice the request by Friendship Baptist Church for use of Alvord Park for a soccer camp June 28 – July 2, 2010.
- On a motion by Dan Lovallo, with a second from Jim Pescatore, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the request from the Torrington Tornados to use Joe Ruwet field on the dates they requested, without lights or additional field lining, for the month of June only. A review of July dates requested will be held at the July Commission meeting.
- On a motion by Jim Pescatore, with a second from Dan Lovallo, the Commission voted unanimously to deny without prejudice Prime Time's request for softball field use due to lack of field availability.
- On a motion by Dan Lovallo, with a second by Jim Pescatore, the Commission voted unanimously to deny without prejudice the request from Lorensen Auto Group for the use of Toro II on June 13, 2010 due to lack of field availability.
- On a motion by Jim Pescatore, with a second by Dan Lovallo, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the use of Coe Memorial Park for a Flag Day Ceremony on June 14.

Program Updates

Recreation Director, Donna Winn updated the Commission as follows:

- A Winsted resident would like to enroll her child in the summer playground program. Following discussion, a motion to start charging out of town residents an additional \$50 for any summer program was made by Dan Lovallo, seconded by Jim Pescatore, and approved unanimously.
- Damon Papp, the summer playground program coordinator and Donna Winn have met with applicants for the counselor positions. Ms. Winn commented that hiring decisions would be difficult given the number of excellent candidates, one of whom is a teacher, that have applied for the positions.
- The Oak Avenue summer playground camp will be moved to another location because of construction of the playscape. A press release for the summer playground program will be sent out in an effort to increase enrollment.
- The summer concert series will begin June 15 with Apricot Brandy and will end on August 27 with the Mayor's Polka Party. The Besse pool is scheduled to open June 14.

- A meeting was held with Jill Vannini, the aquatics director for the pool, to discuss this year's season and Jill's recommendations regarding disciplinary actions at the pool. Most of the lifeguards will be returning and applications have been received for the open positions. First aid and CPR instruction for the lifeguards will be provided by Bill Houle at Woodridge Lake. First aid and CPR instruction for the summer playground counselors will be held June 14-16.
- A babysitting class, with full enrollment, was recently held.
- The July 10 New York City Gnosning trip was cancelled. Ms. Winn explained that early deadlines as required by the bus company did not allow sufficient time for people to register. The New York trip to Ellis Island is generating a higher level of registrations than the Gnosning trip.
- Movin' and Groovin' will be held June 5, with 25 different vehicles to be on display. A \$5 donation for adults will be requested, with children being admitted for free. Vendors will be present to sell food and novelties.
- The Pet Expo will be held June 26 in collaboration with the Lion Club. Approximately 20 vendors will be participating.
- Idol auditions will be held June 26. Ms. Winn noted with regret that Dick Terhune will not be the emcee this year.
- A meeting to plan the Home Run Derby was recently held. Ms. Winn is looking for people to help organize the event.

Sports Updates

The softball season is underway. Mr. Simmons reported that 6 of the 10 new bats purchased have been damaged and sent back. The harder ball being used this year as well as the colder temperatures at the beginning of the season were discussed as possible factors for the bat failures. Two 28-ounce bats remain on back-order.

Capital / Budget Updates

A meeting was held last week to discuss the current capital year budget and another meeting will be held to discuss the upcoming capital plan. Mr. Simmons highlighted some of the upcoming projects that were completed this year, among them the new ice rink, renovations to the Ruwet field, and back-stop padding and flagpole restoration at Fuessenich Park. Four to five new entrance signs and 20 rules and regulations signs will be purchased, with additional signs to be purchased in the next fiscal year. Mr. Simmons will be updating the 2010-2011 budget at the next meeting.

Facility Operations

Superintendent Simmons then reviewed his list of completed, current, and upcoming projects, and remarked that staff vacations would limit completion of some projects.

- A second round of field light repairs is planned.
- Bleachers were painted, thanks to those who volunteered for the project.
- Preparations are underway for the pool opening.
- Construction of the Oak Avenue playscape will begin in July.
- Fence repairs have been scheduled at Besse Pool.
- Dates have been reserved for ActiveNet on-site training in September, with possible limited office hours to allow staff training.

Coe Memorial Park Updates

A great number of compliments have been received regarding Coe Memorial Park. Still River Gardens has been working long hours to get the Park looking beautiful.

Old Business

Mr. Simmons reviewed some of the changes he had made to the proposed Parks and Field Use Policies including the addition of Section ID – Requests by New Teams/Organizations and changes to Section 20 – Scheduling. Following discussion, Mr. Simmons advised the Commission that it was his intention to send this document to all affected groups in preparation for a meeting in September with all parties. Official adoption of the policies in October is planned, with a January 1, 2011 implementation date.

A revised Parks Rules listing was presented to the Commission for their review. Following discussion, it was suggested that the proposed new rule prohibiting remote control airborne devices be modified to allow such devices by permit only. A motion to adopt the changes to the Parks Rules was made by Jim Pescatore, seconded by Dan Lovallo, and approved unanimously.

A review of the submissions for the Slogan Contest was held. Following discussion, Dan Lovallo moved that “Explore the possibilities” be the new slogan tag line to the Parks and Recreation logo. Jim Pescatore seconded the motion which was approved unanimously.

The topic of donations was then addressed. Following discussion, Mr. Simmons stated that he would draft a format for handling donations for presentation to the Commission.

Plans for the Titan’s Non-Profit night scheduled for July 16 were discussed. A meeting will be held with Damon Papp to brain-storm activities for that night.

New Business

None.

Other Business

None.

Adjournment

On a motion by Dan Lovallo with a second by Jim Pescatore, the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Rategan
Parks Department Secretary