

**MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2009**

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman John Fontana called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Parks and Recreation office, 75 Main Street, Southington, CT.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Chairman John Fontana, Vice Chairman Megan O. Maruzo, Commissioner Joseph LaPorte; Director of Recreation William J. Masci, Acting Supt. of Parks David Lapreay.

Excused: Commissioners Michael Fasulo and Joanne D. Palmieri; Superintendent of Parks Richard L. Egidio, Sr.

MINUTES:

Commissioner LaPorte made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Maruzo, to accept the Minutes of the October 7, 2009 meeting as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

VISITORS: None

COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS:

1. Jaycee Park letter from Patricia Beloff. Mr. Masci said Ms. Beloff lives across the street from the park. The letter complains about the poor maintenance of the park and that it has become a hangout. He asked how the board wished to handle the situation. Mr. Lapreay said there is nothing recreational going on at the park. The department tries to keep it clean and presentable. There is not much grass there. A crew worked there yesterday. Mr. Lapreay suggested taking down the fence where the tennis courts used to be. There are a few small picnic tables that can be fixed up. Mr. Masci said he believed that the Jaycees were going to reinstate the park a couple of years ago but it never happened. He told Ms. Beloff that any nuisance complaints are police matters. Chairman Fontana wondered if the picnic tables are part of the hangout problem – does anyone use them? There is probably some use in summer. Mr. Lapreay will try to make the park a little more presentable.
2. Winton S. Filipek Sr. Scholarships. Mr. Masci said the town donates tennis balls for the tournaments. The report shows all the scholarships given, five of which went to Southington High School students. It is a good cause, and it was nice to see how many scholarships they gave out.
3. Festival Chorale Letter from Liz Douglas. Mr. Masci said he spoke with Ms. Douglas about the cut to this year's budget and she understood completely. He told her he would be working on the 2010-11 budget shortly. Commissioner LaPorte wanted to be sure Ms. Douglas knew that the Board of Finance did not cut \$2,000 from their budget. Mr. Masci said he explained that the Finance Board cut \$6,000 from the entire Subsidy budget of \$26,000, and that the Park Board discussed how to spread the cut among several groups in that budget. She understood.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS: None.

DIRECTOR OF RECREATION REPORT:

Mr. Masci reported on trips. He has a meeting with the tour director and the 2010 trip schedule will be forthcoming shortly. The Radio City and Lancaster, PA trips are going pretty well. Mr. Masci was able to secure UConn basketball trips in January and February. If necessary we will

share the trips with another town. The Florida “snowbird” trip was cancelled due to lack of interest. Mr. Masci spoke with Keith Nappi regarding the kayak rentals. He is compiling results of what he did this year and will send a check to the town for our share of the rentals.

Lights in the park. Will we plan to shut the lights off November 15 or earlier? These are the lights for basketball and tennis. After discussion, it was the consensus to shut the timers off on November 15. Mr. Masci is working with Little League to get their registrations going. They selected February 6 and 13 but Derynoski will still be playing basketball so registration will be at the high school instead.

Crescent Lake. For January, February and March we will just open and close as we have done in past years. Bow hunting is going on now, then there is a short break and will resume December 9. They got 7 deer – 4 does and 3 bucks. Safe boating course. Mr. Masci tried to set one up for December but the State has not printed the books yet. We do have some classes scheduled for February and March. Mr. Masci will start working on the 2010-11 Budget next month. The long-range 5-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is due to Emilia Portelinha very soon. She wants to complete it before the budget process begins. Mr. Masci mentioned that he spoke with Mark Pooler of the YMCA and he would appreciate it if we put back the budget as we did last year. All programs are in full swing.

The department computers are not back yet. It is difficult for Gerri Roper because she has to recreate things that are on her computer. However, they did not find anything on them and the computers should be back very soon,

Motion was made by Commissioner Maruzo, seconded by Commissioner LaPorte, to accept the report of the Director of Recreation. Motion carried unanimously.

ACTING SUPERINTENDENT OF PARKS REPORT:

Mr. Laprey reported that the crews are doing the fall program – leaf pickup, open spaces. They are still mowing and painting lines. Irrigation got blown out this week. All the rest rooms will be closed by November 15. Panthorn and Memorial are off now since the water was shut off. The department had some equipment that broke down (sweeper and leaf sucker). The mechanic is trying to fix them but it may be a problem down the line. May need to put equipment in the long range plan. Mr. Masci said he would have copies of the previous plan to review when the group talks about the CIP.

Mr. Laprey suggested extending the parking lot for the Dog Park; we still have an issue with mud. Commissioner Maruzo agreed. Chairman thought that some of the dog park issues could be put into the 5-year plan. Mr. Laprey also noted that he planned to contact Agway for a donation of stands and bags.

Motion was made by Commissioner LaPorte, seconded by Commissioner Maruzo, to accept the report of the Acting Superintendent of Parks. Motion carried unanimously.

REPORT OF PARKS:

Panthorn Park. Mr. Masci said that Eric Swallow called. He wants to use the lacrosse field for a girls’ field hockey tournament. He gave Mr. Swallow the names of the lacrosse people.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Dog Park. Commissioner LaPorte said he saw some sturdy posts in the ground at a park somewhere. It might work for the dog park. Commissioner Maruzo commented that it might be good for the linear park trail, because depending on where your dog goes, it could be a long walk to carry a full bag to get to the nearest trash can.
2. Crescent Lake. As reported earlier, we will just open and close the gate from January through March, no supervision.
3. Drive-In Property. A sketch of the pavilion drawn by Commissioner LaPorte was handed out. The pavilion will be 115' x 50' overall. He pointed out where the rest rooms would be, storage area, service area with counters and cabinets, etc. He is looking into a company that makes concrete structures for the bathrooms. There will be sewer and water. The main area could be portioned off for four small parties or used for one large one. Question arose as to whether someone planning a large event could request a one-time waiver to serve alcohol. No alcohol is allowed in any of the town parks but it is something to think about before someone comes in and asks that question. Commissioner LaPorte believed there would have to be very tight supervision in that case. Everyone thought the pavilion would be very nice and that it would be used extensively. Engineering will work up a more formal sketch to present as a site plan at a Planning & Zoning meeting. Bids for demolition of the concession building will be opened tomorrow, November 5, 2009. The all-purpose field will be good sized also. The fence will be taken down by the football league and the board thanked them for their assistance. Commissioner LaPorte is hoping that some work can be done before spring. In response to a question, Commissioner LaPorte said that the construction of the pavilion would have to be bid but we have specifications to be followed.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Maintenance department structure. This is on hold. Mr. Weichsel and Mark Sciota are working on it. It will be discussed when everyone is here.
2. Jaycee Park. Already discussed.
3. Budget 2010-2011. Mr. Masci spoke with the Town Manager about it. At this time we don't know how the new Council will deal with the budget containment policy but it will probably be similar to last year. For budget purposes he will put in a 2% increase.
4. Commissioner's Reassignment of Parks. Mr. Masci put Commissioner Fasulo for Crescent Lake in place of former Commissioner Kanute. The board was fine with that.
5. Status of Superintendent. Commissioner LaPorte asked if there was any status update for Mr. Egidio. Chairman Fontana said there was a meeting and retirement was offered, but he has no idea what may have occurred after that. He presumes the Town Manager will let him know.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Maruzo, seconded by Commissioner LaPorte. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Berardinelli
Recording Secretary