

**MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 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 (arrived 6:40 p.m.), Commissioners Michael Fasulo, Joseph LaPorte and Joanne D. Palmieri; Director of Recreation William J. Masci, Acting Supt. of Parks David Lapreay.

Guest: Michelle, journalism student from Southern CT State University

MINUTES:

Commissioner LaPorte made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Palmieri, to accept the Minutes of the November 4, 2009 meeting as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

VISITORS:

Ron Newman and Todd Verde, Southington Valley Midget Football League. Mr. Newman introduced Mr. Verde as the new president of SVMFL. He then informed the board of a serious accident that occurred on November 7. A tackle went out of bounds hitting a parent who had been helping with the chain marker. She suffered a broken leg and needed plates put in; she has already had two surgeries and more are planned. Mr. Newman spoke again about the tight fields at Recreation Park and is hoping the new field will help in preventing another accident. He thanked the board for helping him out the past couple of years.

Commissioner LaPorte asked Mr. Verde to let the league know how much the board appreciates everything Ron Newman has done. Mr. Verde said there is a general meeting next Tuesday and he would pass that on. Comments were made about Mr. Newman's continued involvement with the league. Mr. Verde said that while Mr. Newman will be spending more time with his family, they will keep him involved.

Commissioner LaPorte said that irrigation was never mentioned as part of the new field, but it would be foolish not to put it in. The field would require top soil, hydroseeding and irrigation. He said we would need the league's help (fundraising, etc.) since there is no money in the current budget. Mr. Verde asked if any other needs were foreseen so that when they plan fundraisers they could be earmarked for particular things. A water line needs to be brought in and drainage needs to be included. We may require a fence where the trees are hanging. If the work can't get going in April, we may have to wait until July with the new budget. Commissioner LaPorte estimated that the irrigation would probably cost about \$16,000.

Mr. Masci wished to point out while Mr. Newman was still here that he was a great help on the day we had Santa in the Park. There were so many people and Ron got some cones and placed them to keep people off the street. Mr. Masci really appreciated that.

COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS:

1. Blue Knights Travel Football. Chairman Fontana asked that this item be held off since new information would be available for discussion in a few weeks. He spoke with Mr. Daigle about

it. Mr. Masci was asked to write a letter to Mr. Daigle stating that the board would get back to him in a couple of weeks.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

Commissioner LaPorte suggested that, as in past years after a municipal election, that the board should elect its officers. He made a motion to keep the current officers: John Fontana, Chairman, and Megan Maruzo, Vice Chairman. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Palmieri and passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS: None.

DIRECTOR OF RECREATION REPORT:

Mr. Masci said he has two more trips in December. The new slate of trips is being compiled now and will be on the website in January for the new year. YMCA obesity program. Mr. Masci met with John Myers. He explained that the YMCA got a \$50,000 grant for a program with the schools (changing the soda machines, healthier food, concession stands, etc.). There is a trip February 16-17 that Mr. Masci is supposed to go on. If he is not available he asked Commissioner LaPorte if he might be available to attend in his place. They want to have someone representing the Park Board. Kayak rentals. Mr. Masci spoke with Keith at Suburban Sport today. He has not completed his report but will have it for the next meeting. Commissioners were not happy that it is taking so long to receive the final report. After discussion, it was decided to put in the RFP that the report would be due 30 days after completion of the season.

Music on the Green. Mr. Masci handed out a survey for the sound system that he sent out to bands in an attempt to try to save money under the budget containment policy. Much discussion followed on the success of the program for numerous years, problems that could occur with bands bringing their own sound systems, and how this program is not one to cut back on. Everyone seemed to agree that “if it’s not broke, don’t fix it.” Commissioner LaPorte made a motion to keep the Music on the Green program as is for the 2010 season, with Jerry Limmer as the coordinator and Vinny Morelli for the sound. Seconded by Commissioner Palmieri; passed unanimously.

Commissioner Fasulo asked Mr. Masci if he still provided lists of expenses for programs as he did in the past. He said he could do that. After discussion, it was agreed that Mr. Masci would submit reports of all events where expenses are incurred.

Crescent Lake will be closing on January 1 as far as supervision. Mr. Masci spoke with the Town Manager about ice skating there; he would not recommend it. There is too much chance of accidents occurring – ice fishing holes to trip on, the lake curves and you wouldn’t be able to see someone around the bend, etc. There was some discussion about not being able to ice skate anywhere in Southington. There is too much water flow at Recreation Park and Memorial Park so the ice never gets thick enough. Mr. Laprey said he could look into other options. Bow hunting is a little down from last year. Hunters got 17. The program resumes December 9.

Autism Programming. Mr. Masci handed out a packet of information for the commissioners to read at home. He spoke with the Town Manager about the program. Mark Palmieri will give a presentation at the January 6th meeting. The meeting will start at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Masci said tomorrow night is Christmas in the Village of Plantsville. They are having an ice carving contest; an area near the gazebo will be roped off. On Friday night at 5:30 p.m. the downtown lighting of the trees will take place. A child will be turning them on.

Commissioner Palmieri said she would like to see hourly sheets for all of the workers. She wants to see who is working what on different events. Commissioner LaPorte said it should be made part of the agenda.

Mr. Masci said he would start working on the budget. He will try to put all the organized recreation groups back to what they were last year. Dave Lapreay made a suggestion to put \$30,000 in the budget for repairs of park buildings. Discussion followed on what would make sense and also pass the Town Manager's budget cuts. Mr. Lapreay noted that the bathrooms at Memorial Park are in dire need of repair. In response to a question, Mr. Masci said the town owns the buildings but while a group is using/occupying it, they are responsible for upkeep. If the building is abandoned by the group, it would revert back to the town. It was the consensus that specific line items, such as Rest Room Repair, rather than a lump sum for repairs would stand a better chance of passing. Mr. Lapreay was asked to get some prices for repairing the bathrooms at Memorial Park. Mr. Masci handed out a copy of the award letter for the demolition of the concession stand to Abcon Environmental. They were the low bidder.

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

ACTING SUPERINTENDENT OF PARKS REPORT:

Mr. Lapreay reported that a piece of leaf equipment was repaired; they are catching up. This week the department was busy with getting the greens ready for Christmas; they are all set. We have been keeping up with trail cleanup. Mr. Lapreay met with Tony Tranquillo regarding the parking lot at the dog park. Suggested changes could work to alleviate the mud problem due to wetland. At least 20 spaces could be made in the new area, perhaps more.

One item not on the written report is that the department's mechanic, Gary O'Hala, will be going in for shoulder surgery on December 11 and will be out for at least three months. We may be in a bind with breakdowns which occur constantly. He will talk with Steve Wlodkowski to see how he handles it. He said he has used temporary mechanics in the past. There was some discussion about the department being shorthanded already, with Mr. Egidio out and a laborer position that was never filled. Mr. Lapreay said that Mr. Egidio has tried to add a person to the budget but the item was cut. Commissioners believed it should be put in the proposed budget.

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

REPORT OF PARKS: No reports.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Drive In Theater Property. Commissioner LaPorte reported that he got a price for the pavilion. They are doing the engineering on the bathrooms that will go there. A site plan is made. It will go to Planning & Zoning and the wetlands commission. He believes the pavilion

will go up in the spring.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Budget 2010-2011. Mr. Masci said he would send a draft budget to commissioners as soon as it is ready but before the next meeting

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Palmieri, seconded by Commissioner Fasulo. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Berardinelli
Recording Secretary