

**MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 6, 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, Commissioners David Kanute, Joseph LaPorte and Joanne D. Palmieri; Director of Recreation William J. Masci and Superintendent of Parks Richard L. Egidio, Sr.  
*Absent/Excused:* Vice Chairman Megan O. Maruzo

**MINUTES:**

Commissioner Kanute made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Palmieri, to accept the Minutes of the April 1, 2009 meeting as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

**VISITORS:**

1. Mr. & Mrs. Robert Hickman re Dog Park. Mr. Hickman said he and his wife are members of the Southington Dog Park Association but were not officially representing the association at this meeting, merely as citizens of Southington. First of all, he thanked everyone for the dog park. It is a wonderful thing and he and many others really appreciate having it. Mr. Hickman was concerned about some users of the dog park who do not follow the rules, i.e., they bring dogs that are not licensed (hence, no proof of rabies vaccination) and aggressive dogs. He presented a copy of a recent Observer with several pictures of dogs without collars at the park. While there are not many of these, when they are there they could be a hazard to the health of others. The owners do not listen to suggestions that they remove their dogs from the park and are sometimes belligerent. Mr. Hickman does not wish to have any confrontations there and so has not been bringing his own dog to the park. He asked if there was anything that the board could do, such as request at least a patrol car drive-by. He did not in any way expect an animal control person to stand guard there. Mr. Masci said he or anyone who notices an unlicensed dog could call the office and someone could go out there in a town vehicle to handle it. If it's after office hours, Commissioner Kanute noted that an Animal Control Officer (ACO) is on duty until 11:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. They recommended not confronting the abusing parties and to call for assistance. Commissioner Kanute also stated that he would request a regular patrol of the area. Mr. Hickman thanked the board for listening and for their time and appreciated any help in this matter.

2. Sal Penta re Blue Knights Soccer Clinics. Mr. Penta handed out an information sheet on the soccer clinics he and Dave Yanosy would like to have at Recreation Park in July and one week in August. There are three groups for boys and girls: (1) Youth Clinic for children entering 3<sup>rd</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade; (2) 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Academy for players entering the first year of high school; and (3) a Skills Clinic for advanced training. The clinics would run Monday through Thursday with Friday as a rain day, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Mr. Penta stated that the high school fields would be under renovation so would not be available. It would be for Southington residents only. The prices have been kept low because of the economic times. Mr. Masci said he would have to check with Ans Swanson regarding availability of the soccer fields at that time. Chairman Fontana stated that he attended a meeting at the high school and he believed they did not want the name "Blue Knights" affiliated with anything not sponsored by the school. Mr. Penta said he checked, and they did not have an objection to using the Blue Knights name since their registration form clearly states that it is not sanctioned or sponsored by the high school or the Board of Education. Mr. Penta said he has the insurance all set.

Commissioner Kanute made a motion, seconded by Commissioner LaPorte, to approve the soccer clinics pending working out availability with the Southington Soccer Club. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Ron Newman, SVMFL. Mr. Newman reported that the South End School PTO approached him about using the football field for their Field Day on May 20. Due to the ongoing construction at the school, they would not be able to have the Field Day on school grounds. He is happy to help them out in any way he can. There are 20 to 25 events and the kids go from stage to stage. Question arose as to whether the PTO called the office first as they should do. Mr. Masci said he did receive a call and he told them to stay on the grass.

Mr. Newman said he felt better after the budget meeting last week. It is a slow process but he felt progress was being made. He brought up a suggestion for a fund raiser using the old drive-in marquee for short-term advertising. He distributed a proposal prepared by his daughter with some suggestions. Any funds raised could go towards the all purpose field. Mr. Egidio told him that the marquee is not usable right now as the letter holders are broken. Mr. Masci said a proposal such as this would have to be presented to the Town Manager. He will let Mr. Newman know the result.

#### **COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS:**

1. Letter from Mr. & Mrs. Otano. This was a request for either a refund or roll over to fall soccer from the Southington Soccer Club due to a conflict in practice times and locations. Commissioners felt that this was a reasonable request but it is handled through the club. Commissioner Kanute said he would handle the matter with Ans Swanson.

**PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS:** None.

#### **DIRECTOR OF RECREATION REPORT:**

Mr. Masci reported that he has a trip to Ellis Island this weekend. LandJet called us regarding Yankee games; they are trying to get a deal. Crescent Lake. Mr. Masci and Mr. Egidio discussed the fact that there is not enough money in the budget for supervision for monitoring during the week. They suggested weekend only for the month of May. Some discussion followed. It was the consensus to just open and close and weekends only for May. At the June meeting Mr. Egidio will report as the funds are in his budget with seasonal help. Also, a sign will be put up stating that the park opens at 8 a.m. instead of 7 a.m. because the employees begin work at 7 a.m. and by the time they arrive at the park it's close to 7:30. To avoid lines or backups, we will state 8 a.m. as opening time.

Rails to Trails. Mr. Egidio said there is nothing to report. He had a meeting with Milone and MacBroom, the design architects. The design should be ready by July; it is considered "shovel ready". Paul McCalla would like to do some refurbishing of the old railroad station next to Canal Street. Mr. Masci stated that Mr. McCalla was interested in going to the Historical Society about it.

Music on the Green. Mr. Masci said all 13 concerts are filled. June 3<sup>rd</sup> is the first concert. The storage trailer will be in the week prior. Kenny Berkmoes will wire the mobile stage for us. The police have been requested. They asked for a brochure. The brochures are being proofread and will be ready in about 5 days. Mr. Masci is still talking with Leslie Cotton about showing the video on the town's TV site. The Charter Revision Commission meetings are being broadcast right now several times but they should be winding down. One of the stage hands, Andrew Tillman, will do the filming rather than hiring a videographer. Kayak Rentals. Suburban Sport was the only proposal received. Everyone had received a copy of the proposal. Mr. Masci said if agreeable, we could wait until the end of the rental

season for the town check. No one expressed an objection. Milldale Station is being considered for possible rest area for the trail. The softball website is up and running. Mr. Masci and Mr. Prozzo are working hand in hand on it. There was some discussion regarding “re-entry”; Mr. Masci will send a reminder that there is no re-entry (our rules). Touch A Truck will be on May 16 at Derynoski School. This is an annual event the town does with the American Legion. This year there will be 45 vehicles including a helicopter. Rain date is Sunday, May 17. Middle School Dances. Commissioner Kanute suggested cancelling the May dance next year since attendance was low and money was lost. Mr. Masci said when you average out all the dances, there is no lost revenue. He already cut back to one policeman and will cut a few more chaperones.

Pool Opening. This was discussed by Mr. Egidio and Mr. Masci. School gets out officially on June 22 which is a Monday. The pools will open for the weekend of June 20-21, close on June 22 and open on June 23 all the way to September. Closing time was discussed. For the beginning, weekdays in June hours will be 12 to 7, weekends 11 to 7. For the month of July will try staying open until 8 p.m. and see how it goes.

Mr. Masci reminded everyone that the next meeting would be Thursday, June 4, due to the summer concerts on Wednesdays.

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

#### **SUPERINTENDENT OF PARKS REPORT:**

Mr. Egidio reviewed some of the items on his written report. Four new tennis courts should be ready this week or early next week. Brand new basketball poles will be put up next week. Commissioner Kanute suggested getting some press on them. Mr. Egidio said he could have an opening ceremony with some of the board members present.

Trail. Mr. Egidio reported that there is a dirt bike trail behind Raggozino’s on Summer Street. He will cut down the dirt piles. He has a community service worker picking up litter. Commissioner Kanute noted that there was some serious vandalism there also. Midget Football at Memorial is doing a new roof on their building. It is not costing us anything. Mr. Egidio said he would get them a dumpster to help. The water break at Memorial Little League will get fixed this week – a contractor will have to do it. It is in back of the concession stand. Recreation Park. When water was turned on for the rest rooms at the Community Pool, the ground shifted. We will fix it ourselves. That is why the rest rooms were not open. Softball fields are in good shape. Commissioner Kanute said the fence near the backstop at Panthorn Park is curling and he is afraid someone will get hurt. Mr. Egidio will take care of it. There was some discussion about the lights in the parks. They are all on timers. Mr. Masci said that Dave Lapreay checks them every day. Sometimes someone will turn them off manually and then they won’t work because the timers would be off. They are set to go on about 6:45 p.m. for now and off at 11:30 p.m. As summer approaches the on time will be changed. Commissioner Kanute asked if Gerri could log any complaints about lights that are not on. Mr. Masci said there are very few such calls. Recycling at the parks is not required and it is very expensive. Mr. Egidio said he would like to put up signs that say “Carry Out What You Carry In.” While many people will not do so, the ones that do follow rules will help with trash in the parks.

Mr. Egidio showed a map of the drive-in property prepared by the Engineering Department. He met with Tony Tranquillo and Jon Pearson of Metcalf & Eddy, the consulting engineers working on the Denitrification project. Mr. Egidio pointed out where the proposed field would go, the two parking

areas, rest rooms, etc. He explained that it would need a water line, drainage, sewer hookups for the rest rooms. We have still not received the \$200,000 from the state. Paperwork was submitted about three weeks ago. Commissioner Kanute asked if we could get some prices for the water line, drainage and sewers. Mr. Egidio will get them.

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

**REPORT OF PARKS:**

None.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1. Kayak Rentals – Crescent Lake. Commissioner Kanute made a motion to accept proposal of Suburban Sport for kayak rentals at Crescent Lake. Seconded by Commissioner Palmieri. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Defender Program. This was discussed and approved at the last meeting. Mr. Masci met with the Town Attorney. He said it was okay to treat the program like others under the auspices of the Parks & Recreation Department. They will start May 16. It is for children ages 7 to 12.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Lacrosse fields. Commissioner Kanute said the lacrosse fields at Recreation Park stay wet. He asked about the possibility of using the land on River Street for practice. The league will have about \$20,000-\$22,000 after the tournaments. He asked if that would be enough to get a couple of fields. Mr. Egidio said you could probably put four fields up there. The one near the church doesn't have any parking. The one near the farm house would probably be a good location. People could park where the barn is. The lacrosse people will work together with midget football and little league to get the fields ready. The fields would be there if and when a school is put there. Chairman Fontana spoke with Dr. Erardi and John Weichsel and they had no problem with the idea. Mr. Egidio believes we should get something in writing from the Council saying we can use the property. He will speak with Attorney Sciota.

2. Hot Dog Truck. Mr. Masci distributed a proposal from Caroline McCarthy to operate a hot dog truck at Memorial Pool and park. Discussion followed regarding times, location, concession stand times, etc. Motion was made by Commissioner Palmieri, seconded by Commissioner LaPorte, to approve the hot dog truck at Memorial provided it does not interfere with the Little League or Midget Football concession stand during the week or on weekends. Motion carried unanimously.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion was made by Commissioner Kanute, seconded by Commissioner Palmieri, to adjourn the meeting at 8:04 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Berardinelli  
Recording Secretary

Next meeting: Thursday, June 4, 2009