

**MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2008**

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman John Fontana called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Chairman John Fontana, Vice Chairman Megan O. Maruzo (left at 7 p.m.), Commissioners David Kanute, Joseph LaPorte and Joanne D. Palmieri; Director of Recreation William J. Masci and Superintendent of Parks Richard L. Egidio, Sr.

MINUTES:

Commissioner Kanute made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Palmieri, to accept the Minutes of the October 1, 2008 meeting as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

VISITORS:

1. Ans Swanson and Dale Ianni, Southington Soccer Club. Ms. Swanson said there were a few concerns she wished to address with the board. The soccer club is now going year round in order to be able to compete with the rest of the state and they are in need of indoor gym space. Mr. Masci commented that he already told Ms. Swanson that gym space is very hard to come by because of basketball and other sports and events at the schools. He told her that he would call when he had more information. His secretary tried to reach Ms. Swanson today because he found two openings, Monday and Friday, at either Hatton or Flanders school (he would check the correct location and get back to her). Much discussion followed about how many nights the soccer club needed for practice, how many people are involved (about 200), and the difficulty finding openings.

Commissioner Maruzo asked if other locations were looked at, such as Christian Academy. Ms. Swanson replied that they were not very helpful. Discussion followed regarding Christian Academy's use of the soccer fields; why couldn't they allow use of their gym? There was also the issue of the Academy's being charged for use of the soccer fields. Ms. Swanson corrected that to be a "donation" of \$10 per child per year to help defray the cost of upkeep of the fields. The adult leagues were also asked to make a donation. It is NOT a rental fee.

So far there are two days available for the soccer club's use. By November 18, basketball registration will be over and Mr. Masci will have a better idea of what may be open. It depends on how many people and teams are signed up. He also noted that the schools are normally not open for practice before 5 p.m. The time slot is 6 to 9:30. He cautioned that some schools do not allow certain types of sports because of the floors. Mr. Masci was asked to call Christian Academy to see if a swap could be made – use of fields for use of their gym.

Another issue Ms. Swanson brought up was other groups using the soccer fields and stating that the Park & Recreation Dept. told them it was OK. Discussion followed. Many times people do not call for permission, they just go there and if the field is empty, they play on it. Commissioner Kanute suggested that when groups do ask to use the fields, the Park & Rec Dept. give them a written permission slip. Also, the department would need to notify Ms. Swanson of the authorization; this would alleviate the problem of the soccer club going for an impromptu practice and finding the field in use.

At this time Commissioner Maruzo left the meeting.

There was some discussion about having calendars for the fields in the office so that you could see at a glance which fields were being used and by whom. Mr. Masci said he has calendars for the recreation fields. Commissioner LaPorte said because the town has grown and sports have grown with it, we have to learn to share our fields and gyms with other sports. Ms. Swanson said they are well aware that the fields are town property and has no problem with other groups using them but believed the soccer club should have first preference since they spend a lot of time and money keeping the fields in good shape.

Another item was brought up by Dale Ianni, the club treasurer. He spoke about the leak in the roof of the field house after 22 years. The club recently had the roof replaced and the interior painted. The roof cost \$4,700 and the painting of the water damaged interior was \$3,900. They are requesting help from the town to pay the cost. Mr. Masci said the board could ask for a one-time allotment in next year's budget. Commissioners asked about insurance and Mr. Ianni replied that it was not covered. He was asked to provide a written explanation. At this time Ms. Swanson passed out a write-up to the commissioners.

The last item the club wished to discuss was the need for new standardized goals per the rules of the CT Junior Soccer Association. They are requesting that the board help with the \$3,400 cost of standard goals. The plan is to get rid of the smaller, old goals, use the bigger size ones for the C Division and then use the new goals for the B Division and for the travel league. This is another budgetary item. The timing of the budget proposals was explained to Ms. Swanson. If approved, the money would not be available until July 1, 2009.

COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS:

1. Letter from Carole Milano. This was a copy of a letter to the editor commending the Parks and Recreation Department on the good job they do.
2. Petition re Men's Basketball. This is a request to change the mens' basketball league's location from DePaolo to Derynoski. Mr. Masci said he spoke with Eric Korp and told him that Derynoski is totally impossible.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS: None.

DIRECTOR OF RECREATION REPORT:

Mr. Masci reported that we would be receiving a check soon for the kayak rentals. He spoke with Suburban Sport. He believes it was double last year. Dog Park. The person talked about at the last meeting has not been back. The association did take the sign down. The board needs to vote on whether it wants the park to be "Town Residents Only". No vote was taken at the last meeting to wait for Commissioner LaPorte to be in attendance. Commissioner Kanute made a motion to post a "Residents Only" sign at the Dog Park per order of the Parks & Recreation Commission. Seconded by Commissioner LaPorte. Motion carried. Question arose as to who would do the sprinkler system at the park. Mr. Egidio is aware of it. The association will learn how to do it from Pete Kurtz and take care of it themselves.

Apple Harvest made about \$8,000. A report will be made. Fall Ball is winding down this week. Chairman Fontana said he knows someone who will build them a web site. Wolves were great at Recreation Park. They were very gentle. Commissioner Kanute asked if any of the settlement that came in from Solvents Recovery would be coming for the trail. None is expected. The business that made the promise was sold. Mr. Masci said he would call Christian Academy to offer a flip-flop – soccer fields for the gym as discussed earlier.

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

SUPERINTENDENT OF PARKS REPORT:

Mr. Egidio presented his written report. He informed the board of a disciplinary issue that he was taking care of. He reported that there was a Department Heads meeting this morning, and the Town Manager went over the new Budget Containment Policy of the Council. All departments are to try to cut expenses and defer any items that can be deferred.

South End School will use a portion of our parking lot near the ice hockey rink for storing building materials during construction. Commissioner Kanute reported that the basketball court lights weren't working. It was discovered that there wasn't enough clearance in the breaker box, so when the box was closed it was tripping the breaker. It has been fixed. Mr. Egidio reported that he has started milling the tennis courts and basketball courts at Panthorn. He is hoping to get it paved before Thanksgiving.

Lights at Crescent Lake are working fine according to Commissioner Kanute. It serves the purpose. In response to a question, police cars have been sent up there about four times. Mr. Masci noted that bow hunting is going on there; we got 19.

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

REPORT OF PARKS:

There were no specific reports.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Budget 2009-2010. Mr. Masci said with the Munis system, the budget will look different this year. Many line items are combined. He will provide the board with the old budget line items and show where they fall in the new system. Commissioner Kanute asked if the board could receive the budget before the meeting to review it.
2. Drive-In Theater. Mr. Egidio said he received a call from Tony Tranquillo. Two of the lights planned along the road to the sewer treatment plant would be in front of the screen. Mr. Egidio asked that the two lights be removed since we plan to use the screen. They will do so.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

ADJOURNMENT – EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Motion was made by Commissioner Palmieri, seconded by Commissioner Kanute, to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters. Motion carried unanimously. The regular meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Berardinelli
Recording Secretary