

**MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 2, 2007**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

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

**ROLL CALL:**

*Present:* Chairman Joseph LaPorte, Vice Chairman David Kanute, Commissioners Michael Fasulo, John Fontana and Frank Galante; Director of Recreation William J. Masci and Superintendent of Parks Richard L. Egidio, Sr.

**MINUTES:**

Motion was made by Commissioner Fontana, seconded by Commissioner Fasulo, to accept the minutes of the April 4, 2007 meeting as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

**VISITORS:**

**1. Ron Newman – SVMFL.** Mr. Newman began by thanking the commissioners for approval of the banner at Recreation Park announcing signups for football and cheerleading. It was a good reminder for parents. Seventy-three kids signed up. Mr. Newman guessed that the league would have between 450-500 kids total. Last year they had 95 games in a three month period. He commented on the need for more fields. Commissioner Kanute noted that some Council members would be agreeable to a football field at the drive-in property but there is no money.

Mr. Newman attended the meeting to answer questions the board had regarding the request to use the field house for birthday parties – as a fund raiser. He said that in December a parent wanted to throw a party in January. Because of the mild winter they were able to play a game and then everyone went to a restaurant. It would be really nice to be able to have the birthday cake, etc. right there at the field house. Would it be possible to do this by making a donation to the league? Mr. Newman noted that the league carries its own liability insurance. They do let other groups use the field house for meetings. Mr. Newman added that an Executive Board member would be in attendance at any such event and would keep everything under control. None of the commissioners had a problem with the concept as long as it is OK with the Town Attorney.

Mr. Newman commented on the No Parking signs along the driveway. They are not that noticeable and people are ignoring them. He asked is perhaps bright orange signs could be used so people can see them. Commissioner Kanute said he has spoken with the Police Chief about getting “One Way” signs put up. Commissioner Fasulo commented that if the police could drive through on a regular basis, they could enforce the No Parking signs. Mr. Newman would appreciate anything that can be done.

**2. Joe Proud re Disc Golf.** Mr. Proud said the 9-hole course is working pretty well. He estimated that 100-200 people use it weekly. He said he would like to put up a message board at his own expense, which would post the rules of etiquette, ongoing events, score cards, etc. Mr. Egidio recommended a sign no larger than 4x4. This size was fine with Mr. Proud because it would be raised up to about 8 ft. Mr. Proud is also seeking permission to go to 18 holes in the area directly to the west toward the pond in the back. They have had some success with fund raising already. The proposal was \$3,000 for the first nine holes. Now they are looking for \$1,500; if not possible, just permission to go ahead and try to lay something out and fund raise. Mr. Egidio stated that he may be putting a softball field in, but Mr. Proud said he could probably go a little deeper so it wouldn't conflict. Question arose about the cell tower. Mr. Egidio said it is not a dead issue. He believes they are trying to get more use for the tower. It is marked off in any case. The board gave approval for the disc golf

expansion subject to working out the details with Mr. Egidio.

**3. Downtown Plantsville Groups.** Representatives of the Village of Plantsville Association and the Plantsville Preservation Society said they were asked to attend the meeting. Atty. Carl Sokolowski, representing the Village of Plantsville Association, gave some historical background of the work of the group since 1996. Some of the activities they have been involved in over the years include decorating the bridge and walkways with flower boxes, putting up banners, Halloween and Christmas in the Village, and the annual Strawberry Festival. Discussion followed regarding the removal of the flower boxes by the Plantsville Preservation Society and their eventual replacement (due to age), and also the changing of the banners. Conflicting views were brought up. Chairman LaPorte said that the Park Board meeting was not the place to resolve some of the issues and said he would be happy to schedule a separate meeting if they wished the board to mediate. He believed the purpose of their attendance was to schedule the placing of the various banners in downtown Plantsville.

Following lively discussion about what banners were already available and/or planned for the various seasons, it was agreed that each group would choose two banners and would each pay to have the banners changed. They have used Jeff DeBishop in the past because he has a bucket truck which is needed for the height. It costs about \$700. Changing the banners four times a year is very expensive. There was discussion about turning the banners toward the sidewalk instead of the street, allowing them to be lower and, therefore, able to be changed with a step ladder, as is done in downtown Southington. Someone would have to check with Frank Vinci, zoning enforcement officer, to make sure it is OK to do so. The two groups agreed to talk about which banners would be used for the four seasons; each would select two.

**4. Marian Teadora re Farmers Market.** Ms. Teadora is interested in having 10 to 12 vendors on Fridays from 2-6 pm in Mark Lovely's parking lot in downtown Plantsville. She spoke with Rick of the Department of Agriculture who would like to see something in this area; he is willing to put it into the booklet of Connecticut agricultural events. Mr. Lovely has already agreed to the location selected and is all for it. It would not conflict with the flea market that is held on Saturdays and Sundays on Linda Zommer's property. The board had no objections to the farmers' market. It was suggested that Ms. Teadora get in touch with Rebecca Davis, chairperson of the Southington Parking Authority, for approval.

**5. Garrett Meccariello re Hot Dog Vending.** Twelve-year-old Garrett Meccariello, along with his father, Bryan Meccariello, proposed selling hot dogs and drinks at Recreation Park only when the concession stand is closed. He distributed a flyer showing what the cart would look like. He has contacted the Health Department and the Police Chief. Mr. Meccariello would have to apply for a health permit and would be subject to the rules and regulations. Mr. Egidio suggested that Mr. Meccariello go to Panthorn Park since there is no concession there. It was suggested that the Rails to Trails where it meets the Dog Park would be good sites as well. A certificate of insurance would be required, just as the vendors for Music on the Green are required to have. A formal vote would be taken under New Business.

**6. Stuart Estra re National Trails Day & Family Fun Day.** Mr. Estra handed out an itemized list of work to be done for the festival. Item #2 on the list, help putting up signs and banner either May 17 or 18 – Mr. Egidio said he could help just one day. There was some discussion about Item #3 – need to fix bridge banister on the trail. Mr. Egidio said volunteers built it; volunteers should fix it. He also noted that #9 re fixing drainage and making stage area next to the gazebo would have to wait until the July budget is final. Fireworks Celebration – Saturday, June 30. Some discussion followed regarding

the generators that would be rented and storage of same until they could be returned. There is a storage area at the high school that could possibly be used. There will be entertainment on two stages – very good Vegas-style. Pricing suggested at \$5 for Adults and \$3 for Seniors and Children.

### **COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS:**

1. Letter from Harvest Medical Supplies. This was a thank you note from Robert Soutter, President, in appreciation for the recovery of stolen records found by Parks staff at Crescent Lake. The letter was shared with the two employees.
2. Western Little League. Letter from Gerry Dionne, president of the league, thanking the department for digging holes for the flagpoles.
3. Dave Zoni email re graffiti. Councilman Zoni suggested planting evergreens along with rear of the buildings that directly about the linear trail to help with the graffiti problem. Mr. Egidio said one of the property owners does not want the trees on his property. He estimated it could cost \$25,000-30,000 to plant arborvitae tall enough to do the job. Commissioners said the property owner may have believed that he would be responsible for the cost and therefore was not interested for that reason. Mr. Egidio commented that after the email was written, a Town Council meeting was held at which the topic came up. He does not believe the Council would support such an expense. However, the board suggested that Mr. Egidio walk the trail to see where the trees would need to be planted, get a price and submit it to Councilman Zoni.
4. Tennis Court reservation request. Matthew Wayton is requesting one set of courts for Saturday, June 23, from 10 am to dusk for a tennis tournament he is hosting. He is looking for tennis courts in any of the town parks. Panthorn gets the least amount of use on the weekend. Suggestion was made about the courts at the high school. Mr. Masci will speak with Mr. Wayton about the high school; otherwise, Panthorn Park was a second choice of the board.
5. Dog Park By-Laws. Since no one had received the by-laws before the meeting, Commissioner Kanute made a motion to table this item until the next meeting. Motion seconded by Commissioner Fasulo. Motion to table carried unanimously.
6. Request for portable stage for Italian Festival. Mr. Masci distributed a letter from Joe LaPorte of the Italian Festival Committee to use the portable stage for its annual event on July 27, 28 and 29, 2007. Motion was made by Commissioner Kanute, seconded by Commissioner Fontana, to approve the use of the stage for the Italian Festival. Motion carried 4-0-1 abstention (LaPorte).

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

Mr. Masci reported that the agreement for kayaking at Crescent Lake was signed today. Suburban Sport will start with Saturdays and Sundays in June; when school is out they will add days. If he uses the ramp to the right of the dock, if we could put some sand, it could be sort of a “beach” area which would make for less congestion for the boats. Mr. Egidio will ask Highway Department for some sand. Keith of Suburban Sport suggested putting a buoy so the renters cannot go beyond the sight line. Commissioners felt that he could do that himself. Port-O-Let problem at Crescent Lake. Atty. Sciota suggested a block building that could be locked. Mr. Masci said he received a call from Shirley Bloethe regarding the kayaking bid. She was unhappy with the board’s decision, but she never submitted a proposal.

Youth Theater director quit. They will still go with *Annie, Jr.* and *The Sound of Music*. Footlights will do Fiddler on the Roof. Mr. Masci has been working on the Apple Festival. Pepsi won out again. Dog Park is having trouble with 12-and under people; need to put a sign up. Crescent Lake hours are all set. There will be good coverage with the three men working 30, 20 and 12 hours. Met with Tony Mauro re tennis. Will start June 25. Music on the Green starts May 23. Sponsors and vendors are all set. Mr. Masci reminded all the vendors that they need a new certificate of insurance.

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

**SUPERINTENDENT OF PARKS REPORT:**

Mr. Egidio asked commissioners to review his written report and to ask any questions on it. He gave the president of the dog park association a key for the building. He also got in touch with the appropriate people to try to get the well going. It was drained and cleaned, and new fittings were put in and tested. It will probably come out of the Parks budget. Today the park was fertilized so it will be closed for a few days. Memorial Pool marcite application was done and we started filling the pool. A new roof was put on the pool building. Painting inside, outside, doors, aluminum siding. Cleaned two drains inside the pool house and outside the building. Did 4 pointed roofs; there is also a flat roof. Repaired concrete deck at Community Pool. Commissioner Fasulo stated that Mike Riccio will take a look at the mushroom. The fountain at Riccio Way got flooded during the heavy storm. The electrical work below the fountain shorted out; will need an electrician to repair it.

Graffiti on linear park. Mr. Egidio had a meeting with Mike Riccio and Mark Sciota. Received two bids for painters; gave to Mark Sciota. The decision to be made is either to paint over the graffiti, use surveillance cameras, motion detectors or lighting on the trails. They are handling it.

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

**REPORT OF PARKS:**

Memorial Park. Mr. Masci spoke with Tony D'Angelo about the bronze plaque to honor Bill DePaolo. Awards of Elegance can do it; need to decide on the wording. It will be dedicated either June 25 or 26. Mr. Masci checked on the volume of the PA system after the complaint last month. The people cheering were louder than the PA. It was OK. Mr. Egidio added that the neighbor called to ask about the barbed wire fence and whether we would repair or replace it. Mr. Egidio told her that we had no plans to do that. Her property borders the area and she has a chain link fence.

Holcomb Park. Mr. Egidio said it is moving forward. Chris Palmieri is getting a stone to be placed there. Three benches should be in pretty soon. Parks Dept. is mowing and keeping the area cleaned up weekly.

Curtiss Farms Open Space. Mr. Egidio said they want signage placed stating "motorized vehicles not allowed."

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1. Budget/Synthetic Turf-SHS. This was requested at \$450,000. It made it to bonding for \$250,000. Commissioner Fontana called Zeke Zalaski. The bonding commission said \$250,000 was for Rails to Trails and \$250,000 for the turf. They thought that was enough. He then met with the Town Manager since he didn't know if the \$250,000 for the Rails to Trails was for the design. He found out that the design money was all set; this is beyond that. The \$5,000 placed in the new budget was cut by the Board of Finance. On May 14 we are hoping the Town Council will restore it. Mr. Masci said all department heads were requested by the finance director, at the request of the BOF, to let them know of any overages in department accounts. Mr. Masci and Mr. Egidio wrote a letter today stating that there would be zero left in the accounts.

2. Dog Park. Already covered.

3. Crescent Lake. Already discussed.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Hot Dog Vending Request. Motion made by Commissioner Kanute, seconded by Commissioner Fasulo, to allow Garrett Meccariello to sell in Recreation Park in off-concession hours and in Panthorn Park and the Dog Park or any areas not having facilities, provided that insurance and health permits are in place and that he is supervised by an adult. Motion carried unanimously.
2. Use of Field House at Recreation Park. Motion made by Commissioner Fasulo, seconded by Commissioner Kanute, to allow the field house at Recreation Park to be used for birthday parties subject to approval of the Town Attorney. Motion carried unanimously.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business, motion was made by Commissioner Galante, seconded by Commissioner Kanute, to adjourn the meeting at 8:47 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Berardinelli  
Recording Secretary

Next Meeting: Thursday, June 7, 2007