

**MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 3, 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 Megan Maruzo; Director of Recreation William J. Masci and Superintendent of Parks Richard L. Egidio, Sr.

MINUTES:

Motion was made by Commissioner Fasulo, seconded by Commissioner Fontana, to accept the minutes of the September 6, 2007 meeting as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

PRESENTATION:

Chairman LaPorte presented former Commissioner Frank Galante with a plaque thanking him for his years of service to the Town and the Board of Park Commissioners. He will be missed. Mr. Galante said he enjoyed his tenure, and it was a pleasure to work with the board members, Bill Masci, Jiggy Egidio, Gerri Roper and all the staff.

VISITORS: None.

COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS:

1. Email from Mark Sciota re Commissioner Term. At the request of the Council Chairman, Town Attorney Mark Sciota researched the term of the commission term recently appointed since there was some question as to whether the term started at the beginning or end of October. It was determined that Commissioner Fasulo should complete his term at the last official meeting held in October 2007 and that Mrs. Palmieri would succeed him as a Commissioner for the November meeting.
2. Dog Park – Dog Attack. Commissioners reviewed the email complaint regarding Tiki the Keeshund who allegedly has been attacking other dogs and urinating on people at the dog park. Mr. Masci said the specifically mentioned attack occurred about three weeks ago on a Saturday. Tiki's owner called to refute the complaint. He would be writing a letter to Mr. Masci on it.

DIRECTOR OF RECREATION REPORT:

Mr. Masci said most of the trips are winding down for 2007. Met with Donna Calvi who introduced us to the recreation director of North Haven. There is no longer a recreation director in Terryville with whom we shared trips. We may be doing that with North Haven. Villanova trip is coming up.

We are monitoring the work force at Crescent Lake and keeping track of days. Mr. Masci has a calendar on which he tracks who is working and when. Each month he totals the days worked. Chairman suggested keeping a running total for each person in case someone reaches 120 days in the middle of a month. Mr. Masci was confident that his records would alert him to that fact. He also stated that a fourth man is being used as a monitor and if necessary he would add a fifth person. Chairman explained the discussion to Commissioner Maruzo. In past years there was a rule of thumb of 20 hours per week to be benefit-eligible. At a recent Department Heads meeting, Town Manager John Weichsel stated that the rule was changed to 120 days in a year (no matter how many hours a day) constitutes union and benefit eligibility. Security Cameras. Commissioner Kanute stated that proposals are out for cameras at Crescent Lake. We were looking for a motorized camera but were advised by Lt. Pocock that they are more susceptible to breakdowns. Two or three stationary cameras

would work better and are cheaper. Chairman noted that there have been a series of acts of vandalism at the lake. Hopefully the cameras will help. The cameras would be monitored at Central Dispatch.

Bow hunting. Mr. Masci reported that we have 3 does so far. Bow hunting goes until December 2. Apple Harvest is going great. This year we put two speakers up on two poles so that everyone can hear announcements. It is working well. We are losing John Ryan after the festival and will have to go out for RFPs. It means more meetings and interviews. Mr. Masci informed Chairman LaPorte that he was back on the selection committee. Drive-in Theater. The grant money is still up in the air. There were comments about two separate allocations, one for \$210,000 and one for \$250,000. Mr. Egidio said he believed one was for the road to the sewer treatment plant. Self-Defense classes got big publicity but the department did not. Mr. Masci will speak with the reporter. An intermediate class will be added. Budget. Mr. Masci said we will have to start working on next year's budget. The Town Manager is willing to go to \$10,000 for the fireworks. There was some discussion about at least having enough for the fireworks themselves (at least \$15,000). At least there would be a line item for the fireworks.

Special Events. Halloween in the Village is October 24th in Plantsville for the kids. Santa in the Park is November 25. Mr. Masci ordered a hay wagon for it. Someone has been calling the office asking about programs for autistic kids. Wallingford has programs for them but they also have a facility. We don't have the resources to have special programs for them.

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

SUPERINTENDENT OF PARKS REPORT:

Mr. Egidio gave his report. Regarding the lights downtown, he passed along the request to J&M to repair them (5 were out), and he believed they were done. He would check on it. As far as the pole knocked down by the Brenner building, the contractor will try to fix it himself. We ordered three poles and 6-8 pallets of the pavers because the type we have is becoming obsolete. Some of the pavers by the fountain are cracked. Mr. Egidio does not believe they are as strong as they were supposed to be. Comments were made about some of the pavers in the outside dining areas looking dirty. They need to be power washed. That is the responsibility of the restaurant owners.

Picnic tables on the Green were borrowed from the grove and surrounding areas of the parks, total of six. Mr. Egidio ordered two new picnic tables for the handicapped which are wheelchair-accessible on the ends. The department is starting to weatherize the pools. The dog park president called looking for some top soil. He knows someone who donated two loads. The Vo-Ag students will loosen up the clay with the soil and plant some grass. It will be done in sections which will be roped off in order to germinate. There was some discussion about the fountain needing to be pumped out but there is still standing water and trash in it. Mr. Egidio noted that the water was turned off during the festival because of the problems last year with detergent being put in there. It will be cleaned up and water turned back on after the festival. However, it would have to be drained for the winter.

Contractor for Memorial Pool will be in this month to fix cracks. Mr. Masci said he spoke with Barry and Val DePaolo about the memorial plaque honoring Bill DePaolo. Since the bronze plaque has a picture on it, he suggested taking the plaque down for the winter to prevent it being weather-beaten. He could keep it in the office and put it back in the spring if the board was OK with it. There was no objection. Mr. Egidio said that some trees on Woodruff and Pleasant Streets are being cut down because they are in the way of the new sidewalks that will be installed. He is taking the wood chips to

Recreation Park and the trees will be stored by the dog pound area. In case any one gets calls about the trees, they are in the way and must be removed.

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

Ambulance. Mr. Masci commented that he forgot to mention that at the middle school dance he and Officer Petro called 911 for a boy who was not feeling well at all. The father was very appreciative. AMR arrived very quickly. Chairman said he heard that when AMR was called to Rec Park for a football injury, people reported they saw the ambulance drive around on South End Road a couple of times before they entered the park. This should not happen. Commissioner Kanute, who is also a dispatcher, gave some information on how this might occur. The caller needs to state Maxwell Noble Drive, not South End Road, especially if the ambulance crew is not the usual crew. He commented that the other day they had five ambulance calls within ten minutes. There are usually two in town at all times and a third as backup. One is normally in the Queen Street area.

REPORT OF PARKS:

Western. Mr. Egidio reported that the Western Little League president called with a couple of issues. There is overgrowth at the Babe Ruth field. Mr. Egidio it needs to be cleaned up behind the Babe Ruth field. He may hire a forester to do it. The department is working on cleaning up Federal Park on Grove Street. Panthorn. An old garden hose was cut up for use with the instruments in the playground. Commissioner Kanute recalled that the hammers and things to use with the instruments kept disappearing. The garden hose works well. He also suggested that we budget for a few more pieces of equipment for the playground at Recreation Park. Mr. Egidio said it is on his to do list. Meanwhile, all the nuts and bolts are tightened up every month.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Dog Park. Mr. Masci will get the two stories regarding the dog attack and report back. Commissioner Maruzo agreed to report on the dog park since she is there frequently. Mr. Masci would add the dog park to the Report of Parks.
2. Crescent Lake. Kayak rentals are done. Will have to put some electricity there. There is one pole that could be used for the camera and the line extended for the other cameras. Commissioner Kanute believed we would have to sink another pole – cost might be \$3,000.
3. Rails to Trails. Mr. Egidio said we are getting a lot of dog poo on the trail and a lot of glass. He is trying to cut back on the overgrowth. Mill Street area was cleaned up and some mums were planted. For the winter, we will do the same as last year. Whenever we are finished with the storm, we will hit the trail. Mr. Egidio does not think we should put sand on it.
4. Apple Festival RFP. In response to a question, Mr. Masci said new plans would be drawn up for the RFPs for coordinator and consultant. It will be advertised very soon.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Drive-In Theater. Mr. Masci said with South End School being razed, we thought about swapping properties with the school board and using the building and giving the school part of the park property. At this time Town Attorney Sciota entered the meeting room and gave an update. He said that the suggestion would only be considered if the boring samples came back bad. However, he just received word that the boring samples were good, so the building will be razed and a new building will be built behind it. It is hoped that the new building could be constructed while school was in session.

Atty. Sciota also clarified the grant money discussed earlier in the meeting. The town asked for a grant

for the roadway to the treatment plant. He does not know the status. The road will go in anyway because it is part of the entire Denitrification Facility bond of \$14,500,000. All bonding must go through the Council. Once the road is approved and put in, he believes the Council will turn the land over to the Park Board. There are two grants, one for the road and one for the pavilion. The two school bonds are waiting for the Governor; they should go through. Commissioner Fasulo thanked Mark Sciota for his explanation of why the drive-in property had not yet been turned over to the board; it was never explained this way.

2. Chairman LaPorte said at the next meeting we will have election of officers. Mr. Masci will put it at the beginning of the agenda.

3. Italian Festival. If it is not possible to be held in its past location they are contemplating using Derynoski School playground area, but ONLY if it cannot be accommodated downtown. It is only a back-up plan. A letter will be written to the Board of Education requesting use of the DES playground area for the last weekend of July 2008. Mr. Egidio made a suggestion of using the linear trail. Tents could be placed on both sides with space for people to walk on the trail. It's an idea that has some merit and will be considered.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, motion was made by Commissioner Kanute, seconded by Commissioner Fasulo, to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Berardinelli
Recording Secretary

Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 7, 2007