

**MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2009**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

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

**ROLL CALL:**

*Present:* Chairman John Fontana, Commissioners David Kanute, Joseph LaPorte, Megan O. Maruzo; Director of Recreation William J. Masci and Superintendent of Parks Richard L. Egidio, Sr.

*Excused:* Commissioner Joanne D. Palmieri

**MINUTES:**

Commissioner Kanute made a motion, seconded by Commissioner LaPorte, to accept the Minutes of the February 3, 2009 meeting as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

**VISITORS:**

1. Jerry Limmer re Music on the Green. Mr. Limmer said that he had discussions regarding possibilities for the series, such as how many concerts we might have this year. They came up with 13 concerts beginning in June and ending in August (previously had 17 concerts). Four weeks were eliminated, saving on workers, police and other expenses. He did not have the figures in hand as to what the savings would be. Also, the budget still needs to be approved by the Board of Finance and the Council so we don't know what will happen there. Speaking with folks on the street, they seem to be in favor of this proposal. Mr. Limmer believes the music series is one of the nicer events in town, people count on it and it's free, giving people a couple of hours of entertainment.

Commissioner LaPorte would like to go along with the proposal of 13 concerts. It takes care of the summer and satisfies some requirements to cut costs. The other commissioners agreed. Mr. Limmer said there are other ways to save as well, for example, he is trying to get a sponsor for the brochures.

Commissioner LaPorte made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Kanute, to approve the number of concerts to be held on the Green at 13. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Masci added that it was also decided to continue to have them on Wednesdays with Thursday as the rain date but no Sundays. It became difficult to get the bands to commit to three dates but also it saves Sunday overtime pay. Mr. Limmer said he is probably 4 weeks behind on planning, etc. but starting two weeks later this year will help. By now, he said, he would usually have sponsors in and be contracting bands. Commissioner Maruzo asked if there were any changes on the sponsor side. Mr. Limmer responded that letters go out in January. Four responded quickly with "yes" and he has several verbal yeses. He added an addendum at the bottom of the letters this year asking if they would be interested in teaming up with another sponsor, so there is a possibility that there would be more than one sponsor for a band – helping the sponsor and also perhaps being able to get a higher-priced band. Mr. Limmer added that he has already gone to the Parking Authority regarding parking spaces for the lot, car show, storage trailer, etc. Mr. Masci said the trailer is all set.

2. Ron Newman - SVMFL. Mr. Newman said he was able to add the SVMFL field to the Kellogg's Frosted Flakes website. They have a promotion called Plant A Seed to help rebuild sports fields nationwide. They will give \$15,000 to 30 winning fields. The website is [www.frostedflakes.com](http://www.frostedflakes.com) and you would click on Plant A Seed at the bottom. You can search for fields – type in Southington Valley, then you can click to support that field. Mr. Newman said he would be putting the web address

on the back of the flyer this year. The voting period is April 1-30. Commissioners thought this was a great idea and made some suggestions to get the word out, perhaps get an article in the local papers.

**COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS:** None.

**PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS:** None.

**DIRECTOR OF RECREATION REPORT:**

Mr. Masci reported that all the Red Sox games are sold out. Sharing a trip to Atlantic City at the end of the month – going well. Kids Series programs will be on March 22 and April 19. Mr. Masci spoke with the production person and he will send us a list of who is performing and flyers will be made. This is for grades K-5 and includes all the schools. Music on the Green sponsorship letters are out as stated earlier. Letters to all the vendors are out as well. Sunday morning gym program. There was a problem; worked out an idea. The last three weeks the youth basketball paid the custodial fee and charged everyone \$5 a head to defray the cost. Bill Chicowski is handling it. Mr. Masci asked the Town Manager if that can be done and he said yes. No money is being handled by the town. Next year we may use the same format.

Budget. Mr. Masci announced that the department budget meeting with the Board of Finance will be at 7 p.m. on March 25. He distributed copies of the department pages of the proposed budget that was sent to the BOF. Commissioners were having difficulty figuring out what was cut and what was not. Mr. Masci did not have a list of cuts but will have better, clearer information and will send it out to the board. Commissioner LaPorte noted that the budget shows only expenses and does not show the money that goes back to the town from the programs. He felt that was not right.

There was a problem at the Dog Park. Dave Ireland was called. One person was from Burlington and the other was from West Haven. Softball website initial cost to set up would be \$1184 the first year. Richard Lopotosky said using Prozzo's office to work on the site would be OK; it will be a Southington website. Charge is \$800. All the other organized recreation groups can put something on there if they like. Commissioner Kanute thought the price was high and stated that the wrestling group pays just \$9.95 a month. Bats. Mr. Masci said we would go one more year with aluminum bats. They will put in the rules if they get caught using an illegal bat the whole team will be disqualified. The illegal bats are very dangerous.

Mr. Masci handed out a draft request for proposal (RFP) for kayak rentals. Town Attorney suggested that the rental payment be made 30 days after completion of the program. Mr. Masci asked commissioners to call him with any changes they'd like before it goes out. Commissioner Maruzo asked if the RFP should state something about giving back to the town. That was not part of the proposal last time; it was offered by the rental company. Motion was made by Commissioner Kanute, seconded by Commissioner LaPorte, to put in the RFP that the vendor shall submit payment within 30 days after the last the day of the season. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Masci said he is setting up registration for playground, tennis, youth, etc. He will develop the schedule and put it on the web.

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

**SUPERINTENDENT OF PARKS REPORT:**

Mr. Egidio presented his written report and asked if there were any questions. Regarding item #18 on the report, the foreman will be retiring June 30. He will be using his accumulated sick time as discussed and approved at the meeting. Mr. Egidio said that overtime is noted on the timesheets what the person did. It is really just for snow clearing. Mr. Egidio handed out the Parks Department budget sheets. He stated that most of the items that were cut were cut by him; the mower and truck were left in the proposal by the manager, so hopefully it will pass. He noted that a pool payment was not made last year by finance so there is an additional \$47,000 in this year's budget for that. Commissioners said it would be good to have a summary of what was cut and what reimbursement is given back to the town.

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

**REPORT OF PARKS:**

Dog Park. There is a sign that says "Town residents only" but there is no way to enforce it. There was some discussion about the problem.

**MISCELLANEOUS:**

Commissioner LaPorte questioned the way part time people are paid – do they submit some sort of slip stating what hours they worked? Mr. Masci said no. If they are working a program that runs for two hours, they work and are paid for two hours. Some discussion followed about having "back up" for the timesheets. Suggestion was made to perhaps make up a little voucher that the part time people could sign as to their hours when they come in to pick up their checks. Mr. Masci said if that's what the board wants, he will see that it is done.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1. Drive In Theater Property. Mr. Egidio spoke with someone about the building. Someone who does work in town. He suggested when it is time, he could do part of the work such as some of the demolition and the abatement piece and the town could complete the job, keeping the costs down. There is still contaminated soil on the property (4 large piles). Mr. Egidio believes they are trying to use some of the soil as backfill but are waiting for approval to do so. We would still have to get a site plan with grading drawn before we do anything. The Town Engineer had said he would do it for us but nothing yet. Chairman Fontana and Commissioner LaPorte would speak with Tony about it. Mr. Egidio said he is also trying to get some soil from the South End School project to use for top soil.
2. Crescent Lake. Mr. Egidio and Mr. Masci definitely want to have ice skating there next year. He also hopes to have skating at Recreation Park. Memorial Park has too many springs.
3. Dog Park/Evening Hours. This was in regard to lights being left on until 11 p.m. The park closes at 9 p.m. Commissioners agreed that 9 p.m. is late enough. Mr. Masci will call Jim Gura, president of the association, to tell him that the lights must be shut off at 9 p.m. Commissioner Kanute said all the leagues need to be informed about being diligent about shutting off park lights when games are over, rather than waiting for timers to take care of it. People are watching. We need to save dollars.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Budget sessions. As stated earlier, the department workshop with the BOF is March 25 at 7 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion was made by Commissioner Kanute, seconded by Commissioner LaPorte, to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Berardinelli  
Recording Secretary