

**PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD**  
**Wednesday, October 5, 2011**

**Minutes**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman John Fontana called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Parks and Recreation office of Town Hall, 75 Main Street, Southington, CT.

**ROLL CALL:**

*Present:* Chairman John Fontana; Vice Chairman Michael Fasulo, Commissioners David Kanute, Joseph LaPorte and Joanne D. Palmieri; Director of Recreation David A. Laprey and Assistant Superintendent of Parks Michael Manware.

**MINUTES:**

Commissioner Kanute made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Palmieri, to accept the Minutes of the September 6, 2011 as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

**VISITORS:**

1. Fred Cox, Board of Education. Mr. Cox said Dr. Erardi was not able to attend this meeting and asked him to make the presentation. He talked about the upcoming referendum on November 8 regarding the two middle schools construction and renovation projects. If approved by voters, construction is slated to be done over three summers, beginning in June of 2013 with a projected completion date of June 2015. The construction would be done simultaneously while the kids are in the buildings. Mr. Cox reviewed several large boards with architectural drawings prepared by Fletcher-Thompson. The construction would add about 33,000 sq.ft. to each building, including 12 additional classrooms in each school. The referendum cost is \$85 million. If it passes this year, the state will hold its reimbursement rate of a little over 56% reimbursement, or \$44.5 million reimbursement by the state. There is a piece of property adjacent to Kennedy Middle School that may be purchased in conjunction with the project, and the purchase amount is included in the \$85 million. Mr. Cox said they are hoping to "fast track" the project by getting engineering done up front and getting the funding later to avoid delays.

Dave Laprey asked if we would be able to use the schools for fall and winter programs as we have in past years. Mr. Cox replied that the gyms have to remain open for the students so it should not affect the programming. However, the floors will be replaced most likely in the summer so the gyms would not be available then.

2. Lester Pierson re Youth Soccer League. Mr. Pierson addressed the board as a soccer coach for the past 8 years. He is concerned with the extremely low enrollment in the Youth League which allows students to play soccer who may not have strong athletic ability and who possibly cannot afford to join the Southington Soccer Club which is a "travel" league. Mr. Pierson said that not enough recruitment is being done to increase enrollment. Discussion followed regarding how the league went from 1200 kids several years ago to only about 300 now. Mr. Pierson said that he had a meeting with Ans Swanson and others who were introduced as "the board" but it was not a productive meeting, and Mr. Pierson said that some of his questions were not even answered. Discussion ensued regarding the cut-off date for registration for the youth league being too early, and not allowing anyone to sign up before the season starts. Mr. Pierson also stated that since the game schedules are made up by the same people, why conflicting games are booked at the same time, i.e., travel league and youth league games. Then the youth league games get cancelled. It is not fair. He also stated that there is no parent input or involvement allowed and no training for the coaches.

Following much discussion on the subject, Dave Laprey was asked to get accurate enrollment figures for

both programs. Board members believe that these are town programs played on town property, and they have the right to get information including the rules. Board members were concerned about the low enrollment for the youth league and felt that steps should be taken to protect the league. Everyone agreed that they need to get information from the Swanson for both leagues before taking any action. Chairman Fontana said he would get back to Mr. Pierson on the issue and thanked him for bringing it to the board's attention.

**COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS:** None

**DIRECTOR OF RECREATION REPORT:**

Mr. Laprey reported that the first middle school dance was held on September 23<sup>rd</sup> with 619 students in attendance. This was a very large number of students for the 7 chaperones. The board agreed. Mr. Laprey will get two more for the next dance and see how it goes. Numbers usually decline after the first dance. Field goals at Rec Park are in. He met with Todd Verde on the issue discussed at the last meeting; they reviewed the whole plan. Mr. Laprey doesn't think it will be a problem. A lift of some kind will have to be used to remove the top. Crescent Lake – in the past we have done fish studies. Mr. Laprey contacted the state to get them in in November, but they are booked up until next October. Once they start, they will do a yearly fish study. They had stopped doing the studies because the town was charging admission. A new scoreboard was put up at Memorial football. They did not pull a permit first but after speaking with the Town Planner a permit was going to be pulled by the league. Nothing was altered; it was just a replacement. Financial spreadsheets were completed as requested by the Town Manager. It was in response to a request from a citizen in town to the Board of Finance. He gave the information to the Town Manager, who approved it and sent it to the Board. Trips – Julia put together a survey on Facebook asking people what they'd like to see us offer for future trips. We will switch some of the trips to get more interest; we'll see what feedback we get.

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

**ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF PARKS REPORT:**

Michael Manware reviewed his written report and gave further details. The athletic field was aerated, seeded and fertilized. They helped STEPS group in planting a tree at Recreation Park. There was a crack in the slide; he noted the price of \$1100 because it was high for just that section. Pool work is being done at Memorial. Covers will probably be put into the budget for next year for the big pool. It will make a big difference in cleanup when opening for the next season. The small pool has a cover but it had to be redesigned because of the horseshoe. The small pool was just repaired. The mobile stage went to Wolcott and it worked out well. We billed them for the overtime. Pear tree pruning downtown will have to be done again. Mr. Manware said we would do some work on the Plantsville banners, which we used to take care of. We just got the brackets in. We will change the banners twice a year. The brackets will be lowered because a bucket truck was always needed before because they were so high. They will also be turned to avoid damage by trucks. Trail. At the last meeting Mr. Manware suggested keeping the newer section of the trail for cross country skiing and snowshoeing. Some people have commented that they like the idea. He will need to move some of the planting to make it easier to maintain.

Commissioner Fasulo said that two movies are planned at the drive-in for Halloween and asked about advertising on the marquee; Mr. Manware will take care of it. Some comments were made about looking into getting a used bucket truck. Commissioner Kanute said that after 10 years of age the truck would have to get certified each year. Mr. Manware said that Steve Wlodkowski is interested in pursuing a bucket truck.

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

**REPORT ON PARKS:** No specific reports.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1. Drive-in site rental fees/deposits. Mr. Lapreay said he has a lot of information from other towns. Rentals seem to run between \$150 and \$200 and cleanup around \$75 to \$100. This can be discussed at a future time.
2. Turf field. A study committee was formed by the Town Council.

**NEW BUSINESS:** None

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business, motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Palmieri, seconded by Commissioner LaPorte and carried unanimously at 8:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Berardinelli  
Recording Secretary