

PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD
Thursday, July 8, 2010
Minutes

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman John Fontana called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. in the Parks and Recreation office, 75 Main Street, Southington, CT.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Chairman John Fontana, Vice Chairman Megan O. Maruzo; Commissioners Michael Fasulo, Joseph LaPorte and Joanne D. Palmieri; Director of Recreation William J. Masci.

MINUTES:

Commissioner Fasulo made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Palmieri, to accept the Minutes of the June 3, 2010 meeting with one correction. On page 3, under the report of the Acting Superintendent of Parks, the transfer amount should be \$6,100, not \$61,000. Motion carried unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS:

1. Letter from Joe LaPorte to Hilary Parker, Tilcon CT. The letter in the packet was a request letter to Tilcon for help with the site of the former drive-in theatre. Commissioner LaPorte said Tilcon did a wonderful job. Another letter thanking them should have been included.
2. Letter from Foster Adoptive Mission. An email from Deb Kelleher is requesting use of the drive-in marquee to advertise the need for foster and adoptive families. Discussion followed as to the appropriate use of the marquee. Commissioners agreed that it should only be used for community events and not as a place for general advertising. Ms. Kelleher will call Mr. Masci when she is in town and he will get further information as to her request.
3. Letter requesting use of Rec Park for Duck Race. This letter from Janet Mellon of Southington Community Services is requesting use of Recreation Park for the annual duck race on Saturday, October 16, 2010 (rain date Sunday, October 17).
4. Letter from Matt Shea re S.T.E.P.S. Youth Concert. The request is to use the mobile stage for a music program by local student bands. Discussion followed on whether this would be a one-time thing, on a different day from Music on the Green, or what. Mr. Masci suggested having it at the pavilion at the drive-in once it is built since it would be more secluded if the music is loud rock bands, rather than on the green. Not everyone agreed. The board asked Mr. Masci to have Mr. Shea come to the next meeting for more information. He should be provided with some cost information, such as sound, personnel for the stage, police, etc.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Michael Riccio. Mr. Riccio gave an update on the drive-in movie project. It has been going well. The committee is very organized. The first movie night had about 340 cars. Some people had to be turned away. They took in about \$4,000. The organization will get a check for about \$1,200. The second week was the holiday weekend and only drew 206 cars. That civic group will get about \$800. Mr. Riccio spoke about the large dust problem there. They will try soaking the area with water and see how that works; otherwise may have to add calcium. For next year, the committee discussed some things they would like, such as lighting up the sign out front, grass, a projection booth made of concrete so the projectors could be locked up safely away from the dust, and moving the ticket booths.

Mr. Masci presented some bills he received for the drive-in movie for the port-o-lets and the popcorn kits. The bills were reviewed and Mr. Riccio signed them. They would be referred to the Town Attorney for payment. Mr. Riccio stated that the Parks employees have been excellent with emptying the garbage. Volunteer groups are returning Sunday morning to pick up trash. Volunteer firemen will hose down the field for the dust. Question arose regarding how anyone would be informed if the movie is postponed due to rain? Mr. Riccio said

he would call committee members and they would call the volunteers. Ron Newman would put a sign out for the public stating that the movie was postponed to Sunday. Mr. Riccio said he will contact whoever takes care of the drive-in website to post a notice there as well.

Mr. Riccio reported that there is a Pepsi grant for Community Improvement. You can submit an application up to \$250,000. He plans to have someone who writes grants fill out the application including the items mentioned earlier. Then it would be online and people could vote for it. Application must be submitted by August 12.

Mr. Riccio said that the committee also discussed and is recommending with the approval of the board to have a sliding scale for the food vendors' fee. Now they are paying \$100 but if there are less cars and less business, it doesn't seem fair. The committee is suggesting the following:

0 to 150 cars	\$30 fee
151 to 250	\$60
Over 250	\$100

This was agreeable to the board. It will be retroactive to last week. The vendors will now pay after the event once the number of cars is known.

Other suggestions from the committee to possibly try next year were mentioned. The suggestion to have one or two first-run movies was considered too expensive to be worth it. More and more food vendors and civic groups are contacting Mr. Riccio to do it next year. Some discussion followed. Mr. Masci suggested referring them to his office where he could keep the interested parties in a file for future consideration. It was the consensus to keep the original groups unless someone drops out, then we could consider a replacement. The committee also asked about having a banner on the trail; this was not felt to be a good idea as there have been many problems with current signs on the trail. As far as the sign on the corner of the Green, Mr. Masci said it is all reserved for this summer but he could plan having a "Movie of the Week" sign for next year. Mr. Riccio stated that there is a tree in the plaza hiding the sign on Rte. 322. If he could get approval from the owner, would the town be able to cut the tree back? It may be possible to do so.

Mr. Riccio also commented on the efficient money handling practices at the drive-in with counting by two groups, signing off, sealing, depositing and recording. Mike Fasulo does a spreadsheet.

2. Craig Pellegrini is interested in the next phase of the park. He wanted to help on the pavilion end. Commissioner LaPorte said the pavilion construction would be put out to bid as almost complete. However, a lot of things are not part of the bid such as counters and cabinets in the service area, so perhaps Mr. Pellegrini could help with that. He will meet with Commissioner LaPorte to review the plans and go from there.

DIRECTOR OF RECREATION REPORT:

Mr. Masci said he has been busy with Munis requisitions to cover the upcoming trips. They are all set through December. There have been no kayak rentals at Crescent Lake because Keith is having trouble finding someone to move the kayaks back and forth. The requested pod to keep them at the lake was not approved by the Planning Department because of the proposed location. Drive-in movie. Mr. Masci is handling the vendors' payments and the marquee sign (they are getting more letters) and incidentals.

Dave Lapreay is now under the supervision of the Highway Superintendent, Steve Wlodkowski. As of now he is still the Foreman of the Parks Department. There have been reports of creating a position of Assistant Superintendent of Parks in the supervisors union but nothing is settled yet.

Chris Palmieri asked if we could have a vending machine at the two pools just for water. Commissioner Palmieri said they have a machine at the high school that is rent free. Whatever revenue is collected is split between the machine owner and the school. Mr. Palmieri thought any funds received could go towards improvements to the pools. Discussion ensued. Any funds would have to go to the General Fund. Also, Mr. Pellegrini has his food truck at Recreation Park when the pool is open; a vending machine would take business away from him. There is no concession at Memorial Pool. Mr. Pellegrini said his experience is that most people bring their own drinks; his beverage sales are low. Suggestion was to try it only at Memorial.

Mr. Masci continued his report. He had a request for horseback riding on the trail. Everyone agreed that would not be a good idea. Mr. Masci is working on Munis requisitions for the 24 organized rec groups. He received information that the storage trailer currently being rented each year for Music on the Green can be purchased for \$1,000. It is an \$8,000 trailer but the company is not making that style anymore. The Town Manager thought it was a good idea, and the Finance Director agreed. Rentals have been almost \$1,000 a year. The trailer could be stored at the maintenance garage. A Munis request is in process.

Youth Theatre Spotlights will be doing Pippin on July 29 & 30; Footlights will do Willie Wonka on July 22 & 23 and the Summer Stage (older group) will be performing Chicago on July 16 & 17 – this show is not recommended for younger children. Tennis signups – this week Tuesday and Wednesday did not let the kids go due to the oppressive heat; time will be made up. This is the last week for Men's softball.

Commissioner Fasulo mentioned a complaint that Shelly Morelli was not able to get an answer regarding whether any money was left in the budget for the volleyball clinic before the year was ended. Discussion followed. It was noted that this group is not in the Organized Recreation group but is under Parks and Rec. Mr. Masci said there are several groups included in one line item, unlike in the past. Payments made to coaches in these groups were brought up along with statements made when the group or person initially came to the board for approval. The clinics do bring in enough money to cover the payments. However, it was felt that this subject needs to be looked at more closely.

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

REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT OF PARKS: It was agreed that this should be taken off the agenda in light of the new configuration. Also, reports on parks should not be listed except for functional items.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Request to Use Recreation Park for Duck Race. Commissioner Fasulo made a motion to approve the request of Janet Mellon for the use of Recreation Park for the Annual Duck Race on October 16 (rain date October 17), 2010. Seconded by Commissioner Maruzo and carried unanimously.
2. Italian Festival request to use the mobile stage. Commissioner LaPorte made a motion to approve the use of the stage for the annual Italian Festival to be held July 23-25, 2010. Seconded by Commissioner Palmieri and carried unanimously. Commissioner LaPorte requested that the stage be moved on Thursday morning unless the Music on the Green concert is postponed to Thursday, in which case he would like it moved Friday morning. The festival begins Friday night.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, motion was made by Commissioner Palmieri to adjourn the meeting, at 7:20 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Maruzo. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Berardinelli
Recording Secretary