

MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

BUDGET WORKSHOP

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2002

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Denorfia called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Chairman Anthony Denorfia, Commissioners Frank Galante, John Fontana, David Kanute and Joseph LaPorte, Director of Recreation William J. Masci, Superintendent of Parks Richard L. Egidio, Sr.

2003-2004 PROPOSED BUDGET

Commissioners reviewed the proposed expenditures for the next fiscal year.

Personnel Services. All salary items are subject to union negotiation. Two new park caretakers are requested and were listed on the last page under "" items at the request of Jim Bowes. The Finance Department will place all new and capital items in the appropriate categories after submitted. Mr. Egidio is requesting the additional staffing because of the additional workload caused by the Rails-to-Trails project, more open space, new trees and lighting in downtown, etc. There was some discussion about subcontracting some of the extra work. Mr. Egidio explained that some work, such as on parcels of town property (like the old landfill) could be contracted out, but work in the town parks must be done by town employees because of union regulations. It may be possible to get a vendor to maintain the linear park (Rails-to-Trails). It was the consensus that only one new caretaker be requested at \$37,180, and that extra money be allocated for Rails-to-Trails as a separate item under " Property Maintenance" Only a half-year' allocation would be needed during the 2003-2004 fiscal year (January-June 2004). It will be so noted on the proposed budget; \$7,500 was suggested as the amount.

Mobile stage fees are proposed to go up 15%; they are about 90% reimbursable. Overtime noted is mainly for the full time workers. There are no changes to the Longevity amounts; these are bonuses paid to employees with 8 years service and up, the amount increases after 15 years service. Contractual services are up slightly because of higher prices on invoices. Holiday materials are for Santa' House, to dress it up a bit. Re: Seminars, Mr. Egidio would like to attend a couple of workshops close by, since many others would be too expensive because of airfare. There are some good seminars being held in nearby states.

Concerts are up \$3,000 because the downtown merchants requested four extra weeks of Music on the Green, weather permitting. Some of the sponsors will come from downtown. The Kids Entertainment series was very popular; looking into sponsorships for these events. We would concentrate on certain locations that worked best this year.

Southington Festival Choir: There was some discussion about this group now having members that are mostly from out of town. The director gets paid. Mr. Masci has requested more information on the group, including why Parks & Rec has been including it in the budget. He expects to have answers by the next meeting.

Apple Harvest Festival. Commissioner LaPorte asked that this item be discussed next since he had to leave for another engagement. There is a meeting to discuss the future of the festival on January 9 at Chancellor Gardens beginning at 5:30 p.m. Commissioner LaPorte is interested in attending. None of the other commissioners expressed interest in attending the meeting. It was the consensus that the Parks & Recreation Department could take care of the entertainment portion (as it has been), but nothing else.

There is not enough manpower to do more.

Phase two of the lights for Recreation Park are included in the budget. Also, Mr. Egidio stated that two more lights are needed for the Rec Park basketball area.

New and Capital Items. Commissioners discussed the items written on the last page. Most of them are ""

The Ten Year Celebration of Music on the Green would be a special act on one of the Wednesdays in August. Something of the caliber of Steve Lipia' Las Vegas Show. Mr. Masci is getting information on this.

Wrestling mat reconditioning

Caretaker (one instead of two)

Drinking water supply at Memorial - State mandated because we can' use the well - \$18,000

Rails-to-Trails - separate line discussed earlier.

Capital items included:

Recreation Park field lights - Phase Two

3/4 ton 4x4 pickup truck with plow

3/4 ton 4x4 pickup truck

5 ft. mower, riding (Scat mower)

Discussion followed on the midget football building and whether it would be completed in time. Mr. Egidio stated that he received \$11,200 and paid \$10,900 in bills. Commissioners requested that the football league officers come to a meeting in the spring (March, April or May) to discuss what is happening.

After a field review, Commissioner Fontana stated that the proposed fence at Memorial Park will not look good and would not be the best solution. The dugout area should be closed off so that the children can' run out into the road. There was some discussion about boulders in the lot and whether or not they should be moved or removed. They are on the property line. It was the consensus that the boulders are doing what they were intended to do and should remain in place.

Question arose regarding refurbishing Memorial Pool; it is not in the proposed budget. Mr. Egidio stated that the item was shelved because of the out-of-towner issue last year.

Some items are listed in the budget that are not Parks & Recreation items, such as the Memorial Day Celebration (covers police for the parade), Miss Southington Scholarship, Apple Festival toilet rentals. The Annual Trails Day Festival is part of the department budget but is 50% reimbursable.

Organized Recreation. A one-time allotment is included for bleachers for Southern Little League; last year Western LL got them. This item will be taken out. The \$5,000 for Northern Little League is part of the approved five-year plan. The rest of organized recreation remains the same.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Commissioner Kanute, seconded by Commissioner Fontana to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m. All in favor, motion approved. Commissioner Galante noted that he would be in Florida from January 11 through March 7, 2003, so would miss a couple of meetings.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Berardinelli

Recording Secretary

Next meeting: Wednesday, January 8, 2003 - 6:30 p.m.