

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
JULY 9, 2012

The regular monthly meeting of the Commission was held at Town Hall at 7:00 p.m. with the following in attendance:

Robert Ferrigno (Presiding)	Nancy Walsh
Kevin Bellows	Nicholas Bragano
Richard Moore	Marie Pettiti
Anthony Chmielewski (7:40 p.m.)	

Also, Dmitri Paris, Park Superintendent
Mary Markham, Recreation Director

Guests: John Mellardo, 22 Lafayette Drive (Long Hill Fire Company)
Doug Bogen, 51 Bassick Road (Long Hill Fire Company)
Ken Hyatt, 56 Round Hill Road (TDog Vice President)
Dawn Kostzewski, 54 Highgate Road (TDog)
Joan Dosky, 20 Quaker Lane (Trumbull United Soccer)
Sharon Lommitzer, 42 Peaceful Valley Road (Trumbull United Soccer)
Jackie Kane, 9 Woodcrest Avenue (Trumbull Youth Field Hockey)

Public Comments:

John Mellardo and Doug Bogen (Long Hill Fire Company):

They are here as a follow up to their request in 2010 to utilize approximately 1/8th of an acre of Island Brook Park, with an easement of perpetuity, in conjunction with their Fire Station expansion plans which was approved in concept by the Park Commission. They are now ready to move forward with the project and need to have this approval formalized. They reviewed the current layout plan with the Commission. They noted that the current fire station was built in 1927 and the structure is failing. The easement area is a steep slope which will be graded down to a small retaining wall. They will be landscaping the perimeter and in the process of preparing the additional parking and back-bay exit area they are willing to renovate the current park entrance-way which needs widening. The new station is geared for safety of the community. This station is in close proximity to major hazards (the Mall, the Merritt Parkway, Town Hall Complex). They will provide buffer for neighbors.

Ken Hyatt and Dawn Kostzewski (TDog):

They are members of the TDog Organization and looking for assistance from the Park Rangers with enforcing Dog Park Rules at Indian Ledge Park. People come into the dog park who are not happy with new rules which includes that children under 10 and non-neutered dogs are not allowed in the dog park. They recently had a bad incident between adults whereby a call was put in to the Police Department, Rangers were sent to the scene and Rangers called for Police assistance. These people would not prove proof they were Trumbull residents. TDog's problems comes with non-residents utilizing the Dog Park and with non-neutered dogs being brought in. TDog contacted the Chief of Police who indicated that if there is a dispute between adults, the police will respond. In the Dog Park between dogs, they do not respond, Rangers will respond. Therefore, TDog is seeking the assistance from the Park Rangers to enforce the Dog Park rules.

Chairman noted that there has been a Policy and Procedure in place since 2006 with specific rules which was implemented when the Dog Park began. We will provide a copy of those regulations. If they wish to implement a policy in the Dog Park they should come to the Commission. The Commission can give an opinion and if necessary modify the current Rules and Regulations.

Mr. Moore questioned if a section of the dog park could be cordoned off (chain link fence) with one area for neutered dogs and the other for non-neutered dogs. Mr. Hyatt said that would not work because the dogs follow the scent of the non-neutered dogs and would charge the fenced area. He said other community dog parks have this requirement.

Chairman indicated that we would like to have an opinion from the Dog Warden on this policy initiated by TDog. He requested they provide a copy of their current working rules and regulations. The Commission will request the Dog Warden attend a future meeting to discuss the Rules and Regulations for the Dog Park and this current change.

Joan Dosky and Sharon Lommitzer, Trumbull United Soccer:
Came to this meeting to discuss several topics of concern.

1. Athletic Field Notification Timeframe:

In the past they were notified of field closures at 1:00 P.M. This past season, notifications are made between 3:00 and 4:00 p.m. Their practices start at 4:00 .m. and children are picked up at school in order to arrive on time. The late notice is too late for their league. They also pay for coaches and if cancelled, still have that commitment.

2. Lavatory at Kaechele Complex:

They have a key to the lavatories and open and close when they are at the complex. They have had clean-up experiences (i.e. one with plastic bottles in the toilets and they had to clean the toilets). Trumbull United's insurance doesn't cover maintenance duties of the lavatories, and they feel they should not be responsible for this duty when they open the door. They requested that the lavatory building at the Kaechele Complex be opened and cared for daily by the Parks Department as with all other parks.

3. Use of Kaechele Field House:

They indicated that they have the need to use the Kaechele Field House meeting room from time to time. They questioned how do they request permission for this use.

Superintendent explained:

Field Scheduling Program: With the implementation of the new Field Scheduling Program, one field closure notification time later in the day was adopted as weather and fields conditions are established by that time of day and this addresses the needs of the greater majority of users.

Lavatory Opening and Cleaning: The Kaechele Complex is scheduled for play-time only; and, therefore, the lavatory building is opened when there is play. We do not leave that building open all day, which would make it a target for vandalism. It is only opened when the fields are being played. Therefore, the user groups being scheduled have keys to open the lavatories and have the cleaning responsibility.

Use of Kaechele Field House: The building was built by AYSO. Buildings built on Town property become the ownership of the Town. AYSO schedules use depending on availability.

The Superintendent commented that when the Kaechele Complex first opened, there was good working conditions between the two prime users, AYSO and Trumbull United. Last fall that relationship broke down with concerns from both user groups. AYSO is the larger of the two leagues having built the building and providing the funding for maintenance of the facility. Trumbull United is the much smaller Travel Team, without funding availability. Superintendent would like to see the two user groups get back to working cooperatively with one another.

Jackie Kane, Trumbull Youth Field Hockey:

She is the Field Hockey coach at Fairfield University. She has been running the Trumbull Youth Field Hockey group for three years, this fall will be the fourth season. They have over 60 girls, grades 3-8. In the past they scheduled the high school field hockey field following their practice on Mondays and Thursdays from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m., in September and October. She requested scheduling in time for this coming season. They only play one season. Players pay \$115 any remaining funds pay for goals and equipment. She utilizes college-player coaches. They are on a very tight schedule with a whole series of steps for categories to be set. She was made aware of the new Field Use Policy and its requirements. She would not mind becoming a Recreation Program if necessary. She is most anxious for fall field scheduling.

Chairman indicated the Recreation Director will send her a copy of the Field Use Policy.

MOTION by Mrs. Walsh, second by Mr. Moore, unanimously passed to close Guest Portion of the Agenda and return to the order or the Agenda.

MOTION by Mr. Chmielewski, second by Mr. Moore, unanimously passed approving the minutes of the June 11, 2012 meeting as distributed.

Old Business:

- Trash at Twin Brooks Park:
 - Superintendent said the receptacles have arrived and will be mounted.
 - Paper signs up. Permanent signs ordered.
 - Consolidating our current trash pick-up stations.
- Recreation Director indicated that the Rangers have issued many sticker warnings. Recreation Department has been issuing many stickers daily.
- Chairman indicated he has contacted the Town Attorney on the possibility of pursuing the ability for Rangers, both full-time and part-time, to implement fines for violations of park ordinances.

Long Hill Fire District request to utilize approximately 1/8th of an acre of Island Brook Park, with an easement of perpetuity, in conjunction with their Fire Station expansion plans.

Consensus was this use of Town property is a benefit to the community. It is a steep hill which has drainage problems and is not utilized. The improvements to the entrance way to the park will be most welcomed. Having the expanded fire station is a security measure for the park.

The Superintendent is in agreement with this use of a very small portion of parkland so long as we have a voice in the planning.

Chairman noted that Commissioner Ken Martin who is not in attendance at this meeting has indicated that he would not support the request to allow use of parkland in perpetuity as he feels it would set a precedent for other expansion requests into the park system.

MOTION by Dr. Bellows, second by Mr. Chmielewski and unanimously passé to accept utilization of approximately 1/8 of an acre of Island Brook Park with an easement of perpetuity by the Long Hill Fire Company in conjunction with their Fire Station expansion plans and need for a small area of additional parking at the upper level of the park behind 5400 Main Street with review by the Town Attorney and appropriate Town departments and commissions authorizations in place with final review and approval by the Parks and Recreation Commission.

TDog Request for Ranger Support at the Dog Park:

We will request the Dog Warden attend a future meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission to review Rules and Regulations for the Dog Park.

Trumbull United Soccer Requests:

Superintendent explained that AYSO rehabilitated the fields at the Kaechele Complex and is attempting to keep them in good condition. Parks Department cuts and irrigates the fields. AYSO has them lined. AYSO is the larger group with 1200 players. They have volunteer coaches. Trumbull United has 300 players and pays for coaches and travel. The lavatory is opened at game time and accommodates visiting teams as well as resident players. Superintendent will continue to encourage an agreeable and fair working relationship between the two leagues.

Rangers:

Chairman questioned Superintendent as to the possibility of having one of our two permanent Rangers attend a portion of the Commission meeting each month for updates on specific problems. He noted we are awaiting an overview of the summer assignments. Superintendent indicated he can accommodate this request when one of them is on duty on the Commission's meeting date; otherwise, having one come in for the meeting requires 3 hours of overtime.

Signs:

Superintendent agreed to add "Town Residents Only" to entrance sign at Old Mine Park; and, remove plantings at the Twin Brooks Park entrance sign so "Town Residents Only" is visible.

Old Mine Park:

Old Mine Bridge should have a locked chain. Bridge repair work to begin August 8th. Old bridge coming down.

Recreation Director's Report:

- Summer Recreation Programs in full-swing right now. All filled to capacity.
- Computer Program in place and working well.
- Fall Schedules will be in place for scheduling.
- Check for residency at the pools.
- Pool closures have been down this year. We use megaphones to remind parents to get youngsters out of pool for lavatory breaks.
- We continue the 15 minute breaks for Adult Swims.

Superintendent's Report:

- With heat wave pools are active with pumps working hard.
- Beach Pool transformers and pumps may need upgrade if UI Company doesn't come up with a solution to overheating. (We have changed everything we could possibly change to find the problem.)
- Twin Brooks Rail Trail Project is near completion. We need to utilize herbicides to correct heavy weed infestation.
- Hot weather has slowed grass growth.
- Will provide the Commission with the Memorandum of Agreement for Maintaining the Pequonnock River Trail which brings with it an extensive list of responsibilities which we will get no funding for. He noted that the Rail Trail brings a multitude of benefits to the community but requires a tremendous amount of work ensuring the trail remains in good repair and safety.

MOTION to adjourn at 9:20 p.m. by Mr. Chmielewski, second by Dr. Bellows, unanimously passed.

Respectfully submitted:

Joan E. Plouffe
Clerical Administrative Asst.

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