

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
SEPTEMBER 16, 2013

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)	Kevin Bellows
Lee Defusco	Nancy Walsh
Marie Petitti	Vin Lipinski
Richard Moore	

Also,
Park Superintendent Dmitri Paris
Recreation Director Mary Markham

Guests:

Ted Chase, 27 Francis Street, Trumbull Youth Lacrosse
John Egan, Christian Heritage School, 585 White Plains Road
Pam Georgas, 117 Broadway Road, Nature and Arts Commission Chairman
Kevin Malone, 29 Cottage Street, Patrons of the Nature and Arts Center President
Scot Kerr, 12 Linbrook Road, Patrons of the Nature and Arts Center Vice President
Nina Boynton, 107 Whitey Avenue, Nature and Arts Center interested resident

Public Comments:

Ted Chase, Trumbull Youth Lacrosse:

He presented their fall field scheduling request. They use the Pit at the THS complex Sundays from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. for K-8th grades boys and girls. All are Trumbull residents. Their financials and all paper work required is on file from their spring presentation. They just run one hour skill development clinics for each group. No games in the fall, no interference with other sports groups. They are a 501c3 organization with their IRS and Insurance Certificate on file.

John Egan, Christian Heritage School Athletic Director:

Presented their fall field scheduling request. He apologized for missing last month's meeting. They have a similar schedule as last year's fall request. They use field space at Indian Ledge for Girls and Boys Soccer Program, varsity and middle school.

Recreation Director stated they are worked into the field scheduling. It worked well. They share the field with Trumbull United and Trumbull High School. Games take precedent. THS only using the field until this coming Friday, then Christian Heritage shares with Trumbull United who don't start as early as Christian Heritage.

Pam Georgas, Nature and Arts Commission Chairman:

Here to give the Commission an overview of their beginning. The Trumbull Town Council formed the Nature and Arts Commission and gave them use of the Wagner Parcel. Three years ago, the Selectman's Chief of Staff indicated to them that there was an interest to possibly sell the Wagner Parcel and asked them to look at Parks System locations with the possibility of joining with the Ranger Station as there was also an interest to sell or reassign their current White Plains Road building. In the long term, it made sense to them as they have many combined programs with the Rangers. They viewed park locations closer to the Rail Trail and presented a proposal for a combined Twin Brooks Park location. The Park Commission rejected that proposal. The Nature and Arts Commission went back to the Town Council to see what to do. So, here they are again looking for a new location for the Nature and Arts Center.

She introduced Kevin Malone, President, and Scot Kerr, Vice President, of the Patrons of the Nature and Arts Center who will cover key points of their current Vision and Mission Goals.

Mr. Malone reiterated that the Town Council passed a Resolution to give use of the Wagner Parcel in 2005 to the Nature and Arts Commission. Two years ago in order to simplify their fund-raising process, they were required to become a 501c3. The Wagner Parcel is approximately 12 to 14 acres, a nice piece of property for doing small things for elementary students K-5, field trips, pond, scout badges and a variety of community programs. The typical nature center is larger. They are looking for a middle of the road size within a park...not too big, not too small. The last time they came before the Commission concerns developed about what they were going to do within the parks system, and the Nature Commission's request spun out-of-control. He wanted to make clear that their current proposal for a facility and purpose is not the same. They currently have a 2400 sq. foot facility. They would be looking for twice that size and potentially include a Ranger Station. Proposal is for a location at Old Mine Park where the current lavatory building is located. Not proposing a catering kitchen or a large party room. They need space for education and arts focused activities. This is why they are here; they want to relocate to Old Mine Park. Location has natural resources, Pequonnock River water shed. He noted that the current ten year Plan of Conservation and Development encourages protecting the Pequonnock Valley, clean up of plantings, open new entrances. Parks currently doesn't really have a facility across the river where public can relax.

Commissioner Moore questioned why public needs a building within the park to relax.

Mr. Malone said they would improve the area around the facility and it would become a destination in Old Mine Park as a gateway to the parks system. Parks Department could use wall space in the building for visual and historic views so public could learn about the parks system. Current pavilion is in disrepair and they envision this as a good location for a Nature and Arts Center including a Ranger Station. They could develop that area, improve drainage to eliminate erosion and wet area.

Mr. Kerr said next for them is not looking for Commission to sign-off on their proposal to move into Old Mine Park. They are making a proposal. There isn't a plan for the Commission to approve. What they need is the Commission's endorsement of moving the Trumbull Nature and Arts Center to the parks system. They can come back another time to tell us where they think it should be. They need a conceptual agreement that this makes sense, and then they can put together their fund-raising and hire an architect. This is a several years/long-term capitol plan on their part.

Chairman questioned the difference between the Patrons Group and the Nature and Arts Commission.

Pam Georgas, Nature and Arts Commission Chairman, said the Commission develops programs for the Center. The 501c3 Patrons Group was created for fund raising purposes and would eventually be dissolved.

Mr. Kerr said they would answer any questions the Parks and Recreation Commission might have this evening to figure-out how to move forward. They need the Commission's endorsement

Mr. Moore questioned as to what they would like to see as an additional benefit to the park.

Response: Litter/garbage, people not picking up. They would like to maintain a clean environment. Follow the pathway at the Rail Trail. There's a washout from the run-off with tons of garbage there. He mentioned that many people express an interest in a clean environment. They would involve volunteers.

Mr. Lipinski questioned what portion of the park would they want to put a building.?

Response... over the bank where the restroom facility is. Essentially replace that building on the trail; provide public a resting place.

Mrs. Walsh questioned how would they access it.

Superintendent indicated that the bridge is DEEP approved. It can take a full-size fire apparatus, though it's narrow.

Mr. Lipinski referred to Slide (Page) 10 of their presentation, mentioning Small, Median, and Large size Centers; Page 11 indicates desire for medium. He questioned how are they funded...private operation day to day. Are they self-supporting?

Response: They receive \$7 to \$30 for work shops. Private money to support programing and special events. They get sponsors...mentioned Sun Products who provided the \$250,000 play equipment at their current location. Town provides maintenance service.

Mr. Lipinski asked how do they see that practice with a new building.

Response: Not prepared to talk to you tonight. Public/private partnership. Not seeing this work any different than at the Wagner Property. Could potentially reduce costs...three facilities down to one (current lavatory building, Ranger Station, Nature Center at Wagner Parcel).

Mr. Moore questioned what is the size of the New Canaan Nature Center.

Response, 47 acres. That would be a large facility. Has a pre-school on site. They want to service Trumbull residents and school children with programs integral with public schools and field trips.

Nina Boynton, 107 Whitney Avenue resident:

What is music aspect?

Response: Haven't done music. Could envision a place for a recital, etc. Facility might embrace programs currently in Old Mine Park.

Superintendent noted that he has listened to this proposal for a long time. If all parties agree that we will have a facility built within the parks system, a full agreement outlining all details that impact the parks system and resources must be drafted. All parties have to come to the table on how it will function, what is reciprocal, all arrangements.

Ms. Georgas: For us to ask for funds, we need some sort of commitment that the Town is behind us or we can't ask corporations for money.

Superintendent questioned the impact on our parks system if they move in.

Ms. Georgas: We don't have money to handle operations of a new building.

Superintendent said they are well-formed concerns from the Commission. The Nature Center's obligation is that all concerns will be addressed. Before anything happens, an agreement that the building will be fully-funded before they proceed.

Mr. Lipinski questioned if a rock is thrown through a window or there are leaky pipes at your facility, who replaces? You need cash to build, cash to maintain.

Pam: Current services are the Town's responsibility...it's a Town building.

Mr. Lipinski noted they propose doubling their current space....double heat, electric, etc.

Nina Boynton: Here just as a resident. It makes sense instead of going for 5,000 sq feet in size, why not go larger and then you can make money. Why not make it for-profit?

Mr. Kerr said aim is to serve the needs of the town and our community right now.

Mr. Moore noted the heavy traffic on Route 111 at the intersection to Old Mine Park and questioned adding another facility at that intersection which is already bad.

Response: DOT and Gr. Bpt. Regional Council is currently trying to work out a cross-over or under at that location for bikes which would be helpful.

Chairman thanked them for their presentation.

Mr. Kerr questioned what would the Commission see as the next steps.

Chairman said minutes will reflect any thoughts.

MOTION by Dr. Bellows, second by Mrs. Petitti, unanimously passed to close the guest portion of the agenda.

MOTION by Mrs. Walsh, second by Mr. Defusco, unanimously passed to approve the Minutes of the August 12, 2013 meeting as distributed.

Old Business:

Leagues appearing for fall scheduling:

- Lacrosse was in attendance.
- St. Joseph High School's Athletic Director has transferred to another school. We will send a request to the interim director to attend our next meeting.
- Pop Warner League President has not responded or attended as requested.
 - Recreation Director received a voice message that he planned to attend tonight's meeting but is held up in New York City as this is Corporate Filing day, his information is in his parked car at the Train Station and he will make arrangements to meet with the Commission at another time.
 - Mr. Lipinski expressed great upset and concern for the disrespect that the Pop Warner League has demonstrated with no one from the League present at a Parks and Recreation Commission meeting in three years. Attendance is a requirement of our Facilities Use Policy; and, all other users are complying with the rules. We don't know if they have their financials and background check in place as well as their scheduling request. They are well into their season and paperwork is still not presented. He feels field use should be taken from them.

- Mr. DeFusco commented that he does know what it is like to be held up in New York. We want our athletic fields open and enjoyed. He suggests inviting Pop Warner president to scan or email his presentation to us. If we see anything wrong, we can arrange a time to discuss.
- Chairman noted that there is a policy in place for all leagues to abide by. It's a question of fairness and accountability.
- Mrs. Petitti noted that with volunteers, we have to be a little flexible. He should at least send an email to the Commission.
- Mrs. Walsh questioned if we have paperwork from last year. Recreation Director said yes.
- Dr. Bellows felt that it is unfair to coaches and players to sanction the whole group for one representative's lack of compliance.
- Mr. Lipinski still feels a serious concern as to why they have not presented their required paperwork to allow for scheduling...and, they continue to play on Madison field.
- Recreation Director said they can't have coaches with U.S. Pop Warner without background checks.
- It was agreed to try to contact him by speaker-phone and talk with him personally during this meeting.

MOTION by Mr. Lipinski, Mr. Moore seconded, to take practice fields away from the Pop Warner League for the remainder of this week. Vote: Two (2) in favor, four (4) opposed. **Motion failed.**

Continued discussion:

- Practice fluctuates at Madison, 2/3 nights.
- Mr. DeFusco feels it could be unproductive to penalize kids who play because we are upset with the League president.
- Superintendent felt we need to have a better working-plan so requests can be reviewed and Rules complied with.
- Mr. Lipinski said do we now tell organizations that they don't have to come in?

MOTION by Mr. Moore, second by Mr. Lipinski, to issue a letter insisting on Pop Warner Board presence at our next monthly meeting or they will lose their field privilege's.

Gene Cellini, Pop Warner President, returned a call to complete a conference call with the Commission.

- Prior to two years ago, he presented his request to use Madison field to BOE Plant Operations.
- Last year got the book to the Recreation Director.
- Upon question if there is anyone else who can come in to meet with us as we insist with other groups. *Response:* He doesn't have any one to do this. They played weekend games the last three weeks. They work in conjunction with the soccer groups. Seven teams, three games on Saturday, four games on Sunday.
- Chairman stated that we must have someone from his organization here at a meeting. In the meantime he should drop the presentation binder off to the Recreation Director.
- He said Coaches have background checks done. Financials in order. They have draft of 2012 Tax Return (on extension), Insurance runs from July 29 for one year. Town is added as additional insured. They have a 12 member board. Maybe one of these can be here next month. Can't guarantee this; he checked with two to attend tonight's meeting and could not get someone here.
- Mr. Moore stated he was sent a notice that someone had to be here tonight and questioned why someone isn't here.
- *Response,* Mr. Cellini was to be here himself until held up.

- Mr. Lipinski indicated to him that they have worked together for many years on various sports organizations; but, last month he was in Minnesota, this month New York; there must be someone else to come in.
- Chairman noted there is a motion on the floor on a potential suspension of use of fields next year because paper work is not in.
- Chairman will call the board members personally if Gene can't be here.
- Mr. Cellini noted that their coaches have CPR and First Aid Training as well. They put in a lot of hours to get these certifications, more than other sports groups need. Board of Health reviews their equipment.
- Mrs. Petitti thought that with a 12 member board, he needs to designate someone to come in to a meeting.

MOTION by Mrs. Petitti that we send a letter insisting on the Pop Warner League's presence at our next regular meeting or they could lose their field privileges for the 2014 season. No second, **Motion failed.**

MOTION by Mr. Walsh, second by Mrs. Petitti, passed 5 in favor, 1 opposed (Mr. Lipinski) that we send a letter to the Pop Warner League Board of Directors bringing to their attention the concern of this Commission for the lack of presence at a Parks and Recreation Commission meeting by the Trumbull Pop Warner Organization with their fall field scheduling request, as required by the Facilities Use Policy, which is necessary before scheduling can be considered and may jeopardize future consideration for field availability.

MOTION by Mr. Moore, second by Mr. DeFusco, unanimously passed to approve Trumbull Youth Lacrosse request for field scheduling subject to field availability and Field Use Policy requirements being met.

MOTION by Mr. DeFusco, second by Dr. Bellows, unanimously passed to approve Christian Heritage School request for field scheduling subject to field availability and Field Use Policy requirements being met.

Nature and Arts Commission Proposal:

The Commission will consider the proposal presented at this meeting.

Superintendent's Report:

- Department has been heavily involved with the new High School Concession Stand ground drainage and concrete installation.
- Pools closed down.
- Rest Rooms will be closed by November.
- Tashua Water Park will close this week.
- Beach Park skating pond at Hedgehog entrance completed. Moved 800/900 yards of material and created new spillway, built a walk-over deck around the pond, cleaned-up the contiguous cross country track.
- At Twin Brooks, cleared out debris to left of ponds. Ground will be tilled late in October, by spring seed to come up.
- Next job will be to refurbish the barn and house at the Bill Property. House is gutted and will be a renovated to house the Rangers.
- Long Hill field being prepared for a major rehabilitation.
- A new slide for Tashua Pool about to be installed.
- Electrical improvements necessary for Tashua Pool flow pump.

- He is presently compiling a listing for the Town's Five-Year Capitol Improvements Plan. Parks System needs are comprehensive:
 - Paving (\$500,000)
 - Structural Repairs
 - Additional Artificial Turf field with lighting.(\$1.5 Million)
 - Indian Ledge Turf field repairs needed within two years (now showing age). (\$700,000)
 - Beach Pool Filter House (\$150/\$200,000)
 - Pool Liners (two pools) (\$250,000 each)
 - Full funding to complete Spring Hill field (out-sourced)

He requested Commissioners contact him with any other capitol improvements which should be added.

Recreation Director's Report:

- Started registrations for Fall Programs, ie. basketball, volley ball, yoga, karate.
- Children Concerts ended last week.
- Stopped sticker distribution. Gave out approximately 9,000 this season.
- There are new State regulations for pools. A certified Life Guard must be on deck when lifeguard is in the pool coaching. This has impact on the Swim Team.

MOTION to adjourn at 10:00 p.m. by Mrs. Walsh, second Mrs. Petitti, unanimously passed.

Respectfully submitted:

Joan E. Plouffe
Clerical Administrative Asst.

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