

**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
DECEMBER 8, 2014**

The Regular monthly meeting of the Commission was convened at Town Hall at 7:05 p.m. with the following in attendance:

Robert Ferrigno (Presiding)  
Lee DeFusco  
Michael Travisano

Kevin Bellows  
Richard Moore  
Nancy Walsh (7:15 p.m.)

Also,  
Parks Superintendent Dmitri Paris  
Recreation Director Many Markham

Guests:  
Susan and Clay Hughes, 99 Rocton Avenue, Bpt., CT, 06606

Public Comments:

Susan Hughes stated they were present in regards to their son, Jerrett Hughes, who would love to play Trumbull Little League baseball. He is a student at St. Theresa's, and they wanted to express and clear a few discussions that have been addressed by this Commission at the September and October meetings, in relation to All Stars being pilfered from Bridgeport. It's in regards to their son and they would just like to speak to the Board.

Chairman indicated that the Commission would be more than willing to here their issues.

She distributed a letter from Jerrett and stated that they are Bridgeport residents here on behalf of their son Jerrett Hughes who is a proud Honor Roll student at St. Theresa's School. They take the opportunity to clear up a few things that were discussed at previous meetings. First, they moved their son to St. Theresa's after a lengthy search of several Catholic schools in the Fairfield, Stratford, and Trumbull area. After talking to the Principal of St. Theresa's they felt that school would provide the best environment for their son to learn and develop into a well-rounded young man. They made the hard decision to transfer him from St. Andrews in Bridgeport to Trumbull...not to play baseball...but, for his education.

She stated that secondly, this past fall Jerrett had the pleasure of playing in Trumbull's Fall Ball Program. They submitted the necessary paperwork from Williamsport and paid the fees. He also played with several town kids on various travel baseball programs and loved it. After talking to these parents and kids, they were all excited about the upcoming spring baseball season and playing with each other. After trying out for the Trumbull baseball team, the coach informed them that they would love to have Jerrett play but for reasons beyond their control they were unable to let him play. They found out that shortly after school started, a phone call was made to a Board (Parks and Recreation Commission) member from someone saying he was a coach from Bridgeport and that Trumbull coaches were trying to pilfer their All Star players. She assured two things, first the only player involved here is their son Jerrett; second, they were never, and have never, been approached by any coach or official from the Trumbull Little League.

Clay Hughes continued... He stated that last year their son came to them and said he really didn't want to play baseball anymore. He said Bridgeport was looking for a leader and their son Jerrett is just not a leader. He said they are basically asking this board (Parks and Recreation Commission) to reconsider its previous decision on the Residency Policy.

He questioned if we could Grandfather him in because he did play earlier. He asked the Commissioners to take a moment to read what he wrote in regards to this (presented a letter written by Jerrett) and know that he really wants to have fun, this is his last year in playing Little League Baseball, and it's not going to be much fun if he plays in Bridgeport...especially with the calls and their knowing that Jerrett is not going to play on the Bridgeport travel team. They have followed the 11 year olds to other communities to get the experience of what it is like to play in a bigger competition. They want his last year to be as good as possible and Williamsport doesn't have a problem with non-residency even though Trumbull does.

Susan Hughes finalized with a request for an exception to our residency rule as he does go to a school in Trumbull.

Chairman said the Commission has considered this question and has enforced the residency rule. He explained that there are several programs in the system in Trumbull that are 100% residency, it's not just baseball and Little League. There's 1100, 1500 soccer players, there's probably 300 to 350/400 lacrosse players, there's 70 to 100, swimmers, and it goes on and on.....all 100 % residency. So it's not just Little League, the impact would be across the board because there are four parochial schools, non-public schools, that are in Trumbull which could impact the system as well. These are the things that the Commission considered when we made that decision. It's a program that's been in place now for many years. We created a Field Use Committee and a Field Use Policy was approved by both the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Board of Education. He explained that there are fees involved in the progression. Little League is a core group with a 100 percent residency requirement. As programs move down the priority list there are fees involved that the 100 percent residency affects.

Susan Hughes questioned if anybody from other parochial schools had ever asked.

Chairman said the Recreation Director could provide that information. He stated it wasn't a decision that was easily done, we understand not only your son but possibly some others who would not be allowed to play in the system.

Susan Hughes said that if it's for this year, according to the Little League rules you have to already be enrolled in the school prior to December 1st, so if an exception were made we wouldn't have a bus load of kids from Bridgeport wishing to play; they would have to already be enrolled.

Atty DeFusco questioned if the Waiver given to them was on paper.

Clay Hughes... Yes, from Williamsport, but he did not have it with him.

Atty. DeFusco questioned what Trumbull Little League gave them to let their son play Fall Ball.

Response: Little League required paper work from the Principal stating that he is going to that school and that he was enrolled prior to a certain date. Then these were signed by the President of Trumbull Little League that he was allowing an out-of-town player.

Atty. DeFusco questioned what did Trumbull Little League say on their paper work as far as how long he could play...Fall/Spring, Fall only, 2014, 2015.

Response: There was no time limit. Just an agreement that he could play.

Chairman indicated the Commission would consider their request with input from the Commissioners, Superintendent and Recreation Director.

**MOTION** by Dr. Bellows, second by Atty. DeFusco, unanimously passed to close meeting to guests.

Election of Officers:

**MOTION** by Mrs. Walsh, second by Mr. Moore, unanimously passed nominating Robert Ferrigno to continue as Chairman. Vote unanimously in favor.

**MOTION** by Mrs. Walsh, seconds by Atty. Mr. DeFusco and Dr. Travisano, unanimously passed nominating Kevin Bellows as Vice Chairman. Vote unanimously in favor.

**MOTION** by Dr. Bellows, second by Mr. Moore, unanimously passed adopting the second Monday of each month as the regular meeting date for the Parks and Recreation Commission Meetings for 2015, with meetings being held the third Monday, or a date to be determined, if the regular meeting date falls on a holiday or must necessarily be rescheduled.

**MOTION** by Dr. Bellows, second Dr. Travisano, and passed (Mr. Moore abstained) approving the minutes of the November 17, 2014 meeting as distributed.

Old Business:

Pickle Ball

Superintendent has not acquired a price for lining the courts yet; but, he has reached out to the users to indicate that we will get them a number as soon as we get a quote.

Finance Department Policy on Contracts:

The new Finance Department policy that all contracts for work on Town property must go through the Town bid process will be distributed to users when they come to this Commission in February with their requests for scheduling.

Ice Skating:

Attorney DeFusco noticed that the Hedgehog Road entrance pond which will freeze for ice skating looks great. He noted that in the past there was a lower level ice-skating area at Unity Park.

Superintendent said that area no longer freezes as it is “too hot” as it contains natural decomposed material. This area would need heavy dredging to re-create the past skating area.

Attorney DeFusco expressed a desire to possibly develop a man-made skating area somewhere within the parks system. Several other communities have done this on flat land or on court areas. Westport’s location is sponsored by the PAL organization with admission charged. He stated that skating is a wonderful activity that we should consider in our long-range plans.

Attorney DeFusco and Dr. Travisano were charged with investigating the potential for a long-term project to create a permanent weather-driven shallow ice skating area within the parks system.

New Business:

Hughes family Request:

Discussion:

- Can’t accommodate them.
- A lot more deep-seated than we thought.
- Little League President said they knew nothing about it, checked with every coach; however, waiver was signed allowing a non-resident to play Fall Ball.
- There are issues with how Little League is gaming the season.

- Rules are being circumvented.
- There should be some kind of punitive action.
- Request League representative to appear before us to clarify their not abiding by the 100 percent residency rule.
- There is potential for re-evaluation of Field Use Policy Group.

**MOTION** by Att. DeFusco, second by Dr. Bellows, unanimously passed the Commission will maintain our 100% Residency Policy.

Chairman will invite Little League President Greg MacDonald to attend the January meeting to comment on the information we have received from the Hughes and the circumstance brought to our attention as the Commission wants to be assured that going forward this doesn't happen again.

Superintendent's Report:

- Effective loss of majority of crew due to leaf program and illnesses. One employee had extended surgery on his hand and another employee a week and a half ago fell victim to a heart problem...a myocarditis viral infection with permanent damage to his heart. Will keep us informed of his status. Now working with a skeleton crew. Trying to get our own work done as well as the completion of the Beach Pool Filter House...neither of which are done.
  - This year, Highway Department decided to go at the Leaf Program 10 hours per day, six days a week, and constructed a budget for that. The unexpected consequence of putting that into effect was bringing in non-union employees. The regular work force had a right to contest those hours by non-bargaining personnel. Human resources and Director in recognizing that was the case capitulated and said anyone who wanted to work is eligible to do so. Parks Department employees given the opportunity to make some extra money jumped on it leaving us with a skeleton crew. The only solution for the future is we need to fortify our 'own' overtime account and then the Parks Department can offer the same overtime hours; 60 hours a week, 10 hour days, for 6/8 week period. It will be a straight budget number that will be added to our overtime account. Time and a half over 8 hours a day and 40 hours a week, Saturdays, time and a half. Two double time events during that period, Veterans Day and Thanksgiving. No Sundays.
- Beach Filter House now wide-open. Block work done and trusses up. Will close it up as quickly as possible. All mechanicals will be done in-house.
- Huge amounts of leaves still on our grass areas.
- Lease purchase. There may be a 2500 pick-up truck replacement this year, 4-wheel, no plow.
- This week, Town reviewing 20 year bonding projects.
  - An artificial field.
  - Significant work to the basin of Beach Pool. 20 years liner itself is fine; but, the shell that it's protecting is crumbling under it. Liner needs to come out to determine what can be done to remediate the shell. Any substantial work or changes to that pool would have to go for a full review before the State and would probably not be approved. The graduated depth on entry doesn't meet the current health standards. We can repair, we can't change. We will need to be prepared to jump on the project the day after Labor Day to get a solid two months in. Because of the urgency of this project, hoping to get this approval in time to begin work late summer of 2015.

Recreation Director's Report:

- For the holidays, now selling Movie Tickets. \$8 (\$11.50 value)
- Basketball is up and running. Short two coaches.
- Stickers will be ordered with new color, same design. (10,300 in 2014)

**MOTION** to adjourn at 8:30 p.m. by Mr. Moore, second by Dr. Bellows, unanimously passed.

Respectfully submitted:

Joan E. Plouffe  
Clerical Adm. Asst.

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