

**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
JANUARY 12, 2015**

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

Robert Ferrigno (Presiding)
Vincent Lipinski
Lee DeFusco
Nancy Walsh

Kevin Bellows
Michael Travisano
Richard Moore

Also,
Parks Superintendent Dmitri Paris
Recreation Director Mary Markham
Vicki Tesoro, 133 Beechwood Avenue, Dist. 3 Town Council Member

Guests:
Greg McDonald, 57 Raven Road, President Trumbull Little League
Ted Chase, 27 Francis Street, Trumbull Lacrosse

Public Comments:

Greg McDonald, President Trumbull Little League
Asked Steve Finger to join me he's the Vice President of Little League. We are here at the request of the Commission concerning the residency policy.

Chairman noted that when Mr. McDonald was here at one of the meetings we had he made a statement that there was no contact from anyone from Little League with the Jerritt Hughes family (Non-Resident applicant)...and is that still his statement and position.

Mr. McDonald responded that in October when he came to address the Commission there was a September minutes and also a memo that came out about the 100% residency policy and the allegation that Little League coaches were actively recruiting kids from other towns to play in Trumbull Little League, and he made a statement that allegation was inaccurate. He had followed up with coaches and commissioners about the Hughes boy and it was the Hughes boy from Bridgeport who had requested to play in Trumbull Little League for the fall. So what Mr. McDonald was addressing was that Little League was not actively recruiting kids to play in Trumbull Little League.

Chairman noted that the statement from the Hughes family was that Little League required paper work from the principal of his Trumbull school stating that he was going to school in town and enrolled prior to a certain date, this was signed by the president of Little League that their son was allowed as an out-of-town player to play. This information was given to us in December, so there's a contradiction on what was stated and what they're stating. They said the paper was signed in the fall by the president of Little League. Chairman questioned if Mr. McDonald was the President in the fall and did he remember signing this paper? He said what he was addressing was the Little League National Policy that had come out in the spring that would allow a child that goes to a parochial school to play and approved the child to play...that's all. The paper work was signed in late August. He said his statements were that Little League was not soliciting kids to play in town...addressing something different than approving a non-resident? He said the family came to them, they didn't go to the family. There's now a clarification on Little League's understanding of the residency rule and

all have to have a zip code of 06611. He notified the Hughes that we have a 100% policy, and the boy would not be able to play with them.

Upon question he indicated:

- Taking the steps now so that all coaches know that.
- Right now open registration is going on and any child who tries to register with other than our zip code is rejected.
- They have in-person registrations and are advising families that they cannot follow the Little League Policy that was set forth in April because we have a Town policy in place.

Dr. Travisano questioned if the boy did play fall ball, though. Yes, even though he didn't live in Trumbull.

Chairman noted that part of this issue was that notification to all the athletic groups, not only Little League, that there is a 100 % residency policy and it's important that this be adhere to with all the parochial schools in town which would impact the system...not only their group, but all the other groups.

Mr. Moore expressed concern that Mr. McDonald addressed this Commission about this issue and knew full well they had a player on the fall ball team that was not a Trumbull resident and didn't mention it.

Mr. McDonald said he did bring up that a family approached him and that they inquired about the new Little League policy. He apologize if he didn't volunteer the information, they don't need another resident, they were just trying to offer to this family who approached them about going to St. Teresa's an opportunity; and, so, made a mistake and allowed the child to play.

Dr. Bellows questioned what would have happened if the Bridgeport coach hadn't approached us? Mr. McDonald said that when they came in the spring, if their roster had a non-resident they would have brought that forth in their request for fields. Dr. Bellows continued that if the Bridgeport coach didn't come to us, it could have been a real sticky situation because if a player 'slides through' and then plays, now all of a sudden we have every family that goes to St. Theresa's , St. Jos., St. Catherine's, Christian Heritage saying a precedence has been set and we would have a deluge...everybody gets the same thing. So he wanted to point out how it was stopped because if it wasn't, it could have been a real a problem.

Attorney DeFusco felt this was really caused by an inconsistency between the new Little League Policy and our Town Policy.

Ted Chase, 27 Francis, President Trumbull Youth Lacrosse:

He has been here several times before on the issues and challenges they face with field space, etc. Here tonight because they have begun their scheduling process. Most teams that they play have already completed all of their scheduling. He wanted an understanding of what they can expect come spring. He is looking for some clarification on things and inconsistencies.

Chairman questioned what does he consider inconsistencies? He said treatment to different organizations. First he questioned if there is anything going on in the town that's going to change fields...ie. the pit being redone and he understands, from some other towns, that there has become a liability issue around lacrosse being on a field while track is actually in session. He is trying to make sure what might be changing. Their request will be for more time on Indian Ledge turf field.

Chairman reiterated that what normally happens is that their schedule, and all the paper work then goes along with it, is submitted and reviewed by the Commission and if it is approved, we pass that on to the Superintendent, Recreation Director and High School Athletic Director for scheduling. So their request comes in at one level and actual scheduling at another level.

Upon question Mr. Chase said:

- There will be no real difference from last year's number of kids.
- He was just asking 'generally' if we were anticipating any issues that affect specific fields. (Recreation Director hasn't heard anything.)
- He wants to know what he can use and what they can't as best we know. (Recreation Director said we won't know that until after the February meeting when the Superintendent, the Athletic Director and she sit down and schedule.)

Chairman noted leagues come in to our February meeting to make their requests for fields and scholastic issue take priority, after the scholastic issues are completed then this Commission takes over.

Mr. Chase continued with the other question he had as if you go to the Town Parks and Recreation web site the Use Policy is listed. He met with the First Selectman's Chief of Staff and she came to the meeting with a copy of the Use Police which had been provided by the Town Attorney. It's fairly similar to that on the Web Site, but it's definitely not the same document. He is looking for a clarification as to which is the Field Use Policy that groups are supposed to be going by.

Superintendent stated that the one on the Web Site was a condensed version. The spirit of the document is the same. The Power Point is the one approved. Perhaps some translation errors in the condensed version.

Mr. Lipinski stated that the one in power point is the one we voted on in 2001...so if we're posting the 'word' document and it's different then that means we're posting something that we didn't vote on.

Mr. Chase noted that we just went over an issue with Little League stating the words that are put in the policy do become fairly important and that a strongly worded, well written policy is incredibly important. He noted some of the clarifications needed around timing...coming in the February meeting or coming in the August meeting to request for fall scheduling. Per meeting minutes, both Pop Warner and Trumbull United came in the July meeting and requested fields and were approved by the Commission in July for fall use (Chairman noted approved but not scheduled.) He stated that here again, point of clarification, I can come now for approval from the Parks and Rec Commission not being scheduled, I can come with my schedule for Trumbull Youth Lacrosse (I can come in December.)

(Chairman noted requests are taken in the current year. February is when we have all the groups make a request for fields, all the paper work is approved or not approved, and if it's approved it's handed over for scheduling...this is when we take all the requests, combine them together and generate a schedule.)

Mr. Lipinski explained we were trying to streamline the process and have everybody come in to one meeting.

Mr. Chase questioned the difference.

Chairman reiterated that it doesn't matter because scheduling takes place once all the requests are in....Until everything is in hand, nothing will be put together. For clarity, what's really happening at the Commission

level is 'sanctioning' various user groups for 'group status'. The greater details of each user group's needs don't come into play for scheduling until we have them all in hand. It's not a mandate that its got to be on February.

Chairman reiterated that we're not going to do any scheduling until all the request are submitted. Mr. McDonald noted that if we look at the fall schedules or summer schedules for use at Indian Ledge, there are organizations that you will not find them coming before you at any meeting.

Chairman asked for an example? Paragon Lacrosse or one of those type lacrosse organizations use fields at the High School. (Superintendent stated these fall into another category, they pay for use and do not come before us for scheduling. They're on the lowest tier and they pay the highest price at the lowest availability.

Mr. Chase questioned their rate and how those organizations also price and what they charge?

Chairman said that there's a standard rate that we charge them. We don't look at them because they're paying. As you move down the priority list, you begin to pay for everything ...lights, field time, maintenance, etc. Trumbull Youth Lacrosse's priority group is not doing that.

Mr. Chase continued to question why approval here for them and not others.

Chairman questioned if they want to pay? He said **No**, but don't we want to understand what these 'for profit' organizations do and are doing on town property and essentially, in some cases, for profit on town property. I understand they're paying, but are they paying the right amount relative to what they are charging town residents.

Chairman stated that we think the fee is reasonable and appropriate.

Mr. Chase said that prioritization becomes the other part of this. Which is how decisions are made when it does come to scheduling. So it's sanctioned here at the Commission, and often decisions are made around prioritization of fields and who gets what. I've made requests in the past for more time on the Indian Ledge...that has been given to soccer. The response or the view basically is that Trumbull Youth Lacrosse gets the high school. He said they get the high school for an hour and a half Monday through Friday and Indian Ledge for three hours on Mondays and Tuesdays... 90% of the time it went to soccer. Soccer is an out-of-season sport; per our policy prioritization field should be given to in-season sports. He said Trumbull United is not a 100% Trumbull resident program as per their own mission statement.

Recreation Director addressed some of the issues with Lacrosse versus soccer. She said that when she met with the Chief of Staff and Ted she prepared a breakdown for every hour of scheduling for all the high school fields and on the turf field at Indian Ledge versus the turf field at the high school...what activities take place on everything. We were looking at the possibility of adding one more night for Lacrosse in the spring on the turf; there isn't one field at the high school that is painted for goals for anything other than lacrosse or baseball. There are no soccer fields what-so-ever in the spring at the high school complex. The only field (now we have Indian Ledge grass which we just re-opened late in the spring) is the artificial turf that soccer had for games. We also had openings on Saturdays and Sundays when it was raining or the prediction was rain I did call Ted and say that there were certain slots he could move games over. We have one field for them. We had all the fields at the high school. I could not take soccer and move them to a field at the high school to give lacrosse an extra turf field...there are no fields lined for soccer at the high school.

Mr. Chase said they never asked them to move off Indian Ledge completely. When you look at what they get at Indian Ledge, they start at 4:00 p.m. they run to 10:00 p.m. So if we're looking to take the middle section of that time, it still gives them time before and after

Recreation Director said taking the center out of the schedule is difficult for scheduling... if you're going to split it you either split it 4:00 to 7:00 or 7:00 to 10:00...not 4:00 to 6:00 and 6:00 to 8:00 and then 8:00 to 10:00.

Superintendent noted that Trumbull is not alone in this; every other community has gone down this same road...every organization has expanded and every community has done everything within their power to 'play catch-up'.

Mr. Chase stated that it all comes back to the Policy... it's 100% residency, it's in-season, it's prioritizing and applying the prioritization.

Upon question he said they would like what he thinks is absolutely reasonable is to let them share Monday through Friday so that they can get practices in at Indian Ledge because they don't have, and may not have, any turf time during the week for practices when another sport is in its second season. If that has to be sandwiched around them, it's a priority...they don't and have not run a fall season.

Mr. Chase concluded that he was looking for clarification. We have certainly given some, given him better insight as to what goes on and how the decisions are being made and why they're being made the way they are. Does he agree with them all, absolutely not; does he think they're all fair, absolutely not; there is also recourse because at the end of the day this is about sharing town-owned fields and there are things within the Code of Ethics that require 'fair treatment'... residents, non-residents...non-residents are getting time on fields, there's got to be a prioritization and that is not happening...not happening in a fair manner.

Organizations like his and Trumbull Little League, Trumbull Youth Field Hockey, AYSO, are de-facto Recreation Programs. We're running them so the town doesn't have to. Have us come in early, give you our requirements, go over them, make sure they're reasonable, based upon the number factor...then schedule everybody else. The Policy is very poorly written in his opinion, not clear in terms of the procedures and/or the prioritization. One of those organizations who is using Indian Ledge has non-residents. I've never heard anybody address the issue of Trumbull United and the fact that they have this. (Superintendent stated that Trumbull United a grandfathered organization. When the Policy was created there were many conditions that were put on the table...people who had been here for a long period of time, long before there was a lacrosse as a presence, that was a determination that we wanted to try to keep these people moving along and it has become a part of a compromised plan.) Mr. Chase said that their grandfathered-in is an issue. Because you can't grandfather in things that don't jive with the Code of Ethics which requires everyone to be treated equitably and fairly. And, if what you grandfathered-in doesn't then do that, then you have a problem because that is something he is going to continue to push on. You (Commission) don't have a good way of prioritizing, don't have any sort of level of transparency.

Chairman said that this Policy was reviewed and approved by the Parks and Recreation Commission and Board of Education.

Mr. Chase said we're agreed not to agree on certain of this at least on transparency, on how some of the decisions are made. The last thing he recommends is that we assemble some sort of advisory board made up of the Youth Sports Organizations so that they can at least start to coordinate, make it easier for kids, for families, to participate more and we don't step on toes and that we can share fields and better use facilities.

Chairman stated we have several Commissioners on this Board that have children involved with many sports programs in town.

Chairman thanked Mr. Chase for his comments.

MOTION by Mr. Lipinski, second by Dr. Bellows, unanimously passed to close meeting to guests.

In review:

- We schedule by the numbers.
- All the artificial fields in town are already lined for dual purpose.
- In the spring Lacrosse had 120 slots of game times on grass fields and 12 slots on turf fields; and, Trumbull United had game times of 2 on grass and 7 on turf fields,
- Lacrosse wants to take Indian Ledge turf field every night from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. and share it. Others to come in early and late. It doesn't make sense to split it.
- With make-up games...we understand how important it is to those participating...we look for the next space available.
- Lacrosse wants it 'locked out' and available to them instead of navigating through the obstacle of weather conditions.

MOTION by Dr. Bellows, second by Attorney DeFusco, passed to accept the minutes of the December 8, 2014 meeting as distributed. (Commissioner Lipinski abstained.)

Email/Call from Mike Mastroni, Fallen Heroes, injured himself and wants to be put on the February agenda.

Old Business:

- Attorney DeFusco spoke with Chairman of Inland Wetlands concerning creating an ice skating area. He said he would contact the Chairman and Superintendent. Supt. will be speaking with him soon.
- No price yet on Pickle Ball court lining. Superintendent has an appointment with contractor this Thursday. Will request the cost to do the painting of the pickle ball court without jeopardizing the warranty.

New Business

Indian Ledge sign got taken out again. Vehicle traveling at a high rate of speed lost control and broke through the granite post, the sign and the hydrant. Mr. Lipinski noted there were twenty cars parked around that sign on Thanksgiving. Pick-up football...gate probably locked at that point. Parked there.

Superintendent noted that we've had four incidents of damage to our property due to vehicular crazyness in the last six months. Police work in process. He will put the sign up by spring, moving it further back.

Update on the Sticker Program:

Call from Chief of Staff to indicate that the Sticker Program will maintain its current status, the only thing that will be different is that the funding won't come from the residents. She's working with the Director of Finance to try to resolve the issues for funding the whole sticker program. There will be no \$5 fee for residents for the stickers, but the program itself will be in place.

The non-resident fee will still be in place. In reviewing the fee it might be best for us to keep it at the State rate for out-of-state residents which is \$112. So we probably should adopt that figure rather than the \$150 voted.

MOTION by Mr. Moore, second by Dr. Travisano, unanimously passed that the figure of \$112 be adopted as the Non-Resident Sticker Fee.

Superintendent noted that we have now passed January 1st when new stickers would come due. We will extend the current sticker until we can offer an updated sticker. Current stickers are valid until the new stickers take place.

MOTION by Mr. Lipinski, second by Mr. Moore, unanimously passed that we honor the current stickers until new stickers become available.

Superintendent clarified that if someone does not have any sticker on their vehicle, they would be in violation so we have made accommodations to offer a temporary pass for new vehicles.

MOTION by Mr. Lipinski, second by Dr. Travisano, unanimously passed that Rangers will honor the current 2014 sticker and anyone who doesn't have one but needs a sticker can get a temporary pass at the Parks and Recreation Office to enter the parks until we have new stickers available.

Superintendent's Report:

Beach Pool Pump House – We were able to get the roof on and sealed up just prior to Christmas. We made accommodations even before we started the project to be able to run heat in there. We've gotten the interior sealed. Main electrical panels on the exterior, extending the new interior electrical in place, and as soon as we have the pool powered up again we will start doing the big plumbing....all in house.

Mr. Moore questioned the soft spot under the liner. We made a proposal for a number of Capitol Projects, one of them is replacement of the full liner and do some major research to stabilize that shell because the shell is falling apart. So, it's a two-part project. There's a big unknown. We don't know what we are facing under the liner. Going to get the pool liner manufactures in place to see what options from them making sure they can do that ASAP and then finding what kind of stabilization options.

Recreation Directors Report:

- All programs going along. They have been super busy.
- A lot of kids playing basketball. (Upon question she said close to 1,400 kids between regular and travel.)
- A lot of kids taking swim lessons.
- Pisces comes in next month for pool use.
- St. Jos's only used the pool for five meets so we were able to add open swim after our classes at night so from 8:00 to 9:30 Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday its open swim and people are using it.
- Open Recs very well attended as well.

MOTION to adjourn at 8:30 p.m. by Attorney DeFusco, second by Dr. Bellows, unanimously passed.

Respectfully submitted:

Joan E. Plouffe
Clerical Adm. Asst.

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MOTIONS

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