

Trumbull Day Commission Meeting Minutes February 13, 2013

Commissioners present: John Karpowich, Elizabeth Mastroianni, Anne Fers, Veronica Lenzen, Mitch Hallock, Joanne Orenstein

Others present: Cindy Penkoff of the Board of Finance, First Selectman Timothy Herbst, Edward Lavernoich, Barbara Whetstone, Amy DeZenzo

Chairman Karpowich called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

There was a general discussion concerning the use of the grounds at Trumbull High School and Hillcrest Middle School. Whetstone and Lavernoich explained that fields previously identified for the event are used for sports activities throughout the summer, which will necessitate quick repair of any turf damage resulting from the event. Lavernoich provided a general description of the arrangement that the Board of Education had with the Parks Department and a private contractor that maintains the fields for normal use. Lavernoich stated that it was his understanding that a special event such as Trumbull Day may require identified financial resources to repair any damage to the fields. Karpowich read an excerpt from a November 2012 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission wherein Trumbull Day was discussed, and concerns were raised about the potential need for repairs.

First Selectman Herbst briefed the Commission on the status of fundraising calls to potential business sponsors. He described four potential tiers of sponsorship: \$10,000 or more for Fireworks; \$5,000 Platinum; \$2,500 Gold; \$1,000 Silver.

First Selectman Herbst asked for a consensus from the group regarding him making a request of the Board of Finance for the \$13,000 which was previously in an account that had been allocated for Trumbull Day, but re-allocated for the planned 2012 concert, which ultimately did not occur. Cindy Penkoff, a Board of Finance alternate, stated that she thought the Board of Finance might look favorably on such a request, but reserved judgment as to what the final decision of the Board might be. She expressed that consideration should be taken with regard to insurance for bad weather. First Selectman Herbst reassured her that conversations had already occurred with the Town's insurance broker concerning this matter, Sean Carroll of Merit Insurance. He also briefly related a conversation with Ken Martin Jr., a member of the Trumbull Little League team that won the Little League World Series nearly 25 years ago regarding the possibility that members of the team might be willing to sponsor the Fireworks. There was a general discussion of the fireworks and other cost items as being the biggest monetary concerns. Whetstone stated that the RFPs for the fireworks and the carnival rides were nearly completed and ready to be issued. The need for an action by the Commission to authorize the release of the RFPs was discussed.

Whetstone stated the belief that a good fireworks show could be obtained for approximately \$18,000. Lavernoich explained that current draft of the fireworks RFP included required proposals from each responding vendor for \$20,000, \$25,000 and \$30,000 shows. First Selectman Herbst requested that a \$15,000 show proposal be added to the RFP document.

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First Selectman Herbst stated that Cooper Surgical had committed to a \$2,500 sponsorship in the past week. He stated that approximately 30 contacts had been made with potential sponsors, and that it was expected that additional commitments would be obtained in the near future.

First Selectman Herbst then provided the Commission with an overview of a document that had the expense and revenue highlights of budgets for the previous four Trumbull Days. He explained his interpretation of the summaries to be that the Town of Trumbull had to subsidize Trumbull Day for approximately \$65,000 over the four year period. He related his plans to share this information with the Board of Finance at its meeting the following night. There was general discussion of the potential amounts that could be expected from sponsorships and the Town (subject to BoF action) He stated that it was not his intention to plan for a concert in 2013, which would reduce police-related expenditures. He stated that the Commission would ultimately have to give careful consideration to the level of an entrance fee.

There was a general discussion concerning the level of the entrance fee/ ticket prices. Potential rates were discussed for adults, children, Friday night and the Saturday. It was generally agreed that the discussion at this point was based primarily on what the attendees would be willing to pay, but ultimately the Commission would need to refine the entrance fee based on the financial needs of the event, making the cost for residents as low as it could possibly be while still meeting all of the events financial obligations. Whetstone suggested to the Commission that this thinking made sense, as calculations had to be made regarding projected expenses and other sources of revenue prior to determining the price of the ticket. It was agreed that the proposals obtained from the RFPs would be an important indicator for determining expenses, and ultimately setting the ticket prices. It was agreed that as revenue and expense estimates became available, it would make sense to obtain projections so that ticket prices could be set in an informed manner. It was suggested that the Town's Finance Director might be able to assist with the projections. Penkoff suggested that a decision should be made as to what is being offered each day, the cost of each day should be estimated, and the price of the tickets could be determined at that point.

First Selectman Herbst excused himself and left the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

Karpowich asked Lavernoich whether he had inquired about the Barnum Festival's plans for the Car Show. Lavernoich reported that he had spoken with Barnum Festival Ringmaster John Stafstrom; the date and location for the Car Show had not yet been established; and that the Barnum Festival has no objection to the Car Show being incorporated into Trumbull Day earlier in the day on Saturday 6/29. Lavernoich stated, however, that he was advised by Stafstrom that the Car Show could attract nearly 200 cars, and would require 3 or more dedicated acres. It was noted that the field space that has been used at times in the past for the car show was where other parts of the Trumbull Day event needed to be located. There was a general discussion regarding alternative locations for the Car Show. It was noted that the Car Show usually runs for 4 hours and has its own logistical considerations/challenges. It was noted that the Car Show has charged its own admission in the past, and that it has expenses such as security and trophies. It was noted that Ed Coyne was usually involved in the organization of the event. Lavernoich stated that Stafstrom had advised him that the people who have organized the event in recent years have not stated their intentions regarding involvement in this year's show. DeZenzo suggested that the board could invite Mr. Coyne to a meeting in the near future.

There was a general discussion regarding the activities that might occur on Friday night. It was suggested that local breweries and wine distributors be contacted to explore their willingness to participate in the event. The possibility of hiring a local band was discussed. The entrance cost

for a concert-type of event was generally discussed. Lavernoich related to the Commission that he was just made aware of the Board of Education's prohibition of alcohol on BOE property. Lavernoich stated that the First Selectman had indicated a willingness to approach the Board of Education and request a waiver, when and if he was asked by the Commission. Penkoff stated that the waiver had been granted in the past.

Fers suggested that due to the relatively short period of time until the event, and all that needs to be done, that the Commission might want to consider having only one day of events. There was general agreement that the extra expense for the second day should be evaluated

There was a general discussion regarding the role of and compensation for Promote Marketing & Public Relations (PM&PR), Whetstone's and Trista Morin's event planning firm. Whetstone described the liaison role that the firm would play between the Commission, Town departments, vendors, and volunteers. It was generally agreed that the contract with the firm would need to be considered in the very near future. There was a general agreement by the commissioners that an understanding of the overall budget for the event would be helpful as the firm's contract was considered. Lavernoich discussed the categories of possible expenses that he had identified related event. The categories included: fireworks, field repair, Police Department overtime, fire department presence, Fire Marshall's Office overtime, BoE electricians and custodians overtime, highway department overtime, Parks Department overtime, marketing and advertising, signage of event, golf cart usage, tents, tables, chairs, restroom facilities, and Civil Air Patrol (one staffer related to fireworks). Lavernoich stated that he would work with PM&PR to develop cost estimates for all of the potential expense categories.

Lavernoich excused himself and left the meeting at 8:10 PM.

The RFPs were discussed. It was noted that the dates are not in the RFPs; they would be inserted into the documents at the date of issuance. Karpowich asked that the Commission review and consider approval that evening. It was noted that the RFPs included requirements added by various Town officials that would provide protections for the Town. It was noted that First Selectman Herbst had requested that a \$15,000 proposal line be added to the fireworks RFP.

There was a general discussion regarding the role of the event planners. There was a general discussion of the event planner's relevant experience and the background of various commissioners related to event organization. Penkoff advised the commissioners that this was one of many decisions that they would be required to make. There was a general discussion regarding the rationale/criteria that would be utilized to select vendor for the amusement rides. The strong feeling of the group was that the safety record of vendors was of greater importance than any other consideration in the selection. DeZenko provided the Commission with a general description of the Town's process for issuing solicitations (such as RFPs) and paying vendors. It was requested that the Commission be briefed at a future meeting on the process for reviewing proposals and awarding contracts.

There was a discussion of the relative merits of a one day vs. two day event. It was generally agreed that a day event made more sense given the short time frames for planning and the 3 year dormancy of the event. Lenzen made a motion that Trumbull Day be limited to one day for 2013, that being June 29th, and the official times that were previously decided would remain the same. Fers seconded. The motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

There was a general discussion of the PM&PR contract, and the need to consider the contract and approve it, if acceptable, at the next scheduled meeting. It was noted that the commissioners

all had other obligations, including jobs during the day, that made it sensible to acquire additional help in organizing the event, but that the contract with PM&PR had to be determined to be a cost-effective way to obtain help.

Karpowich motioned that the Trumbull Day Commission reviews the PM&PR contract, and then decide how to proceed at that point. Mastroianni seconded. The motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

Karpowich motioned that the presented RFP for the amusement rides be accepted. Orenstein seconded. The motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

Lenzen motioned that the RFP for the fireworks be amended to add the \$15,000 proposal and be accepted as amended. Mastroianni seconded. The motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

Karpowich stated that the Commission would need to receive the contract by e-mail prior to the next meeting. He stated that he intended to discuss this matter with the First Selectman Committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy DeZenzo
Clerk