

Draft of the Minutes, Parks and Recreation Commission

Regular Meeting, February 13, 2023

Town Council Chambers

Present: Kevin Bellows, Chair, Brian LeClerc, Nancy Walsh, Ken Martin, John O'Brien, Mike Travisano

Absent: Kat Lamy, Ed Ritacco

Also present: Dmitri Paris, Superintendent of Parks and Recreation, Matt D'Amico, Assistant Superintendent of Parks and Recreation, Joanne Glasser Orenstein, Substitute Clerk

Mr. Bellows called the meeting to order at 7pm and opened Public Comment

Jim Cooke, President of Trumbull Youth Hockey presented the new league's request for a field for 5-8th grade boys' and girls' teams, a U-12 and U-14 team, both co-ed. They plan two practices a week (Tuesday and Thursday, 5:30-7:30pm), and Sundays between 9am-12, with hospitality afterwards. They are part of a travel league, the team would be all Trumbull residents. So far, over 75 kids are interested in playing. The side field at Madison would be adequate: it needs to be simply lined and no goal posts are needed. They play 15 players a side, youth games do not require a full field. They start the 2nd week of March for practice, the season is April-June. They would have 4 home dates for Sundays.

Felix Reyes, VP of Velocity Softball requested permission to run a tournament May 6, 7 at Jane Ryan and Madison-Tashua Complex, 8am-6pm. 75 players from 8 different teams would be participating in a round-robin style tournament, with a food truck from a local establishment at each venue. They will pay for field lining, port-a-potties. Depending on the traffic, a ranger may also be needed, also at Velocity's expense.

Mr. Batra of Salem Road, Trumbull, and the Trumbull Tigers Cricket club, which has about 55 members playing regularly at Tashua, presented an issue with water accumulation on the pitch. They request it be elevated, made to concrete and then covered with turf. They have purchased clay for the pitch in the past, but the clay soaks up the water, thus allowing for accumulation. Mr. Paris said he will go take a look, and will try and come up with a solution.

Ray Baldwin, Chairman of the Veterans' Center Building Committee, presented an update on the project. The State has allocated \$2.25 million for the project. Construction costs had gone way up, but have settled back down a bit and are now estimated at \$3.7 million. Marilyn Moore has put in a grant request for another \$1.3 million. They are going through an add/alternate plan in case not all the funding happens. They have received a tremendous response from the public and have already raised about \$60,000, and they have not yet reached out to corporate sponsors. Rotary has promised \$30,000. They have gotten lots of cooperation from the Town. The town gave the VFW a 99 year lease on the property, so 62 years remain. They have also

gotten tremendous help and support from the Conservation Commission for plantings. The building is 5000 square feet with a prep kitchen, service bar and a large event room. The primary function will be to help veterans to re-enter society with job support, health support. It will also provide training space for the police, fire and EMT. The pond will give the police a place for water training as well. The pond needs to be dredged, but this does not need to be done prior to construction. Inland and Wetlands is in charge of the dredging project: the Town is very motivated to get it done without impacting construction.

Nancy Walsh moved to close Public Comment at about 7:45pm. Brian LeCrec seconded,
VOTE: All in favor.

Mike Travisano made a motion to accept the Minutes of January 9, Ken Martin seconded.
VOTE: All in favor.

It was noted there was correspondence from Mr. Baldwin, Velocity Softball and the Trumbull Tigers Cricket Club.

Old Business: Ms. Walsh asked about the status of the bridge repair at Old Mine park. Mr. Paris said they have a quote and funds have been secured. He said specs were put out to bid and 6 vendors met on the site. There are three phases of bridge repair: #1 at Old Mine Park, Bridge #3 on Spring Hill Road and Bridge #2 on the overpass on the trail. They all need to be replaced soon, but #1 and #3 are the priority. They expect numbers from the vendors by the end of the month, then they will begin work, weather depending.

Ice Skating: The Commission requested an ice skating plan at Unity Park; Mr. Paris said they were reverting back to plans and designs they've had for years. Ponds #2 and #3 need structures that would allow the water level to be adjusted and maintained. The depth would be uniform - 6 inches across the entire base, if it's cold enough. They will present an updated plan in April.

The second option for skating is at Twin Brooks. The plan involves putting a curb around the parking lot closest to the Pavillion. They would put a liner on it, then flood it from the pond, creating a space as large as a full size hockey rink: 200x85 feet. In the summer, it would still be used as a parking lot. The parking lot is funded in the project. It would be easy to maintain, even if it snows. They anticipate it could be by next winter. There are other parking lots available if the rink is in place.

The time frame on Unity: there is money available, it is about the structures and the replacement of the calvert at the Bayberry entrance.

Mr. Travisano asked if the issues about Volleyball were resolved. Mr. Paris said it was re-surfaced, the boundaries were re-defined and a 30 inch fence was erected.

New Business

Mr. Paris said it was unclear if the Rugby group was aware of field use policies. He said Field 9 on the scholastic map can be lined for them. Mike King (the High School Rugby Coach), may not be able to get coaches until 5pm, which could be problematic. The field at Indian Ledge is not ready. Rugby has a reputation for doing a lot of damage to fields.

Ms. Walsh made a motion to allow Youth Rugby to play in Town, based on finding an appropriate field, and they adhere to field use policies. Mr. O'Brien seconded. VOTE: All in favor.

Mr. O'Brien made a motion to allow Velocity Softball to run a softball tournament at Jane Ryan and Madison-Tashua on May 6 and 7. Mr. Martin seconded. VOTE: All in favor.

Trumbull Tigers Cricket Club was previously known as the Trumbull Cheetahs. Mr. Paris said their request for an upgraded pitch came as a surprise. They may have to find an alternate solution as there is no budget to build, and it will definitely not happen this spring. They do pay for field use. Mr. Martin made a motion to approve the Trumbull Tigers Cricket Club to play in Trumbull, pending approval of the necessary paperwork. Ms. Walsh seconded. VOTE: All in favor.

Superintendent's Report

Mr. Paris reported he is spending more time with building maintenance and having a bigger role in the construction side of things. Mr. D'Amico is doing more of the park work. Mr. Paris will be reporting on bigger projects quarterly, while Mr. D'Amico will be attending the monthly meetings, and reporting on the regular park maintenance and system as a whole. A lot is happening in programming for the first time in the last three years.

Mr. Paris is well into the budget process, and he will do everything he can to get funding. One of the ranger vehicles died last week. Capital projects are limited; he is trying to finish Indian Ledge and Twin Brooks. They have gone into a partnership with the Conservation Commission, whose excess \$12000 in planting funds are allowing Mr. Paris to put an arboretum at Twin Brooks, with 60-80 trees.

They are developing a relationship with the Board of Ed, who is hearing their needs in a way that they never have before. For the first time ever, the Board of Ed is allowing them to go in the schools during the playground camps, which will help them get to budget neutral.

Mr. Paris, Mr. D'Amico, Steve Chapman, Chief Park Ranger, and Noreen Wilpiseski, the Recreation Program Manager, will alternate coming to these meetings. The Commission would like to see Mr. Chapman, and especially Ms. Wilpiseski, more frequently.

The Park Ranger and Recreation reports were submitted. Mr. Martin would like follow up information on the elderly woman who fell in Twin Brooks park.

Mr. O'Brien made a motion to adjourn, Mr. Martian seconded. VOTE: all in favor at 8:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne Glasser Orenstein
February 19, 2023