

**NEW FAIRFIELD PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**  
**4 Brush Hill Road**  
**New Fairfield, Connecticut 06812**  
**Telephone (203)312-5633 Fax (203)312-5636**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**Minutes**  
**Monday, February 9, 2009**  
**7:00 p.m.**

**TOWN HALL CONFERENCE ROOM**

**PRESENT:**

Sean Loughran (Chairman), Steve Burfeind, Chris Van Steen, Fred Testor, William Tripp, Tom Edwards, First Selectman John Hodge, Steve Merullo (Parks & Recreation Director), Kelly Ferris (Program Director), Denise Coccozza (Secretary)

**1. Call to Order:** Meeting called to order at 7:06 p.m. by Sean Loughran. Agenda approved unanimously without changes.

**2. Public Comment**

A) Anthony Masi, along with his wife, was in attendance to advise the commission of his intent to sell hot dogs on Route 37 near the cemetery. The commission members discussed and it was agreed that having a hot dog vendor at that location will not be an issue.

B) Tom Pardalis expressed his disappointment in the letter he received regarding the change in fee structure for the summer basketball camp. He was concerned that the new 60/40 split will make it difficult to maintain a high quality program. The possibility of offering a compromise to long-standing programs was discussed, but the commission members agreed that the goal is to keep the fee structure fair and consistent across all programs without exceptions. Also discussed was the fact that with vendors receiving a smaller share of the income, there is a risk that they might try to set up stand-alone programs that would be competitive with Parks & Recreation. The members agreed to discuss further later in the meeting.

**3. Approval of Minutes January 22nd**

Fred Testor made a motion to approve the Jan. 22nd minutes. Bill Tripp seconded.

Vote taken:

Steve Burfeind	Yes
Fred Testor	Yes
William Tripp	Yes
Chris Van Steen	Yes
Tom Edwards	Abstained – was not present on 1/22

***Motion Carried.***

#### **4. Chairman Comments**

A) Sean Loughran noted that the Rebel Turf bathroom(s) status and options should be addressed at this meeting, as Fred Testor had done some research and prepared some information to present.

B) Capital Budget – Sean Loughran asked First Selectman John Hodge if there are any next steps to be taken regarding the capital budget. Mr. Hodge said that no further action is needed at this point.

C) Swim Dock Replacement – Steve Merullo is still working on obtaining an estimate for full dock replacement figures. Current estimates indicate that \$15,000 will cover repairs needed.

D) Dog Park – Sean Loughran asked First Selectman John Hodge for the status on the Dog Park proposal. Mr. Hodge said there should probably be a town meeting to approve this.

#### **5. Director Update**

A) Fishing Derby – John from Valley Angler agreed to the terms set forth at last month's meeting. In return for usage of the space to hold the fishing derby (valued at \$200), he will hold 2 youth sessions at a value of \$100 each. Dates for these sessions are TBD. If the dates are not set up in time for the spring program brochure, flyers will be distributed at the schools and details will be listed in the Citizen News. Steve Burfeind suggested possibly charging a nominal fee to the participants of these programs. This will be explored further at the next regular meeting. Steve Merullo commented that it might be beneficial to add a "coming attractions" section to the back of each brochure with some general information about upcoming programs.

B) Bathrooms at Rebel Turf – Fred Testor presented cost and structural data based on research he had done. Since the original \$200K project was voted down, he researched some less expensive avenues with various components. There were four levels of amenities discussed:

- 1 – Replace steps only – first priority due to condition of the existing steps.
- 2 – Restrooms
- 3 – Storage
- 4 – Concession/press box

He proposed \$64,950 as a starting point which would cover the steps, foundation, septic, well, and electrical service. Beyond that, the purchase of a pre-fabricated concrete restroom building (with 2 single johns) would be \$46,700 for a combined total of \$111,650. There was some concern about spending that amount of money and only getting 2 bathrooms in the end. Restrooms composed of sheetrock would be less expensive but vandalism would be a concern. Also discussed were the need for storage and location of the building. As a result of the ensuing dialogue, next steps are:

- First Selectman John Hodge will re-approach Whitley Company for a scaled-down version of the original restroom building quoted when this project was first conceptualized.

- Steve Merullo will look into pricing out having a local contractor build it in place as opposed to ordering a pre-fabricated structure. John Hodge recommended putting an RFP out for this.
- The commission will re-group with the other organizations in town to make sure that they are all still in agreement about allocating funds toward this project: (Parks & Rec - \$15K, Town of New Fairfield - \$15K, Board of Education - \$15K, Lacrosse - \$15K, Soccer - \$15K and Score Fund - \$22K). Steve Burfeind suggested putting two versions out there to the other organizations – a building with 6 – 8 restrooms vs. a building with 2 with the option to add on later.

## 6. Sub-committee reports

A) Programming – Kelly Ferris voiced concern over the newly implemented 60/40 structure, suggesting that some programs are less replaceable than others if they choose to drop out. Some of the sports programs were specifically addressed due to the fact that they are feeder programs for high school sports. The members also discussed various ways to handle program costs, as some programs have higher expenses than others depending on what giveaways are included. John Hodge suggested that due to the importance of a strong high school sports program, perhaps the Board of Education would grant a concession on room/field use fees associated with feeder programs. The dialogue resulted in a vote to change the proposed pricing structure for programs that are considered feeders for high school sports.

Fred Testor made a motion to explore a lower room/field use rate through the Board of Education and in turn offer a 70/30 split to current high school coaches, to drive the feeder program for high school athletics. In addition, Parks & Recreation would cover field/room use fees and the vendor would cover all other program-related expenses (i.e. T-shirts). Bill Tripp seconded the motion.

### Vote taken:

Steve Burfeind	Yes
Fred Testor	Yes
William Tripp	Yes
Chris Van Steen	Yes
Tom Edwards	Yes

### ***Motion Carried Unanimously.***

Another item brought to the commission’s attention by Kelly was that some contracted programs offer a fixed cost per child enrolled. To make the 60/40 work, the price per child will need to increase which could negatively affect enrollment.

John Hodge suggested that a two-tiered pricing structure should be considered down the road, in which vendors carrying their own insurance would secure a larger share of program profits.

B) Fields – Steve Burfeind met last week with the clubs who need spring field space. Turf fields will be open on 3/18. Grass fields’ opening date is still TBD. Freshman boys and girls lacrosse

teams have been added to the schedule. The lower Rebel “open space” field is not available until Steve Merullo deems it safe for use. Fencing is still being explored. Jay Greenberg is working on setting up a website which will house a master schedule for field use and cancellations. The Town of New Fairfield and Board of Education websites will be linked to this site.

Flash Track will now be paying field fees for usage of the track, but want exclusivity guaranteed during their allotted time. It was discussed that exclusivity from other clubs can be guaranteed but it would be difficult to turn away members of the general public who go to walk/jog on the track. After discussion, Chris Van Steen made a motion to recommend that the Fields & Fees Committee to give a \$5 discount (\$25 vs. \$30) to the Flash Track team in exchange for leaving the outer 2 lanes open to the general public during their scheduled time. Tom Edwards seconded the motion.

Vote taken:

Steve Burfeind	Yes
Fred Testor	Yes
William Tripp	Yes
Chris Van Steen	Yes
Tom Edwards	Yes

***Motion Carried Unanimously.***

C) Ball Pond Beach – Steve Merullo provided an update. It has been proposed by Ball Pond residents that the sand be removed and replaced with topsoil to make it more of a park-like setup. As far as maintenance, Steve would be there with a weed wacker twice a week. No decision needs to be made at this time.

D) Sponsorship for summer movies at Squantz Pond – Steve Merullo noted that there are various sponsorship packages available. He will e-mail for the commission to review.

E) Winter Boat Storage – Denise Coccozza outlined two scenarios based on research and discussions with Steve Merullo and John Hodge:

- 1 – Issue an RFP to local marinas for rental of lot across from Town Park for winter boat storage. Marina would handle all services. Rental fee is still TBD.
- 2 – Town directly charges boat owners for winter boat storage. Subcontract services including trailering boats to and from the lot, shrink-wrapping and winterizing.

Fred Testor proposed a third scenario in which the town charges boat owners directly for storage, and the boat owner would separately handle the shrink-wrapping/winterizing etc. on their own.

Further research needs to be done in order to determine which direction to pursue.

Next steps:

- Steve Merullo to map out lot and determine how many boats will fit in the lot. This will help to establish revenue potential.

- Denise or Sean to speak with contact at Chatterton to determine interest level in above listed scenarios.

## **7. Adjournment**

Fred Testor made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Chris Van Steen seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 10:38 p.m.