

NEW FAIRFIELD PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
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Telephone (203)312-5633 Fax (203)312-5636

SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES

Tuesday, October 5, 2010
7:30 p.m.

TOWN HALL CONFERENCE ROOM

PRESENT:

Sean Loughran, Fred Testor, Bill O’Keeffe, Melissa Fidanza, Mark Lamanna, Tom Edwards, Brian Stroh, Linda Lull (Recreation Director), Steve Merullo (Director of Buildings & Grounds), First Selectman John Hodge, Members of Ball Pond Advisory Committee, Denise Coccozza (Commission Secretary)

- 1. Call to Order** – Sean Loughran called the meeting to order at 7:36 p.m. Bill O’Keeffe made a motion to accept the agenda. Melissa Fidanza seconded the motion.

VOTE – 4-0-0. Motion carried.

- 2. Public Comment** - none

- 3. Approval of Minutes from 6/14/10, 7/12/10, 8/5/10, 9/13/10** – tabled until next meeting

- 4. Chairman Comments**

- a. Discuss and possibly vote on funding for Ball Pond Beach project** - Cynthia Stevens reported that the BPAC is still awaiting estimates for the project. Sean Loughran noted that the last estimate that the Parks & Recreation Commission received was for \$26,500. Ms. Stevens said that the estimate doesn’t include \$14k to replace fencing, which will have to be tabled until a later date if they can eventually secure additional funding. She stated that the state will work with the BPAC to fix the curbing if the project is funded. The BPAC is still asking for \$10K from the town, and Ms. Stevens reiterated that they have a petition from 180 residents who use the pond for kayaking and walking around the pond for exercise. Ms. Stevens reminded the Commission that the application is due on 10/15 and the BPAC needs to show on the application that they have funds from the town for the project. By recommendation from First Selectman John Hodge, the members discussed options for funding the project through a challenge grant.

Fred Testor made a motion to commit 10K in a challenge grant to the BPAC to fund the project as has been submitted, to be good for a 1 year period. Mark Lamanna seconded the motion.

VOTE – 4-1-0. Motion carried.

Sean Loughran noted that at some point a follow up meeting would be needed to lay out the agreement terms.

- b. **Board Elections** – Bill O’Keeffe made a motion to keep Sean Loughran as the Chairman. Tom Edwards seconded the motion. Bill O’Keeffe withdrew the motion due to the fact that some members of the commission were not present.
- c. **Long Range Plan** – Sean Loughran reminded the Commission that they need to vote in December about items for the long range plan. He asked the members to rank their proposed items in order of priority (top 5) for each member and will review at the next meeting. Meanwhile, Steve Merullo gave an estimate of approximately \$3900 to resurface the basketball court. He is looking into pricing for fencing where the community playground borders the parking lot. He reported that on Saturday 10/16 he has a contractor coming to the beach house to walk through and evaluate if any commission members have interest in joining him. Steve Merullo will set a time and send out an email invite when confirmed.
- d. **Discussion of Fees** – It was again discussed that a separate meeting may need to be scheduled to specifically address the possibility of raising fees. Linda Lull said she will bring a list of all fees to the next meeting. First Selectman John Hodge stated that going forward, all organizations need to be a bona fide business with workers’ compensation, liability insurance, etc. Otherwise, they will need to be hired by the town as employees. Mr. Hodge will have another meeting with the Superintendent soon to discuss this policy in further detail.

Sean Loughran stated that NF Baseball would like to attend the next meeting to revisit the Cashman Field project discussed last year.

5. Director Update

- a. **Day Camp report from Brian Stroh** – Day Camp Director Brian Stroh presented expenses & revenues from the 2010 summer camp, which resulted in \$19k profit this year. He reported that there weren’t any issues this year (supplies, space, supervision) with the increased number of campers that were allowed into the program. He will continue to look into usage of the other schools and working with Phil Ross for flexible options to extend camp beyond 5 weeks in the future, as the summer camp is a high demand program. He also presented counselor evaluation summaries, completed by the 21 counselors in attendance on the last day of camp, which revealed positive results for both the Director and Asst. Director. He reported that the revised payment policies worked out much better this year with the with the field trip costs being included in the costs and with payment only being accepted via the Parks & Recreation office. He presented requests for 2 items to be considered for future summer camp procedures:
 - i. Brian serves as a mentor to 2 boys. Their father passed away and they are being raised by their mom who is financially struggling. He would like to have them attend camp in 2011 for no charge or work the associated costs into the Day Camp Director salary to cover their cost.
 - ii. Counselor selections done by the Day Camp Director have not always been honored in the past. Brian requested that his evaluations be honored and trusted 100% as the final decision when hiring counselors. Fred Testor suggested that perhaps the Day Camp Director could have the final right to say “no” to hiring a counselor if he has background information that would make hiring that person a bad decision; but should defer to the Recreation Director and the town before approving any counselors for hire. Likewise, the Recreation Director and Town would have the right to veto a hiring decision, but not to “add on”. Brian said he would agree to that.These requests will be discussed and voted on at the next meeting.

b. Fall events staffing

i. Turkey Run Duties – Duties will be assigned at the next meeting. There was discussion about where to draw the line with allowing a sponsor to have their name on the T-shirts. The Commission members advised Linda Lull to use her judgement based on value of donation/services provided. Ms. Lull reported that the T-shirts (long-sleeved) will cost \$7 each. Sandwich boards promoting the race were donated by NF press and there are also some new sponsors participating this year.

c. Programming - Linda Lull proposed cutting back from 4 to 3 brochures per year (combine winter/spring), which would save \$1200/year. The members agreed it would be good to test this. Melissa Fidanza had a question about a school program that was run through the PTO (4-ball for kids) at the Consolidated Gym. Linda Lull reported that she did not get a building use form for this, and she will check with Phil Ross on the status. Steve Merullo spoke about an upcoming convention for movie rentals at Mohegan Sun in November. The purpose of the convention is to network and rent out the movie equipment as a revenue generator. The cost is \$900 to man the booth and stay for the weekend. Fred Testor made a motion to spend up to \$1000 to send Steve Merullo and one other person to convention in November. Bill O’Keeffe seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5-0-0. Motion Carried.

6. Subcommittee Reports

a. Waterfront

i. Discuss and possibly vote on winter boat dock storage – Steve Merullo and John Hodge stated that they would like to leave the docks in the water during the winter. \$10k was recently spent by the town to restabilize the marina. Mr. Merullo laid out the reasons with a visual diagram to explain which components to leave in and which ones to remove. For the most part, the fingers would be taken out and the main parts would be left in. The members discussed concerns about ice affecting the docks and moving/crushing them during the winter.

Mr. Merullo reported that the water will begin to be lowered in the lake around 11/1. Mr. Hodge added that there will be a deep drawdown this year in hopes of killing more milfoil.

b. Fields – Sean Loughran noted that the recently scheduled Fields Fees committee meeting was canceled and will be rescheduled soon. Mr. Hodge stated that the Board of Education will be sending out a note to alert groups that fees will be going up in the spring.

7. Adjournment - Bill O’Keeffe made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Fred Testor seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5-0-0. Motion Carried.

The meeting adjourned at 10:19 pm