

**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, September 13, 2010**  
**7:30 p.m.**

**TOWN HALL CONFERENCE ROOM**

**PRESENT:**

Sean Loughran, Fred Testor, Chris Van Steen, Steve Burfeind, Bill O’Keeffe, Melissa Fidanza, Linda Lull (Recreation Director), First Selectman John Hodge

- 1. Call to Order:** Chairman Sean Loughran called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m. Fred Testor made a motion to accept the agenda. Chris Van Steen seconded the motion.  
**Vote: 5-0-0. Motion carried.**
  
- 2. Public Comment**
  - a. Ball Pond** – Cynthia Stevens, chairman of the BPAC was in attendance along with other members. She expressed that they would like management of the Ball Pond beach transferred to BPAC. Their plan has been approved by Tim Simpkins and the DOT will work with them on drainage. Erosion/drainage are the biggest concerns. The plan is to turn the area into a park and beautify for passive recreation. They requested for the town to provide \$10,000 to fund the project, which would be complemented by a grant (applications in process). The 10K would pay for removal of sand, bringing in soil, plants, replacement of the fence. BPAC paid for the landscape plan. The group presented a petition with approximately 180 names from town residents supporting this initiative, along with a letter outlining their request. Ms. Stevens also stated that the Parks & Recreation plan to return the area to its natural state is not feasible as it will continue to fill with invasive species as explained in the letter. Mr. Loughran suggested that the funding be discussed at the next P&R monthly meeting. However, Ms. Stevens stated that there is a 10/15 deadline for the grant application and the next P&R meeting is not until 10/18. Ms. Stevens said that while there is no “match” issue related to the grant request, they need to know what the town will contribute before they finalize the request. The BPAC believes it’s the town’s responsibility and they expect the 10K. The total project is estimated at 20K. The members discussed and agreed that firm, detailed costs had never been available for the project so the P&R has not been able to commit any funds without those projections. Ms. Stevens said that Friends of BP is committing pro bono to maintain once the work is done and the property will require little work once established. Rules for use and maintenance would be enforced by BPAC. Mr. Loughran stated that an agreement in writing will be needed if the project moves forward. He asked Ms. Stevens to provide P&R with additional information, at which time a special meeting may need to be held prior to the 10/15 grant application deadline. Several residents in attendance also spoke in support of the project.
  - b. Groovin’ in New Fairfield** – Jeff Main, president of Groovin’ in New Fairfield attended along with Marlene, the Treasurer. He presented their annual plan as part of their

agreement with P&R as a self-sustaining program under P&R umbrella. They are planning on 4 shows per year, the next one being on 10/23. He provided projected costs for the year, which do not have any impact on P&R. Mr. Main said that they do not commit money to any performer unless they have the funds to cover it. They are planning to increase admission to \$10 for the Kennedys band because they are more well-known than some of the others and also more expensive to book. He presented revenue & expenses from the past year and expressed gratitude from partners in town who have supported their efforts (50/50 split with Bruno's on food sales, Ellen Burnett at the Citizen News, the Hodge family for providing lighting). Marlene noted that they have donated some of the proceeds from their raffle to causes such as Haiti relief. Mr. Main outlined some ideas for future projects including a music & arts festival with jewelry vendors etc. on a Sunday in the future, for which he may approach P&R for support. They're also considering a younger age-skewed coffee house event, possibly using some young talent from high school students. Steve Burfeind also suggested that they partner with the youth commission on this. Fred Testor expressed his support of their ideas and encouraged him to come back to P&R if needed to make one of these happen.

- c. **Camp Programs** – Joel Pardalis, High School teacher and head of the summer basketball camp program expressed concern about the future of the working relationship between the summer camp programs and P&R. He stated that for the past 2 years, they operated under an 80/20 arrangement based on an agreement between Tom Pardalis and Steve Merullo. Prior to that, the arrangement was 75/10 (t-shirts/staff), with 15% to P&R. Based on the policy voted on by the P&R Commission last year, the splits are supposed to be 60/40 for most programs, and 70/30 for programs run by high school coaches. Mr. Pardalis said that he will be losing a lot of revenue by moving to the 70/30 structure. They provide equipment, additional advertising beyond what P&R provides, they pay for staff, prep/planning, all day to day activities, t-shirts. He stated that he's doing 95% of the work and only getting 70% of the profit. Sean Loughran pointed out that under prior arrangements, P&R was losing money which is why they voted to change the splits. Mr. Pardalis stated that P&R is alienating people who are loyal to the town and do a great job over the years and may not continue to run their programs through P&R. On this point, he was also speaking on behalf of Matt Schlosser, varsity soccer coach who ran several summer programs this past year. He cited that the Garbowski baseball camps ran independent from P&R this past year in partnership with All Star Batting Cage. When asked what structure he's like to have, Mr. Pardalis said that he'd be happy with the 80/20 that worked out this past year. Recreation Director Linda Lull reported that P&R made \$1600, \$464, and \$500 respectively for weeks 1 – 3 of basketball camp. First Selectman John Hodge pointed out that if done legitimately, it is not cheaper for a program to go through outside parties for insurance & workers compensation for their staff. He suggested considering a salary for head counselors as an employee for a lump sum as a subcontractor; and have all counselors go through NF Human Resources. The only exception would be if it's a business that can prove insurance & workers' comp. He also suggested that P&R re-evaluate fees/programming overall. The commission members asked Mr. Pardalis for a couple of months to re-evaluate both internally and collaboratively. Mr. Pardalis agreed and asked that he and Matt Schlosser both be kept abreast of any upcoming discussions on the matter. Mr. Hodge said that the Board of Education will also weigh in on some of this, which he will bring up at an upcoming appointment he has with the Superintendent.

### 3. **Approval of Minutes from 6/14, 7/12, 8/5** – Tabled until next month's meeting

#### 4. Chairman Comments

- a. **Board Elections** – Tabled until next meeting as 2 members are not present
- b. **Long Range Plan** - Sean Loughran circulated a list of items submitted by the commission members. FY '11-'12 items need to be prioritized for the budget as short-term vs. long-term with both short and long-term reserve laid out. Mr. Loughran said that a tour of the beach house needed soon possibly during the upcoming weekend for any members that can make it. Chris Van Steen suggested that a contractor be brought in to provide drawings/quotes for suggestions made. Mr. Loughran said he will ask Steve Merullo to get someone to accompany the group for this purpose. Other items to consider for the budget include the following: fields, facilities, fences, pavilions at HS & placement, playground replacement fund, boat dock replacement fund, chains, new P&R bldg on Gillotti Rd (subcommittee to be formed by Fred Testor, Bill O’Keeffe, Chris Van Steen), resurface basketball courts at playground, backboards/rims, Cashman baseball project review, beach/boat trailer parking, Ball Pond, boat attendant building, beach concession stand, grass field at Gillotti, walking trails around reservoir or elsewhere, lights on softball field, storage for P&R equipment. Mr. Loughran asked each member to review the list and submit any other ideas within the next week; then prioritize with 5 projects to complete next year & 3 long-term with reserve building in next year.
- c. **Discussion of Fees** – A special meeting needed or add to next month’s agenda
- d. **Beach House Remodeling** – Sean Loughran to talk to Steve Merullo as noted above.
- e. **Fall Events Staffing** – Linda Lull reported that Sunday 11/21 is the Turkey Run – volunteers from the Commission will be needed for picking up food. Cookies to be supplied by commission members. Number bibs may not need to be ordered as there are many left over. Savings Bank of Danbury will be a sponsor and also donate staff to hand out food; NF Press is donating sandwich boards. Linda Lull said that she will look into different vendors for best pricing on shirts and explore switching from long sleeve to short sleeve depending on pricing. Advertising reads people who register by 11/12 get a shirt. The Commission advised her to order a supply of additional shirts for race day to sell or give out, while supplies last. There is a \$20 registration fee both pre-race and race day. At the next meeting, roles/responsibilities of Commission members at event will be reviewed. Bill O’Keeffe made a motion to order a total of 200 shirts based on an average of attendees over the past several years. Fred Testor seconded the motion.

***Vote: 5-0-0. Motion carried.***

Tree lighting 11/28 – Linda Lull to ask the high school chorus to perform again. Santa is booked. Fred Testor will work with the booster club about providing the hot chocolate again.

5. **Director Update** – Linda Lull reported that Still River Lacrosse has asked for 6 weeks at a field on Sundays starting this coming weekend (9 – 11 a.m.). Steve Burfeind said he needs to look at the fields schedule and clear through Marty Morgan to see if he is using during his allotted Sun. a.m. slots. Additionally, the Community Service Club requested the town park lot on 10/16 (rain date

10/17) to have their Junk in a Trunk sale from 7 a.m. – 3 p.m. They will bring in a porta potty. Sean Loughran pointed out that the boats are still in the marina so there may be a challenge with space. The Commission discussed and decided to allow parking below in the lower lot, and allow them to have the event in the upper lot.

## 6. Subcommittee Reports

### a. Waterfront

- i. **Chains at marina** – On behalf of Steve Merullo, Sean Loughran reported that Mr. Merullo is replacing the chains.
- ii. **Docks** – Steve Merullo had proposed leaving the docks in the water this year; however, Sean Loughran had consulted w/Chatterton Marina and they didn't recommend that based on the type of docks we have. Further discussion is needed.

### b. Fields –

- i. Steve Burfeind informed the Commission that an Eagle scout project has been proposed to renovate the area behind the rack at the marina, by the boat launch. Sean Loughran stated that there are no concerns with this.
  - ii. Mr. Burfeind also had a field use question, that if a private club such as the Booster Club or another club runs an event and uses one of the fields; should they pay a fee? He gave an example that the Diamond Club ran the 9-11 softball tournament, from which the proceeds were split between the Chris Blackwell Memorial Fund and the Diamond Club which supports the NFHS baseball program. They didn't fill out the paperwork but would be categorized under category 4 – which would be \$50/hr for extended use per field. After discussion, it was determined that if the some of the proceeds are going to a school club then it's a school supported event and thus a fee would not apply.
  - iii. Mr. Burfeind brought up the issue that too many people have the code to the concessions stand. Fred Testor said that this something they knew would be an issue, and the code needs to periodically change at the end of each season. Sean Loughran also pointed out that there needs to be better control over kids going upstairs. Regarding the concessions stand, Fred Testor reported that it is now a legal food service location. All groups need to show an insurance certificate to use the concession stand; cooking is now allowed with an approved grill and only for people who have taken approved food handling courses. We have 1 year to upgrade counters, floors etc. to be fully approved.
  - iv. The Commission members discussed safety issues with Lacrosse balls being hit out of the lower Rebel Turf field. A few cars' windshields have been hit, and there is also concern about kids running out into the parking lot to retrieve the balls. A solution would be to add poles with netting to avert this issue, but the cost (approximately \$2,000) would need to be covered.
- c. **Programs** – Prior to the meeting, Brian Stroh provided Linda Lull with summer camp numbers. She distributed copies of the information for the members to review. He will likely attend the next meeting to review in detail.

## **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 10:35 p.m.