

PARK COMMISSION

JUNE 13, 2011

The regular monthly meeting of the Park Commission was held at Town Hall at 7:30 p.m. with the following in attendance:

Robert Ferrigno (Presiding)
Kevin Bellows
Vincent Lipinski
Joseph DeSabia

Anthony Chmielewski
Kenneth Martin
Diane Mayo

Also,
Park Superintendent Dmitri Paris
Recreation Director Mary Markham

Guests:

Pat Festa, 42 Wendover Drive, Donna Festa Tournament
Peter Tinnesz, 39 Cranbury Drive, Trumbull Youth Lacrosse
Paul Crisci, Donna Festa Tournament
Gary Bean, 163 Hilltop Circle, Trumbull Babe Ruth
Francisco Roliz, 222 Teller Road, Youth Positive Message Concert
Pam Georgas, 117 Broadway, Nature Commission
Frank Grazynski, 21 Sharon Road, Nature Commission
Jeff Blueweiss, 63 Coventry Lane, Trumbull Little League
Doug Imri, 32 Ridgeview Avenue, Trumbull Little League

Public Comments:

Pat Festa and Paul Crisci, Donna Festa Tournament:

He provided a proposal sheet for the 4th Annual Donna Festa Softball Tournament planned for September 2,3,4 and 5, 2011 with request for use of Unity Park fields, except Field #1, all day from 8:00 a.m. to end of daylight and use of Island Brook fields on a single date of September 2nd, from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The last date is a rain date. Trumbull Little League is sponsoring the event. This is a fund raiser for Little League for the improving of the Little League Girls Softball Program. They will be responsible to clean the park of any and all debris and garbage from the tournament . Concession stands profits collected by hosting teams CT Seahawks, Fairfield Lights and Stratford Seahawks will be distributed equally to those teams. Outside vendors are not required to give any portion of proceeds to the tournament. In the event a vendor does donate a portion of the proceeds to the tournament, funds will be put into the Donna Festa Memorial account. All additional proceeds are donated to a charity of the Festa family's choice. All teams required to have valid liability insurance. The tournament requests that the usual field maintenance (ie grass mowed, weeds removed, etc) on the Thursday before the start of the tournament. No alterations will be made to the field. Removable pitching mounds will be inserted as has been done in all prior tournaments. Tournament staff will be responsible for parking. Parking on grass will be prohibited. They will be responsible for one park ranger for the duration of the tournament. Food Vendors are required to acquire their own Dept. of Health permits.

Peter Tinnesz, Trumbull Youth Lacrosse:

Presented a Field Use request for Fall Season. They use the pit at the High School from 9:00 a.m. top 5:00 p.m. on Sundays beginning September 18 through November 13th. They need an additional 3-4 ½ hours on Sundays of field space on another field from 2:00 p.m. on. They are all Trumbull residents. They work very well with Trumbull United Soccer in the spring season.

Gary Bean, Trumbull Babe Ruth League:

Follow-up on landscape architect report. They are beginning to think about maintenance work at Unity in the fall. Park Commission was to give an opinion of work proposed. Their concern is safety first, maintenance second. They do not have the funds to do major work this fall.

Superintendent indicated that he reviewed their overall plan. There are a lot of elements that need improvement on the Babe Ruth field. Grass improvement, mound work, infield beyond the mound perimeter grading, replacement of clay. These are substantial improvements. The field is now a "bowl". To address this is a major remediation. At this time, they could look more toward regrading, sod and replacement of clay.

Mr. Bean thought this to be too big a project for them this fall. They could do intermediate work this fall and try to get by for another year.

Superintendent stated that they should be looking for a fall closure, major rehabilitation of the field area with nothing happening on the field again until spring. Short of that, they should merely do aesthetics and correcting minor safety issues.

Mr. Bean noted that until the Freshman Sports concerns is resolved, they will have an influx of players in the fall.

Chairman noted that from the professional view, they should be addressing the bigger picture...the infield and pitcher's mound.

Mr. Bean questioned if the Town could do any of the labor. Response was no.

He noted that they have a strong season going this summer. Games being played, grass mowed, getting games in on regular basis. He thanked the Commission and Department.

Francisco Roliz, 222 Teller Road:

Mr. Roliz attended with several youth from his group concerning a request to hold a Positive Message Community Concert for Youth at Indian Ledge Park on Thursday, August 18, 2011. He explained his background as having sponsored such an event in his youth in Delta Christian Event in California which would be the model for this event. The event would be strictly a local group here in Trumbull of school students ranging from 13 to 22 years of age. Details for the concert and program would be forwarded. Security, insurance, lights, transcripts of songs, volunteer names and addresses would be provided. He checked parking spaces as 250. He could expect two per car. That would be an attendance of 500. It would be completely free, no donations. May provide popcorn and water.

Mrs. Mayo stated that it appears to be a forum for youth to express themselves, gathering at Indian Ledge Park.

He said it is for a positive influence, not just self-expression. He would have youth speakers, among them this year's football team captain.

Upon question he indicated he is the only committed sponsor. He would be the organizer. Youth to take part. Attendance would be approximately local 300 students with some from surrounding communities, perhaps 30 miles in distance, as well.

Mr. Martin questioned who the youth leaders are.

Mr. Roliz said they are a part of the Cross Roads Community Church and already leaders in their schools.

Mrs. Mayo questioned if this event is religious based.

Mr. Roliz said, "Ultimately it is." Gives the youth the opportunity to bond at that age.

Pam Georgas, Nature Commission Chairman:

Requested discussion take place which leads to a decision on their proposal for locating a Nature Center within the parks system. She commented that a tremendous amount of research on their part has been done and particularly by Don Watson on site evaluation. Don provided our sub-committee members with a revised draft of recommendations and they have not had a response.

Neither Chairman or Committee Member Chmielewski received the information she referred to.

Chairman explained that he and Commissioner Martin had a meeting with the First Selectman and Chief of Staff at which time the subject of the Nature Center relocation was discussed. Chairman Ferrigno and Commissioner Martin suggested the proposed exchange of property with the State of Connecticut in conjunction with the proposed Magnet School for the Fairchild Wheeler Park property be looked at as a possible location for the proposed Nature Center. The exchange brings with it 30 acres of land, a building and large multi-bay garage, is contiguous with the Pequonnock River, the Rail Trail, major highways and proposed new Magnet Science and Technology School. This seems to be a good location for a Nature Center to be established. There was also discussion on the potential for consolidating the Park and Recreation Commissions and the Ranger would fall under this category and then would not be sharing space with the Nature Center. The thought was that this would be an appropriate location to be considered for the Nature Center.

Mr. Martin said they thought the idea was a good one which needed further exploration; not necessarily where it will go, but a consideration.

Mrs. Georgas questioned whether there are other locations within parks. Would we consider a location in a park. They have spent \$20,000 of research on parks locations

Mr. Martin noted that other parcels have been discussed. He didn't think the Town is in a position of making a decision at this time. There is a major cost for construction. The Nature Commission proposed Beach Memorial Park, then Twin Brooks Park. The Park Commission suggested the Kaatz property, a building which could be donated for use, as well as property on Dayton Road. We have now come up with an option which is in consideration.

Frank Grazynski stated that we may not be considering establishing the Nature Center within the parks system and wanted to know if the answer is no.

Mrs. Mayo noted that she didn't think the Park Commission would like to vote on a new building at this point because of the financial conditions.

Mrs. Georgas noted that they had agreed to fund-raise for this project.

Mr. Chmielewski said they should look at the exchange buildings. They are in good condition.

Mrs. Georgas said that Don Watson has now made two new suggestions in a proposal sent to the Sub-Committee Members... Beach Park at the pool location and Old Mine Park. Twice she requested a meeting of the sub-committee and received no answer.

Both Sub-Committees of the Park Commission and Nature Commission shall arrange an appointment with the First Selectman, Director of Public Works and Chief of Staff to further discuss proposed location sites for the Nature Center and report back to their respective commissions.

Mrs. Georgas provided copies of Don Watson's revised proposal to the sub-committee members.

At this point in the meeting moving on with the Agenda items, the Chairman opened a packet hand delivered this evening, addressed to PARK COMMISSION in ink, to be read under the correspondence portion of our agenda. It contained the proposal Mrs. Georgas was referring to which had not been mailed to the sub-committee members but hand delivered and just received at this meeting.

Jeff Blueweiss, Trumbull Little League President:

Mr. Blueweiss reported that on Memorial Day while meeting with Trumbull Little League board members on a number of topics, one member reported that the banners and buntings on the field fences were gone. They had no idea who had taken them. They have a cost of \$50 each, plus labor and material needed to secure them. Bunting costs about \$20 each. Hanging these has been their practice for over the ten years of his involvement with Little League. Sponsors pay to have these banners displayed on the fields. They went down to the park and spoke with the Park Ranger who said the Park Superintendent was off duty and then they contacted the Trumbull Police who they met with at the park. Took up his time with his family on a holiday and law enforcement time, all unnecessary as the Park Department had removed the banners with no message or notice. That day, Mr. Blueweiss left a specific cell phone number for a return call, which was not responded to. A number of calls have been made to the Superintendent without return. He went on to explain the fund raising purpose of the banners and the resources Little League puts back into the Unity complex. He said that on many other occasions calls have been made to resolve issues. He felt the removal was inappropriate, disrespectful to the Little League players and volunteers.

Superintendent explained the ongoing practice of no advertising in the parks and that 11/12 years ago a policy was approved with certain standards of size and color for advertising on field fencing at specific locations for a two-month period of May and June, with no signage at areas interfering with the irrigation systems. What led to removal was the first heat wave of the season and an urgency to irrigate the fields. The bunting and signage that was on the fences did not meet regulations and blocked the irrigation systems. They were removed and have been in storage at the Park Department since Memorial Day weekend.

Superintendent said that prior to this he had spoken with Doug Imri from Little League indicating that those banners blocking the irrigation system would have to be taken down. Most blocked the cross-stream system which runs from 10:30 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. in ten and fifteen minute cycles. There is no way to know which ones to remove without being there for all cycles.

Mr. Imri said he thought he would be notified as to when that would be and that not all banners and buntings blocked the system. Little League felt that the problem could have been avoided if sufficient notification that they were to be removed had been given.

Gary Bean, Babe Ruth League, commented that the single approved Babe Ruth Banner, which does not interfere with irrigation, had also been removed.

Chairman questioned what Little League would like us to do, and the response was to re-install the banners. Once again the problem was determined to be which of the banner locations do not interfere with irrigation spin cycles and once determined, which of the sponsor banners to select.

It was agreed that the Superintendent will meet at the complex with Little League representatives to make a determination where and which of the banners can be reinstalled, with additional locations selected to accommodate the numbers of banners, in priority order for fields One, Three and Four. They will be allowed through the end of July for this season as an exception.

Mr. Blueweiss thanked the Commission for its time to discuss this issue. They are available to resolve issues with proper communication. They are accessible.

Chairman Ferrigno apologized to Little League for the inconvenience.

MOTION by Mr. DeSabia, second by Mrs. Mayo, unanimously passed to close the Guest Portion of the Agenda.

MOTION by Dr. Bellows, second by Mr. Chmielewski, unanimously passed to approve the minutes of the May 9, 2011 meeting as distributed.

Correspondence:

Trumbull Youth Lacrosse: Fall Schedule accepted.

Recreation Director Mary Markham said they will begin field scheduling for fall once all requests are received. Diane Mayo will be doing field scheduling through the Recreation Department.

Chairman requested the Commission be provided a copy of the final fall schedule for all field users on Parks and Board of Education fields.

Commissioner Martin questioned if there would be a conflict of interest in serving as a Park Commissioner and doing the scheduling of fields.

Director Markham said she checked and there is not a current conflict. If the two Commissions are joined at some point in time, there would be.

Old Business:

Parking Lot Barriers:

Superintendent is working on materials for a gate at Twin Brooks Lot. Boulders have been placed. Should be able to manage posts by July.

Nothnagle Park is more a problem because when Superintendent checked, it was determined that Cemetery Road is a public road and cannot be closed-off.

Mr. Martin will check further because the park is at the end of the public roadway, and we have other parks with thru-roads closed at night for security reasons.

Donna Festa Tournament:

MOTION by Mr. Lipinski, second by Mrs. Mayo, unanimously passed to approve the Annual Donna Festa Softball Tournament sponsored by Trumbull Little League planned for September 2,3,4 and 5, 2011 with request for use of Unity Park fields, except Field #1, all day from 8:00 a.m. to end of daylight and use of Island Brook Park fields on a single date of September 2nd, from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. with Little League Maintenance Contractor providing the field maintenance prior, during and after the event and payment of outstanding 2010 Ranger Fees to be paid prior to this year's event and scheduled 2011 Ranger Fees to be paid within 30 days following the event.

Francisco Roliz, 222 Teller Road, request to hold a Positive Message Community Concert for Youth at Indian Ledge Park on Thursday, August 18, 2011:

MOTION by Mrs. Mayo, second by Mr. Martin, to **DENY** request by Francisco Roliz to hold a Positive Message Community Concert for Youth at Indian Ledge Park on Thursday, August 18, 2011 as it is not a Town sponsored event. Vote: 5 in favor (Dr. Bellows, Mrs. Mayo, Mr. Chmielewski, Mr. Martin, Mr. DeSabia) one abstain (Mr. Lipinski).

Mr. Martin retired from meeting at 10:25 p.m.

Superintendent's Report:

- Much spring season rain has kept department busy with grass cutting.
- Board of Health inspections of both pools.
- Memorial Day opened for season.
- Beach Park Sprinkler Park had a problem with its sump drains. It was down an additional week, but now open.
- Costs for chemicals and replacement parts for pools have increased considerably.
- OSHA inspections have uncovered chemical and products issues which will be corrected.

MOTION by Dr. Bellows, second by Mr. Chmielewski, unanimously passed to enter an **Executive Session** on a **Personnel Matter** at 10:30 p.m.

Those in attendance: Commissioners Ferrigno, Bellows, Lipinski, Mayo, Chmielewski and DeSabia. Park Superintendent was invited to attend the session.

Executive Session closed at 11:15 p.m.

CONSENSUS to Adjourn at 11:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Joan E. Plouffe
Clerical Administrative Assistant

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MOTIONS**

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MOTION by Dr. Bellows, second by Mr. Chmielewski, unanimously passed to approve the minutes of the May 9, 2011 meeting as distributed.

MOTION by Mr. Lipinski, second by Mrs. Mayo, unanimously passed to approve the Annual Donna Festa Softball Tournament sponsored by Trumbull Little League planned for September 2,3,4 and 5, 2011 with request for use of Unity Park fields, except Field #1, all day from 8:00 a.m. to end of daylight and use of Island Brook Park fields on a single date of September 2nd, from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. with Little League Maintenance Contractor providing the field maintenance prior, during and after the event with payment of outstanding 2010 Ranger Fees to be paid prior to this year's event and scheduled 2011 Ranger Fees to be paid within 30 days following the event.

MOTION by Mrs. Mayo, second by Mr. Martin, to **DENY** request by Francisco Roliz to hold a Positive Message Community Concert for Youth at Indian Ledge Park on Thursday, August 18, 2011 as it is not a Town sponsored event. Vote: 5 in favor (Dr. Bellows, Mrs. Mayo, Mr. Chmielewski, Mr. Martin, Mr. DeSabia) one abstain (Mr. Lipinski).

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