

Draft Minutes

TOWN OF GUILFORD Parks and Recreation Commission Minutes – 3rd January, 2011

A regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was held on Monday 3rd January, 2011 at 7:00p.m. in the Guilford Community Center with Chairman Ralph Schipani presiding.

Present: Gary Gilbert, Robert Guadagno, Calvin Page, Barbara Pine, Sue Robins, Ralph Schipani and Judy Sullivan. Also present Director Rick Maynard. Jenny Carrillo joined the meeting in progress (7:14p.m.). Excused: Alexandra Gross.

The meeting was called to order at 7:08p.m.

Public Forum: There were no members of the public present.

CORRESPONDENCE

Forwarded:

Recreation Supervisor Ellen Clow 12/6/10 re: letter of commendation

Eagle Scout Ian Brocksieper, 20 12/21/10 re: thank you for construction of boat rack at Jacobs
Spruce Hill Rd, Guilford, CT Beach

Approval of Minutes: Mr. Schipani reported that he had received clarification on Freedom of Information issues regarding publication of the minutes, etc. Regular meeting minutes should be published on the Town's web site within 7 calendar days of a meeting. Mr. Schipani added that in future a copy of the minutes would be distributed to the chairman, vice-chairman and director initially with the minutes being approved with corrections, if necessary, at the next regular meeting. Mr. Schipani then made a motion to accept the Minutes of 6th December, 2010 with the following correction: on page 8, under "A. Restructure Option", the fifth sentence should say "...consolidating the custodians *under the P&R staff* was the opposite...". Ms. Pine seconded the motion and it was carried with 5 votes in favor. Mr. Page abstained since he was not present at the December meeting. A motion was made and seconded to accept the Workshop Meeting Minutes of 13th December, 2010 with the following correction: on page 1, under "Budget Summary Sheet/Part Time Wages", the fifteenth sentence should say "...redeployment of staff to work on *other fields*.". The motion was carried with 4 votes in favor. Mr. Guadagno and Mr. Page abstained since they were not present at the workshop meeting.

BILLS

Mr. Maynard mentioned a bill of \$889.95 from Glenn Gunderson. After a crow fell down the Leete Room chimney and became stuck the Department was advised to install a stainless steel cap. He added that an item for clay (\$1,393.29) listed under Grounds Maintenance should in fact be under Field Maintenance. Mr. Gilbert queried the figures listed for Room Rentals and Mr. Maynard replied that he

BILLS (continued)

would have to check on this. Mr. Gilbert made a motion to approve the bills presented for payment. Ms. Pine seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously. MTD Actual is: \$95,877.40.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Spent much of the month working on the budget request; attended following meetings: Safety Committee, Field Committee, Commission budget workshop, tree lighting program evaluation, Directors meeting; checked ice rink at Guilford Lakes School – directed crew to add more water; met with trash contractor to discuss cost; checked crew cutting brush at Daniel Avenue/Mulberry Point; met with First Selectman, P&R chairman, HR director and Finance director re budget.

STAFF REPORTS

A. Recreation Supervisor (written): Organized Holiday House Decorating Contest (2nd year); met with executive director from ASCONN re new babysitting program focusing on caring for children with special needs, in collaboration with Yale Child Study Center; interviewed potential applicants for Mill Pond skate guard position, had Guilford Fire Department representative speak to staff about emergency procedures; attended Wellness Committee meeting, assisted with developing new employee fitness challenge; attended CMT; met with Ashton Killilea, Summer Camp Programmer, summer staff have begun returning paperwork and set up interviews; staff are working on Hot Shot Basketball Contest, Adult Dodgeball Tournament and Game Nights for grades 5-8; winter registration began – over 750 registered for programs with 80% utilizing online registration.

B. Seniors Program Coordinator (written): Trips: Westfarms Mall for Christmas shopping, Wadsworth Atheneum for Festival of Trees, Festival of Silver Lights in Southington, Ivoryton Playhouse to see PT Barnham, Festival of Lights for Housing Authority residents; met with Housing Authority representative re programs, Jean Cherni re speaker presentation in February; presentation by Hula Class at Senior Lunch; Patriotic Dinner held – many seniors attended; Calvin Leete students performed Christmas songs; dinner and movie held at Community Center; Rotary Luncheon – 200 attended; discussion with David Booth, RN, re Healthy Issues presentation in February; Senior Christmas Luncheon – debut of “The Terrific T’s” (Terry/Tracy) dance performance, and debut of Senior Chorus singing two Christmas songs, delivered Christmas baskets, and Be A Santa to a Senior Christmas presents; New Year’s Eve Breakfast – waffles.

C. Parks Foreman (written): Spent many hours doing reports for upcoming budget presentation; snow removal – 2 dustings, 1 storm 8” + high wind, and maintenance of equipment after storms; weather not cooperating with pond/ice rink; items for Rotary road race and luncheon; brush cutting at 25 facilities (3½ weeks) is completed; repaired 4 broken picnic tables; performed playscape inspections, repairs made at Jacobs; Christmas – lights, fencing, cleaned Town Green, staging at Community Center, showmobile; picked up 80 bales of hay for Baldwin hill; field inspections for spring completed.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Standing Fields Committee: Mr. Schipani said that SFC was supposed to make a presentation tonight on fee schedules but this was postponed to the February meeting. Mr. Gilbert asked Mr. Maynard if it would be possible for him to obtain information from SFC which he could review before presenting it to the Commission.

B. Land Acquisition Commission: No report.

C. Policy on Community Center Use: No report. Mr. Maynard stated that the policy regarding Community Center use was that it had to be a Guilford group or involve a certain number of Guilford residents. He said recently he had received three requests for use from non-residents but that there was no policy covering this matter. Mr. Gilbert asked Mr. Maynard to draw up a proposal for the Commission to review and approve.

Ms. Pine made a motion that certain topics should only be listed on the agenda when the person representing the Commission on another committee requested that the topic be listed. Mrs. Sullivan seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

D. Coastal Area Management Plan: No report.

E. Plan of Conservation & Development Committee: No report.

F. Bittner Park Sign: The Commission reviewed two proposed sign layouts. Mr. Gilbert felt “Park & Recreation” was too large and should be reduced by at least 25%, and that “Bittner Park” should stand out more. Ms. Carrillo did not like having different fonts. She also felt that outdoor signage did not need to have such strict consistency as letterhead, etc. Mr. Gilbert said the sign should be scaled so it was proportionally appealing and then reviewed again. The Commission agreed that the lettering should be white with a consistent font. Mr. Maynard was asked to have the proposed sign revised and several versions brought back to the Commission for review.

G. Community Center Landscaping: Mr. Maynard said he had contacted Mark DeAngelis regarding an estimate for the sidewalk work but had not yet received a response.

H. Website: Mr. Maynard reported that this was progressing.

I. Parks & Recreation Survey: Mr. Maynard reminded the Commission that some of the survey comments had been about improving Jacobs Beach. He said he had talked to landscape designer, John Cunningham, who was going to provide the name of someone who specialized in beach landscaping. Mr. Gilbert recommended obtaining an estimate for some really nice white beach sand.

J. Budget: Earlier in the meeting Mr. Schipani stated that at the budget workshop meeting on 12/13/10 the Commission had recommended outsourcing trash collection and that a reduction of approximately \$41,000 be made in the grounds maintenance payroll. Mr. Schipani said he and the Director then had an informal meeting with the First Selectman, Finance Director and Human Resources Director to discuss this matter. Mr. Schipani said some concessions were made which he agreed to and the Director was granted the ability to present a revised budget to the Finance Director

J. Budget: (continued)

showing that some of the reduction would come from salaries and some from elsewhere. Referring to the Proposed Budget 2011-2012, Ms. Pine recommended reorganizing the narrative that accompanied the budget request. Mr. Schipani reminder her that the request had already been submitted. He also said that perhaps he should write a ‘state of the department’ memo on an annual basis. Mr. Gilbert felt if the chairman took on this obligation it would provide an opportunity to highlight the good things that the Director had done for the department. He suggested considering this for next year. Referring to page 11 of the request, Mr. Gilbert said costs for several items had been reduced and he assumed this would not compromise field maintenance. Mr. Maynard replied that straight rye grass seed would be used which was a savings. Some clay was purchased in the fall so less would be needed next spring – another savings.

First Selectman Mazza joined the meeting at 8:00p.m. Mr. Mazza believed that there was some confusion regarding the meeting held in his office about outsourcing trash collection. Mr. Schipani replied that there was no confusion. He reiterated that the Commission had voted to take \$41,000 from salaries. A meeting was then held with Mr. Mazza, the Human Resources and Finance Directors and it was agreed that as long as there was a significant reduction in salaries, either full time or part time, the Department would be allowed, at its discretion, to find other fund reductions, with the Commission’s approval. Mr. Mazza said that a reduction in 3 part time positions had been agreed to and Mr. Schipani replied yes. Mr. Gilbert said there was concern that if all the reduction was taken from the part time salaries the department would be handicapped when getting fields ready in the spring and fall. Mr. Schipani added that the Commission had talked about sharing a maintenance worker with Public Works but this was not possible due to union issues so the idea was not pursued.

Mr. Mazza left the meeting at 8:10p.m.

Mr. Schipani made a motion to present the budget request as discussed above on 1/13/11. Ms. Pine seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

K. Re-structure Options: Mr. Maynard was asked to bring a package of information to the February meeting for the Commission to discuss.

L. Spring Program Fees: Mr. Schipani said there was concern that a decision might be made later this year to increase fees after the lower fees had already been published in the program brochure. Mr. Maynard stated that even though the fees had not been increased the Department was still making money. Mr. Gilbert said Mr. Maynard and the staff had done a good job of setting fees for programs. He added that he would like to leave all the program fees that went into the Reimbursable Account in Mr. Maynard’s hands unless something changed. The other side was the budget side and revenue stream from beach passes, room rentals, etc., and Mr. Gilbert suggested confining revisions to the revenue side of the budget. He added that he had had some correspondence with Mr. Maynard who may have addressed some of these issues. **A) Neighborhood Musical School:** Mr. Gilbert noted that an increase had been requested from the Neighborhood Musical School and the Commission had said it would review this annually but did not do so. Mr. Maynard said he had checked the fee today and found \$15 was paid for residents and \$25 for non-residents. He added that NMS was brought in years ago by a former Commission member who recommended contracting dance classes to NMS. Mr. Gilbert said if Mr. Maynard was comfortable with what the Department was getting that was fine but the Department did not seem to be getting back a high percentage of what NMS was charging. Mr. Page

L. Spring Program Fees: (continued)

said the Department was making \$5 per class which seemed pretty cheap. He asked if NMS was non-profit and Ms. Carrillo replied yes. Ms. Pine said she would like to see all this information in writing. She felt a unit price for room use should be devised, based on the number of people using the room, etc. Mr. Gilbert said when the Department originally met with NMS it was hoping NMS would increase what it was doing. He agreed with Ms. Pine that information should be provided to the Commission for the February meeting. Mr. Maynard pointed out that the Department was semi co-sponsoring programs with NMS. However, Mr. Page felt NMS was being rewarded financially for that. **B) Vineyard Church Group:** Mr. Gilbert asked if the fee for the church group had been increased. Mr. Maynard replied not yet but that he had spoken to this group. It uses 11 room hours but if \$30 per hour was charged for this it would be a huge increase. Mr. Gilbert said he did not feel that \$250 would be unacceptable. He added that there should be some kind of formula but also felt the church group was entitled to some kind of discount. Mr. Maynard said he had tentatively suggested \$240. Mr. Schipani recommended \$240-\$250 and Ms. Pine added that there should be a sound rationale on how this figure was reached. **C) Starship Dance Group:** Mr. Gilbert felt this fee was less than half of what it should be. He added that the Commission had said before that it was no longer going to accept a donation of \$1,000 and that there should be a fee. Mr. Maynard noted that again the Department semi co-sponsored with this group. He added that if the custodial fee of \$15 was used for 160 hours that would total \$2,400 which would be double what was being paid now. Mr. Gilbert noted that this group took up a lot of space, moved equipment around and was a very disruptive organization. Ms. Carrillo suggested quantifying what the Department's in-kind donation might be and building on this. Ms. Pine said she was under the impression that there could not be any profit making events in the Community Center. Mr. Page said this group was providing a service which the Department was not so a 50% reduction should be provided. Mr. Maynard said the program was wonderful and was inter-generational which was a good association for the Department. On another matter, Ms. Pine said that she would like to remind the Commission that it had been suggested that boat use be limited to people with beach passes. She added that she would rather not see the Department charge for boat use. Mr. Schipani said another issue was a complaint about the number of non-residents using the beaches at weekends. Mr. Gilbert said he would like a recommendation from Mr. Maynard and others on these issues. He added that he would like to see more standardization with regard to Lake Quonnipaug and Jacobs Beach. Mr. Page felt that the large number of people who could use the beach using one beach pass compared to all the work done by the department staff was ridiculous. Ms. Carrillo warned that policy should not be set up on one anomaly. She asked if the complaint about weekend non-residents was a one time thing. Mr. Gilbert felt there should be a more uniform system so it was less work for the staff. Mr. Maynard was asked to research this issue.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Mr. Page made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:50p.m. Ms. Pine seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

The next meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission will be held on Monday 7th February, 2011 at 7:00p.m. in the Guilford Community Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Katharine Stewart
Recording Secretary