

Draft Minutes

TOWN OF GUILFORD Parks and Recreation Commission Minutes – 4th April, 2011

A regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission was held on Monday 4th April, 2011 at 7:00p.m. in the Guilford Community Center with Chairman Ralph Schipani presiding.

Present: Jenny Carrillo, Gary Gilbert, Calvin Page, Barbara Pine, Sue Robins, Ralph Schipani and Judy Sullivan. Also present Director Rick Maynard. Excused: Robert Guadagno.

The meeting was called to order at 7:04p.m.

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

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Walked various fields with Parks Foreman to determine which fields to close for spring repairs; worked on trash collection bid specs; attended following meetings: Department Heads, Budget Hearings (2), SILL Board meeting, Fields Committee, Special Commission meeting; compiled list of past reimbursable projects and future projects (with staff input); conducted staff training on customer service and providing excellence; met at Jacobs Beach with paint rep for recommendations for bathhouse; met with landscape designer about landscape projects, and with Mark DeAngelis about sidewalk/patio, all at Community Center; met with beach cleaner salesman and Parks Foreman at Jacobs Beach; wrote specs for bid for Adams tennis court repairs; met with SCSU student about internship; met with 3 representatives from Interact Club for program/project ideas; scheduled groups in parks; met with USTA rep about tennis grants; met at GHS with Principal, Police Chief and school staff about graduation (will line up at Community Center); met with Eagle Scout about project ideas.

Mr. Schipani asked if the GHS graduation plans were being changed. Mr. Maynard replied that it was thought students could not line up at St. George's Church due to a conflict with a wedding so they may assemble at the Community Center instead. However, this may be changed back to St. George's Church. Mr. Schipani said he would be concerned about parking if students met at the Community Center.

Ms. Pine stated that it would be helpful for the Commission to receive a listing of upcoming events on a regular basis. Ms. Robins requested a list of proposed projects which were discussed at Commission meetings with details on the status of these projects. This should be provided by each subsequent Commission meeting. Mr. Schipani noted that any new items to be added to the agenda needed to be supplied at least a week in advance of the meeting mailing.

STAFF REPORTS

A. Recreation Supervisor (written): Attended Community Mobilization, Wellness Committee meetings, attended Risk Management Workshop; met with potential spring/summer instructors; continued to conduct summer staff interviews for camp & aquatics; met with Director and a potential summer intern; completed a preliminary US Tennis Association grant application for Adams tennis refurbishment; met with Director, Senior Program Coordinator and Parks Foreman regarding

A. Recreation Supervisor (continued)

reimbursable projects, attended Commission meeting re projects; prepared for online spring/summer registration – 750 people registered online on the first day.

B. Seniors Program Coordinator (written): Met with Senior Chorus to discuss new director, meeting day/time – now meeting weekly on Fridays 3:00-4:00p.m., group likes Mark Sullivan very much; attended budget public hearing; met with coordinator of new Genealogy Research program – very popular program; met with Rose Dostert/Gerri Parent re next step in 55+ younger seniors programs & activities; attended Commission special meeting re reimbursable account; attended SILL board meeting, input maintenance for SILL programs & booked rooms for SILL programs in Rec Trac, arranged for mailing of SILL catalogue; cleaned out cabinets in Alexander Lounge; lecture with author of “Angels in Connecticut”; Ethnic Cuisine trip to Puerto Vallarta Mexican Restaurant in Middletown (20 participants); St. Patrick’s Day Luncheon with entertainment (100 in attendance); Volunteer Luncheon with entertainment to thank those who worked on the Fair (50 in attendance); Cole Porter entertainment by Julie Harris (30 in attendance); Pizza and a Movie (30 in attendance). **Meal Program:** Meals served at Community Center March 2011 – 655 (March 2010 – 480); Meals on Wheels March 2011 – 2,055 (March 2010 – 1,766). **Bus Program:** Total including medical, personal care, shopping, trips: February Total Trips – 353, Total Passengers – 463, March Total Trips – 340, Total Passengers – 443.

C. Parks Foreman (written): Two small snowstorms; Mill Pond/ice rink finished for season (new liner needed for next year); painting/readying items completed; plows/sanders serviced and put away except for 1 truck; soccer/lacrosse fields set up, goals, nets, sandbags in place; baseball/softball groomed, bases out; trash cans/park signs/picnic tables all out at facilities; grills uncovered and painted; reimbursables – got cost estimates on items/tasks; took down old Jacobs boat rack; spring cleanup – ¾ done at facilities; tennis nets up at GHS only; inventories – all materials/items for spring completed; chain saw certification – 7 personnel attended.

CORRESPONDENCE**Received:**

Email from Mike Gravino 3/30/11 re: thank you for review of Department’s revenue sources and discussion of concerns re GHS ballfield use.

Mr. Maynard noted that Mr. Gravino had also been concerned about fees involved when host organizations used Guilford fields. Mr. Maynard told Mr. Gravino that he planned to introduce a fee for large events with a majority of non-Guilford residents.

Approval of Minutes: Mr. Page made a motion to accept the Minutes of 7th March, 2011. Ms. Robins seconded the motion and it was carried with 5 votes in favor. Ms. Pine abstained since she was not present at the March meeting. Mr. Schipani made a motion to accept the Special Meeting Minutes of 21st March, 2011. Ms. Pine seconded the motion and it was carried with 4 votes in favor. Ms. Carrillo and Mr. Page abstained since they were not present at the special meeting. Following the special meeting, Mr. Schipani said a list of the approved projects was compiled and presented to the Finance Director. In light of the current poor economy the Finance Director suggested that, as a courtesy, these proposed projects should be discussed with First Selectman Mazza. Mr. Schipani said he had

Approval of Minutes (continued)

attempted to set up a meeting with Mr. Mazza but had not yet been able to do so. Mr. Gilbert felt that projects to do with the Community Center which had already been started should be continued. Perhaps other projects could be tabled until after the budget referendum on 4/12/11. Mr. Schipani suggested holding all projects until after the budget referendum. However, Mr. Gilbert felt seasonal items related to growing times, etc., should move forward. Mr. Maynard mentioned that the proposal to replace the sound system in the exercise room was being done because it was necessary and it was a program issue. Mr. Schipani recommended prioritizing projects which could be done before or after the budget referendum.

BILLS

Mr. Page made a motion to approve the bills presented for payment. Ms. Carrillo seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously. MTD Actual is \$72,992.11.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Standing Fields Committee: Mr. Maynard reported that field walks would be held on 4/16/11 (7:00a.m.) and 4/17/11.

B. Bittner Park Sign: Mr. Maynard said the target date for the sign was still April 2011.

C. Community Center Landscaping: Mr. Maynard stated that he had reviewed remaining items in the plan with landscape designer John Cunningham. Mr. Cunningham recommended installing a dry well where rain scuppers came down. Mr. Maynard added that cost estimate for the patio and sidewalk was \$9,604. Including the landscape work of \$3,200 would give a total cost of \$12,804. Mr. Gilbert felt the patio/sidewalk work was well worth it and that it would help create usable space.

D. Department Structure: Ms. Pine mentioned merit raises as a way of improving on union negotiated pay. Mr. Gilbert said that the 1988 Town handbook had talked about raises being based on merit rather than length of service but this practice was not followed. He also felt it would be inappropriate to take pay from the reimbursable account. Mr. Gilbert thought a lot of progress had been made in the Department regarding restructuring and that the changes were all to the good. He said that one of the reasons he had favored the restructuring was because the staff had been focused on particular efforts but were not behind a common mission. Mr. Gilbert felt the Department was good on the high and low ends but, for example, not enough people were being reached through the meal program. Therefore, the Department was not getting value for money. Mr. Gilbert said he had thought having other staff involved in the seniors program would reach more people. He added that he felt the seniors program coordinator needed help reaching more people and that she could not do this by herself. Mr. Maynard pointed out that the meal program included Meals on Wheels. Ms. Pine noted that a meeting about seniors was held but there was no feedback or follow up from that meeting. She suggested that the seniors pro-gram coordinator attend the next Commission meeting to discuss future plans and ideas.

E. Fireworks (7/9/11): Mr. Maynard reported that \$3,793 had been raised. Ms. Robins asked if there was a cut off date. Mr. Maynard replied that plans should be finalized by the end of June. Mr. Gilbert suggested making up donation envelopes and distributing these.

F. Reimbursable Projects: Mr. Maynard stated that the Pre-school Playscape Surface project would have to go out to bid. Regarding a location for the treadmills, Mr. Maynard said the seniors program coordinator had suggested the Quonnipaug Room rather than the Alexander Lounge. Ms. Pine noted that the Quonnipaug Room was used for meetings which the lounge was not. However, Mr. Maynard said the lounge was used for meetings during the day. Mr. Page estimated the cost for improving the Jacobs Beach bathhouse ridge vent at \$500 (for materials). Ms. Carrillo asked what projects were already underway and what would have to wait until later. She suggested projects be listed in three categories: items already underway, maintenance items and special projects. Ms. Robins noted that the projects were put together in response to the results of the Department's survey. Following brief discussion a motion was made to submit purchase orders for all the reimbursable projects identified at the Special March 21st meeting and, as a courtesy, to inform the First Selectman of these projects. Ms. Pine seconded the motion. During discussion Mr. Gilbert said it should be made clear that some of the projects would be spread over several years. The motion was then carried unanimously. Mr. Schipani said he, Ms. Pine and Mr. Maynard would meet with the First Selectman. Mr. Page asked if the projects should be provided to the full Board of Selectmen.

Regarding the proposal to paint the Jacobs Beach Bathhouse, Mr. Maynard said information had been obtained from Sherwin Williams which said paint could not be applied over the current sealer. This would have to be sandblasted off before paint could be applied. He added that architect William Thompson had suggested the area on the south side could be improved with a nice patio boardwalk and the removal of the existing planter. Mr. Maynard said notices could be located on a kiosk rather than on the telephone pole. He felt a master plan was needed because of serious erosion problems. Mr. Maynard said Mr. Thompson had also suggested regrading the parking lot towards the northwest corner. Mr. Gilbert said this should be part of the capital plan. Mr. Page recommended having an informal discussion with Mr. Thompson before he committed anything to paper. Mr. Schipani said personally he did not like doing things piecemeal and that he would rather see a 3-5 year capital plan done in phases with cost estimates.

Bus Radio Antenna (\$3,305): Mr. Maynard said he had been told that the antenna on the roof of GHS was a problem because some of the cables were damaged. Also it was 20 years old and needed to be replaced. Mr. Gilbert asked if he had talked to Fire Marshall Herrschaft who was in charge of communications. Mr. Maynard replied no.

Popcorn, snow cone, cotton candy machines (\$2,500): Mr. Maynard stated that the Recreation Supervisor had said these machines were rented in the summer for camp and throughout the year for other events. She suggested that if machines were purchased they would be used more. Mr. Page queried storage and Ms. Pine asked about cleaning the machines. Mr. Gilbert asked if this would offset rental costs and would the chef take ownership of the machines. He felt kitchen staff would be more appropriate than office staff. Mr. Page said he would like statistics on the costs for the proposed machines, funds saved, etc.

Ms. Carrillo left the meeting at 8:25p.m.

Rail Fencing at Chittenden Park (\$9,845 for 553 feet): Mr. Gilbert asked Mr. Page if this was a reasonable cost and he replied yes. He added that the proposed railing would be very long lasting and maintenance-free.

F. Reimbursable Projects (continued)

Laptop for Parks Foreman: Mr. Maynard circulated information from the Parks Foreman on the rationale for needing a laptop. Mrs. Sullivan asked how the information was handled now and Mr. Page queried savings. Mr. Gilbert felt if the laptop was not online it was not justified. Mr. Schipani did not feel the Parks Foreman needed mobile access. Ms. Pine said the administrative assistant could create folders to store much of the information and keep it current. She added that she was happy to see the Parks Foreman moving forward towards computerizing his records and that the administrative assistant should be used to assist with this.

G. Coastal Area Management Plan: Ms. Pine stated that she had learned recently that only Section J of this project had been tabled but that the rest of it was still viable. She said the Commission needed to revisit this issue and asked that it be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Seasonal Wage Scale: Mr. Maynard said he had reviewed this with the First Selectman and Human Resources Director. It will be approved if the budget passes the referendum on 4/12/11.

B. Concessions at Jacobs Beach: Mr. Maynard reported that he had received enquiries from several hot dog vendors. At present there is an ice cream vendor who has exclusive rights to sell during times that do not interfere with summer camp. Ms. Robins asked if there had been any responses in the survey about this. Ms. Pine replied that she thought there had just been requests for general upgrades. Mr. Gilbert said he saw no reason to consider these requests unless there was some benefit to them and more people were attracted. Ms. Pine felt this topic should be part of a master plan on how Jacobs Beach was going to be improved. She also suggested the Commission needed to research the issue with a survey, etc.

C. Bittner Park Roller Hockey: Mr. Maynard said residents supporting this project were supposed to provide a proposal but did not do so. Should the project be approved then the skate park equipment would have to be removed. It was suggested having the skate park in spring and fall with roller hockey in the summer. However, to remove the skate park equipment twice would be very costly. Also, many of the people in the program were not Guilford residents. Mr. Gilbert said the skate park's time had passed and it was no longer serving the community. Ms. Pine recommended revisiting this issue in September when there would be real data on skate park usage. Statistics would be needed to justify the Commission's decision to take down the skate park equipment and do something else. It was agreed this item would be placed on the September meeting agenda.

D. Non- Resident Use of Community Center: Mr. Maynard said he had received several requests for non-resident use and had denied them. He asked if the Commission wished to allow non-resident use reserving not more than a month in advance, and at a higher fee than residents would pay. Ms. Pine did not feel that the way the reservation form was worded excluded non-residents and that this should be clarified. It was agreed that a copy of the reservation form would be brought to the next meeting for discussion.

E. Park Walks: A tentative walk date was set for 5/2/11 at 5:00p.m., meeting at Jacobs Beach.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Mrs. Sullivan made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:15p.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 2nd May, 2011 at 7:00p.m. in the Guilford Community Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Katharine Stewart
Recording Secretary