

Corrected Minutes 7/12/10

TOWN OF GUILFORD  
Recreation and Park Commission  
Minutes – 7<sup>th</sup> June, 2010

A regular meeting of the Recreation and Park Commission was held on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> June, 2010 at 7:00p.m. in the Guilford Community Center with Chairman Ralph Schipani presiding.

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:05p.m.

**Public Forum: 1) Catherine Bradshaw, board member of Watershed Partnership, and its committee the Guilford Community Garden Association (GCGA)** said she would like to ask the Commission for the use of property just south of the tennis courts at Adams School for a community garden (approximately one-third of an acre). Ms. Bradshaw said she was excited about this property because it was near a school and so students could be engaged in the garden. She added that the property was not used for sports, it got plenty of sun but she did not know about the quality of the soil. Ms. Bradshaw also mentioned that a grant had been received from the Guilford Foundation for start up costs such as fencing, materials for raised beds, etc. This grant will be lost if this project is not begun by next spring. Ms. Bradshaw outlined some of the questions about the proposal: to ensure that there would be space between the deer fencing and the tennis courts in case repairs were needed; what if tennis balls land in the garden – how would players gain access to retrieve balls; a water source. Ms. Bradshaw said she had not yet contacted the neighbors for their input. Mr. Gilbert pointed out that this property did not belong to the Recreation and Park Commission but because the Commission was a steward of sports activities on the property it was good that Ms. Bradshaw had brought it to the Commission's attention. Mr. Gilbert said she should solicit permission from the Board of Education. Mr. Guadagno stated that he was a board member of the Dudley Foundation which had a community garden and he said things were not simple. Mr. Guadagno said storage for gardening implements was a big issue. Another issue was keeping it under control when some users were not as tidy as they should be. Mr. Guadagno felt a community garden took a lot of attention and hard work. Ms. Bradshaw replied that she had done quite a lot of research on how to manage a community garden and had talked to many experienced people. Mr. Hedberg made a motion that the Commission accepted the plan for a community garden at Adams School as outlined as long as all necessary approvals were received from the appropriate authorities. Mr. Page seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously. **2) Jerry Silbert, Watershed Partnership,** stated that a ban on using pesticides on school fields would come into effect on 7/1/10 and that he wished to alert the Commission about this. Dr Silbert said the legislature had received testimony that it was not good to expose students to pesticides. He stated that natural turf care resulted in excellent turf. Dr. Silbert mentioned that Branford used this program and its fields were in excellent condition, in part due to the application of new compost. He pointed out that Guilford had its own source of composted leaves at the stump dump but use of this would have to be worked out with the Department of Public Works (DPW). Dr. Silbert said he would like to see a natural turf program implemented this fall. In addition Dr. Silbert said he would like to give the Recreation and Park Department and Mr. Maynard an award on behalf of the Watershed Partnership for the best organic town green in Connecticut. No pesticides have been applied to the Guilford Green for three years. Mr. Schipani asked what the next step would be. Dr. Silbert

**Public Forum:** (continued)

replied that he would like the Commission's support when he presented the natural turf proposal to DPW and the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Schipani felt the Commission would like to hear both sides of the story before making a decision, especially as he had heard the program was not so successful in Cheshire. Dr. Silbert replied that the main football field in Cheshire was overused and so it was not possible to keep it in good condition.

**CORRESPONDENCE****Received:**

Catherine Bradshaw, Guilford 5/24/10 re: Request to use land at Adams Middle School for  
Community Garden Association community garden

First Selectman Joseph Mazza 5/25/10 re: Facility appearances and maintenance

Alan Tucker, 63 Reeves Ave, re: Request to place memorial stone bench on any  
Guilford, CT 06437 beach in Guilford

Following brief discussion, Mr. Gilbert made a motion to approve this request for a memorial bench provided that the bench was of the same quality, scope and scale as other existing benches and was located with the approval of the Director and Parks Foreman. Mr. Page seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously. Mr. Hedberg suggested the bench could be located at Daniel Avenue beach.

**Forwarded:**

Sandy Offredi, Finance Dept. 5/17/10 re: Revenue accounts

Geno Parisi, 1158 Jennifers 5/17/10 re: thank you for donation of soccer goal to be used at  
Lane, Guilford, CT 06437 Jacob's Beach field

First Selectman Joseph Mazza 5/20/10 re: Fireworks bid

**Approval of Minutes:** Ms. Pine made a motion to accept the Minutes of 5/3/10 with the following correction: on page 1, third paragraph, the second sentence should say “.. introduced herself saying she was *assistant* general counsel.” Mr. Hedberg seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

**BILLS**

Mr. Gilbert made a motion to approve the bills presented for payment. Ms. Pine seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously. MTD Actual was \$89,387.03.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Community Center – awaiting repairs to roof leak, facilities crew repaired rails in front of building, Whitfield Room floor repaired after damage by soda machine (Cocoa Cola company paid), met with John Cunningham regarding landscape plan, met with Will Thompson re Community Center sign

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT** (continued)

specs, septic repairs completed; attended the following meetings: Department Heads, Wellness Committee, Safety Committee, Mentoring, Joe Mazza (Green appearance for Memorial Day), East River Preservation meeting; met with sign contractor about Duggan Dock plaque, Bittner Park sign and other park signs; checked the following fields: Leete, Bittner, Nut Plains Park; contracted for spraying of *phragmites* at Jacobs Beach/Chittenden Park; scheduled apron paving at Lake Quonnipaug parking lot; reviewed fireworks bids and recommended Atlas Pyrotechnical (\$9,500); reviewed budget revenue and expense accounts; reviewed tasks of seniors staff – met with Ellen, Terry and Virginia to discuss, developed options, met with First Selectman Mazza and Commission chairman Schipani to discuss options; Kellie Duggan dock dedication – well attended, kayaks/paddle boats available, Ellen did a great job of coordinating.

**STAFF REPORTS**

**A. Recreation Supervisor (written):** Set up Summer Employee Programs; attended following meetings: Wellness Committee, Lake Quonnipaug docks, Aquatics orientation; planned Kellie Duggan dock dedication – approximately 75 people attended; summer preparations: both beaches opened 5/29/10 (weekend only) – responsible for all set-up/inventory, overseeing all camp preparations including Camp Menunkatuck (Ashton), Great Outdoors, Adventurers and Preschool (Tracy), ongoing contact with summer instructors for sports camps, fitness instructors, etc.; assisted Tracy with plans for the Summer Sizzler; Fishing Derby held 5/15/10 – 80 people attended; set up Men's Summer Basketball League – 14 teams registered.

**B. Parks Foreman (written):** April fertilizing completed, June will be done next week; topdressing/over-seeding delayed because of equipment breakdown; irrigation - new sod areas only being watered; started spraying fences/curbs; clay added to mounds, home plates, low spots; Lake Quonnipaug – sand delivered/spread, worked on boats/docks, ready for opening day; Jacobs Beach – used Madison beach cleaner; Town Green – edged, mulched, ready for parade; Community Center – debris pile removed, topsoil in low areas, signs straightened by DPW; bleachers/benches – minor repairs, waiting for parts; playscapes – replacing some parts; library – now mowing entire facility, filling in low areas, removed sand from corners.

Mr. Schipani said in future he was going to change the format of the Director's and staff reports. Rather than reviewing the reports individually at each meeting, they would be accepted as presented. If Commission members had questions about the reports they should bring them to a meeting.

Mr. Maynard left the meeting briefly at 7:35p.m. to attend the Board of Selectmen's meeting and returned at 7:40p.m.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**A. Standing Fields Committee:** Mr. Maynard reported that SFC had walked Adams, Leete and Nut Plains properties. The Committee is also still focusing on how to generate a replacement fund for the artificial turf field. Mr. Maynard said that work on the D area of the artificial turf field had still not been completed. The contractor was told to complete this by the week of 6/14/10.

**B. Land Acquisition Commission:** No report. Later in the meeting, however, it was mentioned that LAC would like to ask the Board of Selectmen to assign management of two town properties on Trolley Road (Map 8, Lots 70 & 71) to the Recreation and Park Department. This area has traditionally used by residents for clam-ming, swimming, kayaking, etc. However, two area residents have begun parking their boats and trailers on the Town open space property. The Guilford Police Department has officially taken the position that there are no ordinances, regulations or signage to prevent overnight parking or long term camping. LAC felt that the Department's regulations might have the ability to provide some control of these properties. The Commission agreed to place this item on the agenda for discussion at its July meeting.

**C. Policy on Community Center Use:** No report.

**D. Coastal Area Management Plan:** No report.

**E. Community Center Sign:** Mr. Maynard circulated copies of new specifications from William Thompson. He noted that PZC had approved the size of the larger sign. This will have lighting and lettering on both sides. Mr. Maynard said he had sent the specs to purchasing agent Pam Millman who will review them and then they will be sent out to bid. He added that he thought some of the electrical work could be done in-house. As the Commission requested, Mr. Maynard said he had asked Mr. Thompson about using granite on the sign. Mr. Thompson did not recommend this as it would not match anything else around the building. Mr. Page felt aluminum around the edge of the sign would be better than the proposed steel. However, Mr. Hedberg said it would not take paint very well.

**F. Park Signs:** Mr. Maynard said the first sign maker whom he had contacted was very slow and hard to contact and so he was reviewing other sign contractors.

**G. Plan of Conservation and Development:** No report.

**H. Open Issues – Skate Park Noise:** Mr. Maynard reported that he had contacted Wayne Sala but had not received any response. He added that the Town Engineer had felt it would be very expensive to install a wall to act as a sound barrier. Instead he had suggested planting pine trees. Mr. Maynard said he had tried to obtain a small piece of sound deadening material to be installed on a test basis. The company had quoted \$15,000 to cover all the ramps but Mr. Maynard had said he wished to have a small test piece. Mr. Page suggested trying a new foam insulation which might deaden sound. Ms. Pine said perhaps the Department would not have to buy trees but could obtain some from the Park Service.

**I. Community Center Landscaping:** Mr. Maynard circulated copies of a proposed plan from TEC Landscape Design, Inc. (John Cunningham), which he briefly reviewed. There are 6 trees across the front of the building although the original plan only called for 4. Mr. Cunningham recommended removing two of these trees which would open up the vista so one could see the Community Center. This might help with a mold problem on the outside of the building. Mr. Cunningham also suggested installing hedges so people did not cut across the lawn. However, Mr. Maynard did not feel this was a problem as most people approached along the pathways from the parking lot. Around the new entry sign there would be low lying plantings and mulch. Right below the chimney area larger circles would be cut out around the trees with mulch added. Mr. Cunningham also recommended hand-pulling the weeds out of the ivy at the south end of the parking lot. Mr. Maynard stated that there were 7 trees in

**I. Community Center Landscaping** (continued)

the courtyard. Mr. Cunningham suggested removing all of these and having a nice grass courtyard. Alternatively three trees could be removed to open up the space and these could be transplanted to the islands at the rear of the building. At the back, west exit, the ivy along the Guilford Room should be removed and replaced with sod. The bike rack would be moved to the right side with granite pavers underneath it to make it look more attractive. Also, pavers could be installed underneath the planter in this area. Mr. Gilbert made a motion, seconded by Ms. Pine, to approve the landscape plan as submitted with the understanding that there may be modifications from a potential contractor. During discussion Mr. Hedberg suggested having memorial bricks similar to those at the Guilford Library. Mr. Gilbert noted that this project was time sensitive with regard to planting time but he would not be concerned about tabling the sidewalk portion. Mr. Schipani stated that plantings, etc., needed to be as maintenance-free as possible. Mr. Page suggested obtaining a separate cost estimate for removing the two front trees and keeping this out of the bid for the main proposal. Ms. Pine felt the maintenance staff could weed where necessary and that this would make a big difference. Mr. Gilbert recommended doing as much as possible in-house that did not need a landscape expert in order to keep it out of the main project. The motion was then carried unanimously.

**J. Community Center Maintenance:** Mr. Maynard reported that there had been problems with the HVAC condenser unit which were being worked on. The repair to the roof was still leaking although the contractor had been back twice to try and resolve this. The leak was better but still not completely fixed. Mr. Page mentioned new EPA lead regulations. Work on any building built before 1978 required workers to wear protective clothing, etc. He said he wished to draw Mr. Maynard's attention to these new regulations.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Senior Citizens Staffing/Organization:** Mr. Maynard reviewed three options for replacing the seniors program coordinator who is retiring, and the assistant coordinator who has ill health. He said that he thought the First Selectman was supportive of having someone in the seniors program coordinator position. Mr. Maynard added that if this position was eliminated Guilford would be the only town in Connecticut without a seniors program and he said he would hate to lose this. He felt there were cost savings in the program because the seniors were part of the department and not in a separate building. Mr. Maynard felt Option C of having a senior coordinator E1-3 (40hrs/wk) and no assistant was the most reasonable and that the First Selectman would support this. Mr. Schipani stated that he had a fourth option which was to make the current administrative assistant into the seniors program coordinator. He pointed out that this staff member had worked for the department for a long time and was well-known and liked by the seniors. Obviously her current workload would have to be reduced so she could take on different responsibilities. Mr. Schipani felt this was a positive move but that Mr. Maynard would need to discuss this with the staff member. Mr. Gilbert mentioned another option of a part time person that the First Selectman had on staff who could possibly fill the assistant coordinator position. Mr. Gilbert said the whole issue was mission critical and that there were many people who relied on the seniors program for meals, etc. He felt the Department was underspending on the seniors side and that nothing should be dropped on this part of the Department's programs with the seniors' programs staying intact. Referring to an earlier comment that the assistant coordinator's duties had been spread among other staff members, Ms. Gross asked if it was feasible to have someone doing both jobs for the long term. Mr. Maynard replied no, and that at present things were beginning to slip. Ms. Pine said she took issue with trying to save money and that if the Department was allowed to hire

**A. Senior Citizens Staffing/Organization** (continued)

a new person from outside then a well-qualified person should be sought. She recommended going with the highest level of person who would be really good. Mr. Gilbert noted that the First Selectman had talked about advertising the position internally. He felt if an outside person was sought then it would be easier to sell an entry level person. Mr. Maynard stated that he had talked to the administrative assistant and she had said that she would do whatever the Department wanted. Also that she would be interested in the seniors program coordinator position. Even so the position would still have to be advertised. Ms. Pine asked if the administrative assistant was moved to this position might the First Selectman then not allow any additional help to be sought. Mr. Schipani felt it would be easier to get permission for another full time administrative assistant. Mr. Gilbert thought the situation should be studied for a few weeks to make sure that every option within the department had been exhausted. He provided some financial statistics on the Towns of Branford and Madison noting that Guilford spent less on its seniors than either of these towns and he felt it should be spending more. Mr. Gilbert also mentioned the funds spent in various sections of the Department which were unevenly balanced and he felt moving the administrative assistant would balance things better. Ms. Pine said administrative help could be justified by saying that the Department was focused on programs. Mr. Gilbert made a motion to support consideration of moving the administrative assistant to the seniors program co-ordinator position, subject to the Town's Human Resources policy. Ms. Pine seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously. Mr. Guadagno warned that the Commission should be very careful about how it resolved this matter as it should not hurt any staff members currently working for the Department.

**B. 2009-2010 Budget Status:** Mr. Maynard stated that he had reviewed the budget and estimated that \$70,000 - \$80,000 would be turned back to the Town. Mr. Gilbert then made a motion that Mr. Maynard be authorized to approach the Finance Department and the First Selectman and say that with this funding being returned to the Town a request was being made for \$10,000 to be allocated for improvements to the grounds around the Community Center. Mr. Hedberg seconded the motion. During discussion Ms. Pine said that she had noticed small projects around the interior of the Community Center which should be done and asked if the request could include additional funding for this. Mr. Gilbert felt if the amount of funds being requested was increased then the whole amount might be denied. The motion was then carried unanimously as originally stated. Ms. Pine asked if she had the Commission's permission to make a list of repair work needed inside the Community Center and the answer was yes.

**C. Community Garden Request:** See above under "Public Forum".

**D. Follow Up Projects:** Mr. Schipani stated that in the past the Commission had mentioned tasks it wished to do but which were never carried out. He said Ms. Pine had made a list of these and they would be included on the next agenda.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 9:10p.m. Due to a legal holiday the next meeting of the Recreation and Park Commission will be held on the second Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> July, 2010 at 7:00p.m. in the Guilford Community Center.

Respectfully submitted: \_\_\_\_\_ Katharine Stewart, Recording Secretary