



Board of Parks & Recreation
Meeting Minutes

February 22, 2017

Please be advised that these minutes are in DRAFT form and will not become "Public Record" until they are formally approved by the Board of Parks and Recreation at their next regularly scheduled meeting planned for March 29, 2017.

Board Attendees: Nancy Caplan, Gary Dell'Abate, Frank DiVincenzo, John Hartwell, Patrick Slyne, and Hans Christian Thalheim (by phone)

Staff Attendees: Joe Siciliano, Tom Greco, Susan Snyder, Bruce Spaman, and Jeff Freidag

Ex-Officio Attendees: None

Guest Attendees: Leslie Yager, Dean Gamanos, and Dawn Fortunato

- I. The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. in the Keegan Conference Room.
- II. A motion was made by Mr. Dell'Abate seconded by Mr. Hartwell to approve the Board Minutes from the January 25, 2017 meeting. 5-0-0
- III. Ms. Caplan invited Ms. Dawn Fortunato to address the board at the start of the meeting. Ms. Fortunato discussed some health and safety concerns at the Hamilton Avenue School field; Incline, uneven, manhole covers, roots coming up, stagnant water and dog feces.

Mr. Siciliano added that the field was used as a staging area for material during construction. He mentioned that the material placed on the field that was not the best material, and the field was seeded but did not meet the specifications in the contract with the contractor on how to finish the field.

Mr. Siciliano reported that the goal of the community group was to improve the field surfacing, and there are various proposals on how the field can be leveled off. Mr. Siciliano mentioned that there was a lawsuit against the contractor, and much of the settlement money went towards the parking garage that was insufficiently constructed and left unfinished. The balance of the settlement was to be used for field improvements. The remaining funds were approved by the Hamilton Ave. School Building Committee. The community group is asking for approval of a \$800,000 proposal to improve the field, although this has been turned down twice at the BET Budget Committee meetings. This proposal is for field improvements; level the field, take out the hazards, improve drainage, quality of turf, etc.

Mr. Siciliano added that his understanding from the BET Budget Committee meetings was that the Committee did not want to invest that type of money into an elementary field that has specific limitations such as size and dimensions. They are willing to look at other proposals. The Board of Education only voted on the \$800,000 proposal and now they need to decide on whether to go back with an alternative proposal. Mr. Siciliano stated that he feels that they want to improve the field, but not at the \$800,000 that has been proposed.

Upon discussion, Ms. Fortunato offered to send pictures of the field conditions. Mr. Siciliano agreed to take a look at the maintenance issues but will not get into any major reconstruction. The Board of Education is responsible for the major improvements.

IV. Hazardous Trees, Bruce Spaman

Mr. Spaman provided an update on the hazardous tree program as attached. **(Attachment A)**

In addition to the attached report, there was a windstorm a couple of weeks ago, there were 75 tree calls, it took about 2 weeks to finish the cleanup. The first line of defense is to clear the roads, cleanup is secondary. The division is actively searching for troubled trees as a preventive measure. Ms. Caplan praised Mr. Spaman for his efforts in working through major storms. Mr. Spaman added that the tree crews are amazing in how they work in the worst of weather conditions.

Mr. Spaman reported that the Nuisance Ordinance has been updated to include dangerous trees on private property. There is a process to go after the trees, abate them and lien the property owner for the cost to abate.

The Trees at Risk Program has helped decrease many of the dangerous Town trees.

Since 2006, the Tree Division has been reduced by 4 crew members. The ability to outsource some tree work through an agreement with the union has helped.

Mr. DiVincenzo added that he contacted his insurance company to see if they would pay to have some dangerous trees removed from his property before they hit his house. The response was no, call when they fall.

Mr. Spaman advised that the Tree Division partners with the Tree Conservancy; the Town purchases the trees and they are contracted to plant.

V. Director's Report, Joe Siciliano

Mr. Siciliano reported that the boating registrations have been mailed. The golf memberships have also been mailed. Park Pass renewals will go out this Friday. This year, seniors had an opportunity to renew in advance and were provided the opportunity to work one-on-one with staff members. It went well. Ms. Caplan mentioned that since this was such a successful department effort, it would have been great to get some positive press coverage for the department.

The opening of the service counter in the lobby has been pushed back to the week before Memorial Day. This will encourage people to utilize the online renewal system. Mr. Siciliano added that he is hopeful that more people will renew online, it significantly decreases the processing time.

Mr. Siciliano reported that the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Greenwich Point Master has been posted with a return date of March 9. Meetings will be setup with each of those who submit a proposal before making a selection.

Mr. Siciliano stated that the RFP for the golf course restaurant yielded one bidder. The award letter went out last week. The contract will be signed in the next couple of weeks.

Mr. Dell'Abate reported that he was at Greenwich Point this weekend and it was as crowded as a busy summer day. Mr. Dell'Abate inquired if this would setback preparations for the upcoming season.

Mr. Siciliano responded that there will be no impact. There were no issues in the park this past weekend, except for the dogs off leash. There was however a significant amount of traffic into/out of the park.

Mr. Dell'Abate stated he was unaware of the Traffic restricted Sundays. Traffic restricted Sundays restricts traffic through the back side of the Point for about 3 hours each Sunday Mid-Nov. through Mid. April. Mr. Siciliano added that this program is funded by the Friends of Greenwich Point.

Mr. Dell'Abate added it was nice to have the open road. Mr. Freitag added that it does contribute to the traffic through other areas of the park as the back parking lots are closed.

Mr. Siciliano added that spring program registrations are underway.

VI. Chairman's Report, Nancy Caplan

Ms. Caplan stated that at the last meeting Mr. Siciliano made a suggestion that the Board send letters of support for the Binney Park dredge project. Ms. Caplan advised that she sent a letter out last week. Mr. Siciliano added that there has been a positive reception from the BET on the dredge project.

Tomorrow is the Budget Committee's decision day. The full BET meets March 13, any letters should be submitted prior.

Ms. Caplan advised that there is a proposal for a new apartment building near the Tennis Academy in Old Greenwich. Ms. Caplan inquired if there were any drainage issues from the building that would impact Binney Park. Mr. Siciliano replied that all of that will be addressed by Planning and Zoning.

VII. Sub-Committee Reports-EGCC-Gary Dell'Abate

Mr. Dell'Abate reported that the committee's meeting preceded this meeting. At the meeting, the next steps in the process and timeline were mapped out. Mr. Siciliano asked for a list of amenities that are being suggested for the field house. Mr. Siciliano will then review the list with Alan Monelli.

VIII. Sub-Committee Reports-Dogs at Greenwich Point-Gary Dell'Abate

Nothing new to report.

Mr. Freidag reported he received an email this morning from a women regarding the behavior of some ill-mannered dogs off leash on the beach.

Mr. DiVincenzo suggested requiring beach passes on weekends during the winter.

Mr. Siciliano replied that as a result of past lawsuits, the Town's justification for restrictions is that restricts are only seasonal.

Mr. DiVincenzo added that he received several complaints regarding dog feces and the stench.

Mr. Freidag further added that when the temperature is above 40 degrees, even if owners are picking up after their dogs, the stench is amplified.

Upon discussion, Mr. Freidag reiterated that Parks and Recreation cannot enforce the rule or fine people only the police can.

IX. Field Committee, Susan Snyder

Ms. Snyder advised that there have been several new requests for summer camps and other spring programs. The committee discussed some improvements to Byram field to be used for 7-9 year olds baseball/softball. Ms. Snyder further added she met with the Athletic Director at the High School to talk about fields for next fall.

Mr. Siciliano added that during budget deliberations with the Budget Committee, the department asked for \$100,000 for artificial turf for Tuefuel Field and or one of the middle schools, there seems to be some interest. The budget deliberations will move it along.

Also looking at Western Middle School and the potential for artificial turf during remediation.

X. Sub-Committee Reports - Dorothy Hamill Rink, Susan Snyder

Ms. Snyder advised that she sent a letter to key user groups asking if they are interested in working on the reconstruction committee and also additional questions about their use. Heard back from 3 out of 6 that they are interested. The deadline is this Friday. Ms. Snyder stated she will reach out and set up a time to meet. Meetings will be scheduled regularly going forward.

XI. Sub-Committee Reports – Greenwich Point Beach Policies, Patrick Slyne

Mr. Siciliano stated it would be a good idea for the committee to meet again before the prime season. Mr. Slyne stated he is interested in feedback from last season. He was impressed with the police presence last season. Mr. Siciliano stated Mr. Greco conducted a survey and he can share the results.

XII. Unfinished Business

none

XIII. New Business

none

XIV. Public Comments

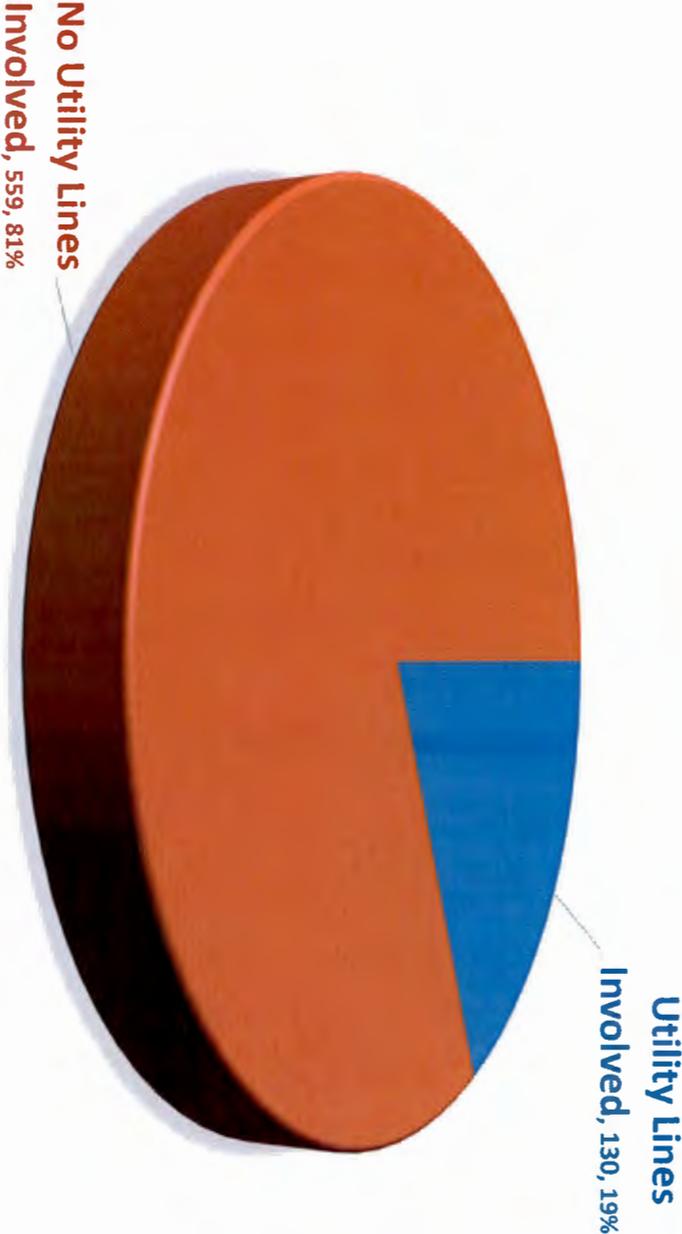
none

XV. Meeting adjourned 7:30 p.m.

2015 – 2017 (Present) Tree Dept. Storm Callouts

- ❑ 361 (53%) Town Trees..... 314 (47%) Private Trees
- ❑ Median Size of Tree That Sustained Damage: 20” in Diameter
- ❑ Median Size of Damaged Part of Tree: 10” in Diameter
- ❑ 52 Different Species of Trees Damaged
- ❑ 130 (19%) Utility Line Incidents
- ❑ Based on 675 Storm Callouts

**STORM CALL OUTS
2015 - 2017 (PRESENT)
UTILITY LINES INVOLVED**



STORM CALL OUTS 2015 - 2017 (present) Town vs Private Tree

