



Board of Parks & Recreation
Meeting Minutes
February 27, 2019

Please be advised that these minutes are in DRAFT form and will not become "Public Record" until the Board of Parks and Recreation formally approves them at their next regularly scheduled meeting planned for March 27, 2019.

Board Attendees: Scott Johnson, Tom McGarrity, Nancy Chapin, Meg Nolan, Frank DiVincenzo, John Hartwell, and Gary Dell'Abate

Staff Attendees: Joe Siciliano, Tom Greco, Sue Snyder, and Brian Kerzner

Guest Attendees: Jill Oberlander, Barbara O'Neill and Dean Gamanos

- I. Mr. Dell'Abate called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. in the Keegan Conference Room.
- II. A motion was made by Mr. Hartwell and seconded by Mr. DiVincenzo to approve the Board Minutes from the December 5, 2018 meeting. 7-0-0

III. **Director's Report, Joseph Siciliano**

Mr. Siciliano reported that Mr. Greco put together a budget summary that shows a high level view of the proposed budget for 2019-2020. The budget has been defended against the BET Budget Committee. To date, there is no decision on how they are going to proceed, the vote will take place on Friday and the Budget Committee will provide recommendations to the First Selectman.

The department is working on summer preparations; program registration, park passes and hiring of summer staff.

The department implemented an updated software package for RecTrac, while the migration went well, there are some bugs that are shaking out.

Mr. Siciliano advised that he is in the final phase of hiring a new Superintendent of Parks and Trees/Tree Warden as well as an Assistant Golf Course Operations Manager.

The golf course concession went out for bid. The Purchasing Department sent out 300 requests to food vendors inviting them to submit a proposal, only one proposal came back. Greenwich Point also went out for bid, only 2 proposals were received. It is difficult to get someone to operate these seasonal stands, business is unpredictable as their success is weather dependent.

Mr. Dell'Abate asked if there is anything that can be done to make the concession agreements more attractive. Mr. Siciliano advised that rent discounts have been made to make the deal more attractive. Mr. Siciliano added that the last concessionaire at the Griff

was paying \$60k a year plus expenses/utilities to occupy the building and run the concession. The Town owns the structure and limited equipment in the building. When the concessionaire bid went out in December, the rent was reduced to \$40k but no one bid. When the bid went back out, the rent was reduced to \$30K, and came back with only one proposal. Mr. Siciliano stated he will negotiate with the bidder considering they didn't meet all of the requirements, otherwise there will not be a food vendor at the golf course.

Mr. DiVincenzo asked if it is necessary to charge rent other than maintenance costs. Mr. Siciliano responded, that the concessions are part of the revenue stream.

IV. Operating/Capital Budget Overview, Tom Greco

Mr. Greco reviewed the 2019-2020 budget summary (**ATTACHMENT A**).

Mr. Dell'Abate inquired how many full time employees the department employs. Mr. Siciliano responded that there are 100 full time employees and several hundred seasonal employees.

Mr. Siciliano noted that five years ago the department employed 126 full time employees. In 2005-2006 there was a review of the department structure, three employees from the Senior center were moved to the Commission on Aging. Since 2005, the department decreased the staff by 23 full time employees by way of consolidation, reallocation of responsibilities, different oversight management and outsourcing.

The restructure was in an effort to avoid arbitrary cuts, which is more difficult to deal with. The restructure plan was worked out with a consultant and all division heads. The goal was to be able to provide a suitable level of service for a reasonable cost.

Mr. Johnson asked if the outsourcing cut was mandated. Mr. Siciliano responded that the mandate of the outsourcing was as a result of the loss of one tree crew (5 employees). The department implemented an outsource agreement for one tree crew. The outsourcing service had to be approved by the union and then go out to bid which resulted in several contractors on the approved service list.

Mr. Johnson asked about the outsourced company's response time. Mr. Siciliano replied that the contract is written such that they need to respond within so many hours of a storm. Sometimes it doesn't work, the Town is in direct competition with the company's private customers. During a storm, we put them on notice that the expectation is they will have a crew available, if they cannot meet this expectation, the next service provider is contacted. In addition, some of the parks employees are cross trained to use tree saws and can assist with ground work.

Ms. Chapin asked how much was saved by outsourcing tree work. Mr. Siciliano replied that the savings is only the benefits on the Town side, the department does not have any cost savings.

Mr. Siciliano added that the department has also outsourced some additional labor intensive duties such as organic turf applications and some of the field construction.

Mr. Greco noted that there is \$2M in the department budget for the Greenwich Harbor Dredging. While it is in the department's budget, the department will not have any responsibilities for the project it is the Harbor Management's responsibility. Mr. Siciliano added that the project is moving forward, the Town will likely not receive funding from the federal government for the project. The state of Connecticut DOT will cost share the project. The Harbor Commission has asked the Town to put the \$2M in the capital budget in anticipation of good faith that the project is moving forward. Hopefully the project will commence in the next 18-24 months. There are a few hurdles to get over, currently under debate with what is going to happen with the sediments.

Mr. Johnson questioned if it is realistic that the permits will be in place in time. Mr. Siciliano replied that there is a chance.

Mr. Siciliano reported that he department contracted with a certified playground inspector to inspect all the playgrounds that the department maintains on an annual basis. The inspector issues a report on each playground which includes any deficiencies. A work order is generated in our electronic work order system for anything that needs to be addressed. The parks staff will address things like fibar replacement. Repair work orders are routed to a contractor certified to repair the playground. As a result of the many lawsuits, the department also has the certified playground inspectors come out each quarter to verify the repairs have been made and document any new issues.

Mr. Siciliano advised that there are two items in the Department of Public Works' budget for Parks and Recreation. \$250K for rink improvements to obtain an architect and take some preliminary site plan work to 30% which includes MI approval. The other \$300K is for the Eastern Greenwich Civic Center design.

V. Lia Fail Way, Frank DiVincenzo

Mr. DiVincenzo reported that the stone benches have been delivered and are ready to be installed, waiting on improved weather. The informational lectern has been designed by a graphic artist. Dedication will be sometime in the spring. Mr. Johnson added that the good thing is that the project was totally privately funded. Mr. DiVincenzo noted that Darrin Wigglesworth and Frank Rupp have been great to work with. Mr. DiVincenzo stated he made a drawing of how the benches should look and the layout. The monoliths have been cleaned and the area is already being used.

VI. Binney Park Advisory Committee, Nancy Chapin

Ms. Chapin informed that the committee has been very active. Department of Public Works representatives attended the last committee meeting to discuss their proposed projects. The goal is to make certain there aren't any conflicts with the projects the committee has been working on.

There was a tree hearing for 20 crabapple trees at the park. The hearing was great, Bruce did a great job, his decision is pending. Ms. Chapin reviewed the tree hearing process; When trees are slated to be removed, they are posted. If anyone submits, in writing opposing their removal, a tree hearing is held. The purpose of the tree hearing is to acquire public input. The Tree Warden will then rule on the fate of the trees. There was a presentation by a woman who expressed concern for clear cutting the trees and planting replacements that would take time to mature. She suggested that the new trees be planted and leave the old trees and take them down as they die off. Ms. Chapin thought this was a good point. Some of the trees are

diseased, the trees are not designed to grow in the environment at Binney with the flooding. It is not wise to plant a monoculture; the plan is to diversify the trees and plan for the future of the park.

The committee recognizes Nancy Caplan for initially marching the master plan along, however it was stalled when the dredging took place. At the next meeting, the committee will have the original Binney Park Master Plan Committee members come to discuss the history to bring the current committee up to speed. The current committee is not intended to hold public hearings, or have debates. The plan has already been approved and the role of the committee is to make sure the plan is implemented.

Ms. Chapin announced that Darrin Wigglesworth has been great in working with the committee.

Mr. Johnson added that there were concerns from the community that the scope of work was not completed. For example, the stone perimeter around the pond. Mr. Siciliano responded that Inlands/Wetlands did not approve a full stone perimeter around the pond, which was part of the original permit. Sometimes the proposal is modified by the governing agency. A significant amount of time and money was spent working on the Historical Landscape Plan for Binney Park, and the landscape design with Martha Lyon. The goal was to bring the park forward a bit while keeping the historical preservation approach to the look, feel and layout of the original plan for the park. Martha was trying to bridge the two. The Tree Warden has the final say in what plantings go in the park.

Ms. Chapin stated that she was surprised that the people who attended the tree hearing weren't involved when the public hearing took place around the time the plan was being written.

Ms. Chapin inquired about the best way to keep the communication regarding the project out to the public. Mr. Siciliano replied that the meetings have been posted on the Town's website and can be accessed by clicking the "agendas & minutes icon at the bottom of the Town's homepage.

Ms. Chapin advised that the committee discussed the island as a project they would like to push to complete. This would be a good area to recognize Nancy Caplan.

VII. Dorothy Hamill Rink Sub-Committee, Sue Snyder

Ms. Snyder reported that the committee met with the top three companies for personal interviews and based on the interviews and their written proposals, the committee evaluated and scored each of the companies and turned them in to the Purchasing Department for tabulation. Mr. McGarrity added that of the three companies, 2 of them are real rink experts. One noted that on the outside that the rink slab should have lasted 25 years, and its 48. Mr. McGarrity highlighted the fact that the slab is on "borrowed time".

Mr. Johnson noted that there is going to be a collision of these projects (Rink and EGCC), they are coming in at the exact same time. Mr. Dell'Abate added that both are as equally in danger of falling apart.

Mr. Dell'Abate asked what would happen if both facilities failed at the same time, would it be possible to move both projects along at the same time? Mr. Siciliano replied that the buildings would both be shut down, but they do not qualify for emergency funding.

Ms. Oberlander added that in the unlikely occurrence of both facilities failing at the same time, the Town would decide if they want to come forward for an interim appropriation to address it with an interim measure or a capital project if it were not included in the budget. It would need to be approved by the BET and RTM.

Mr. Siciliano stated that if the rink compressors fail, it could be overcome, but would be expensive to bring compressors in on a tractor trailer truck, assuming the piping is intact. It is about \$7,000 a week. The biggest issue would be if the slab fails.

Mr. DiVincenzo inquired about insurance. Ms. Oberlander replied that the Town has property insurance for a liability. For example, if there were damage as a result of a leak, that may be covered under the policy.

Ms. Oberlander invited all to attend the BET public hearing on March 26 at 7 p.m. in the Town Hall Meeting Room to make their position on the Parks and Recreation budget known.

Mr. Siciliano added that the ice skating competition was held over the weekend, the event was well attended. Ms. Snyder further added that there were figure skaters at all levels and awards were distributed.

VIII. Eastern Greenwich Civic Center, Gary Dell'Abate

Mr. Dell'Abate summarized the progress that the committee has made. The consultant from SFA spoke at the committee meeting. The committee has prepared a preliminary list of the objectives for the facility to be sent to the architect. Alan Monelli drafted the specs and the RFP will go out to bid. Once proposals are received, the list of architects will be dwindled to 4-5. The plans they generate will be used to develop the final plan by combining the best features of each.

The committee meetings are public and the agendas are posted to the Town website. There will be a public meeting for the user groups.

Mr. Siciliano added that the objectives for the building need to be solidified before the project can go anywhere.

Mr. Johnson advised that he, Mr. Dell'Abate and Mr. Siciliano will be meeting with RTM District 6. Mr. Johnson stated he is looking for a consensus from District 6.

Ms. Oberlander added that there is a proposal in this year's budget for \$300K to take the schematic to construction documents which will be voted on by the Budget Committee on Friday and then the full BET the end of March. If the request passes the BET, it will go to the RTM. One point to note, the RTM cannot add money, but they can take money out. Ms. Oberlander encouraged all to attend the BET public hearing on March 26.

Mr. Siciliano suggested if the BET and the RTM want to be progressive, they could strongly consider the \$300k request with a subject to release, to make sure the plan is being followed--- at least the project wouldn't lose a year. This would be an option for middle ground.

IX. Field Sub Committee, John Hartwell

Mr. Hartwell stated that the committee is rather small and it, at times is difficult to have full participation for meetings. Mr. McGarrity has agreed to join the committee. Mr. Hartwell stated

he's been attending meetings in support of turf fields. Mr. Hartwell stated he is the vocal minority, many attendees speak out in opposition of turf fields, they are mostly neighbors of the different schools who are against turf fields. Mr. Hartwell noted that he received a memo from OGRCC asking everyone to speak in favor of turf fields. Mr. Hartwell advised he was the only one spoke in favor of turf fields. Mr. Hartwell also spoke at the user group meetings held by the department. Mr. Siciliano stated that user groups are notified by Don Mohr when there are meetings to discuss topics involving fields, they don't show.

Mr. Dell'Abate advised that the EGCC Committee is also dealing with turf opposition. None of the government agencies have found issues with turf fields. There is a vocal group of opposition who are operating off of old information.

Mr. Hartwell stated that there was a request from a committee to remove the \$4.7M placeholder from the BOE budget.

Mr. Johnson suggested that the easy way to rebut this, is to convince the state Board of Health. The state Board of Health, the state DEEP and related agencies, looked at it carefully and issued a report saying that turf is safe with the proper use/care. The Mt. Sinai Health Center fact sheet has 5 items of concern; heat, drainage, eating crumb rubber pellets, abrasion, and MRSA. There are NO cases of MRSA on Greenwich fields. Mount Sinai, including others, lack specific scientific studies on conditions on actual Connecticut fields. They only lab test the base materials themselves (which are bad), but not actual playing conditions. The state said they tested it and it was ok.

Mr. Siciliano added that the State of CT Department of Toxicology and the Federal Government have issued reports on this. This is where the science is.

Mr. Johnson suggested that there are reasons not to have turf; it eliminates grass. There is a resolution by the Selectman's Turf Committee that requires any proposed turf be of the best available technologies and recyclable. Some considerations are to throw it over to the Board of Health who by charter is responsible for the health of the Town---they are all doctors who will be looking for the science behind artificial turf.

Ms. Chapin disclosed she is against artificial turf fields.

Mr. Hartwell stated that by not having turf fields, there will be a limit on athletics in Greenwich. Mr. Dell'Abate affirmed there is a demand for more fields.

X. Unfinished Business

None

XI. New Business

None

XII. Public Comment

Mr. Gamanos acknowledged at the last RTM meeting in January, there was an appropriation for \$424K for Hamilton Avenue school. Mr. Siciliano advised that the department's Turf Manager is part of the development team with the Board of Education. The department will have the responsibility to maintain what is built there.

XIII. Meeting adjourned 8:17 p.m.

**Parks and Recreation
2019 - 2020 Budget Summary**

General Fund

| Budget | Parks & Recreation Department | | Administration | | Recreation Division | | Parks and Trees Division | | M F & O Division | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------|----------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------|--------------------------|-----------|------------------|-----------|
| | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 |
| Revenue Sources | 5,063,601 | 4,972,451 | 0 | 0 | 1,962,451 | 1,919,801 | 28,250 | 25,250 | 3,072,900 | 3,027,400 |
| % inc (dec) | | (1.8%) | | 0.0% | | (2.2%) | | (10.6%) | | (1.5%) |
| Operating Cost | 9,617,490 | 9,770,476 | 1,001,296 | 1,023,694 | 1,694,124 | 1,712,321 | 4,662,106 | 4,739,404 | 2,259,964 | 2,295,057 |
| Salary & Wages (100) | 397,048 | 444,010 | 72,681 | 115,200 | 166,367 | 165,810 | 62,850 | 58,900 | 95,150 | 104,100 |
| Services Other (200) | 826,820 | 794,345 | 42,500 | 42,500 | 149,995 | 146,845 | 306,875 | 283,550 | 327,450 | 321,450 |
| Supplies & Materials (300) | 327,113 | 321,613 | 28,363 | 28,363 | 68,750 | 67,850 | 76,500 | 76,000 | 153,500 | 149,400 |
| Maintenance (400) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Operating Cost | 11,168,471 | 11,330,444 | 1,144,840 | 1,209,757 | 2,079,236 | 2,092,826 | 5,108,331 | 5,157,854 | 2,836,064 | 2,870,007 |
| Total % inc (dec) | | 1.5% | | 5.7% | | 0.7% | | 1.0% | | 1.2% |
| Budget Notes: | | | | | | | | | | |
| Adjusted Oper Cost | 11,168,471 | 11,330,444 | 1,144,840 | 1,209,757 | 2,079,236 | 2,092,826 | 5,108,331 | 5,157,854 | 2,836,064 | 2,870,007 |
| Total % inc (dec) | | 1.5% | | 5.7% | | 0.7% | | 1.0% | | 1.2% |
| New Initiatives Included Above | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total New Initiatives | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Net Cost of Operation | 6,104,870 | 6,357,993 | 1,144,840 | 1,209,757 | 116,785 | 130,375 | 5,090,081 | 5,132,604 | (236,836) | (157,393) |
| Adj Operating Cost - Revenue | | | | | | | | | | |
| % inc (dec) | | 4.1% | | 5.7% | | 11.6% | | 1.0% | | (50.5%) |

Parks and Recreation:

| | | |
|-----|---|------------------|
| 812 | LED Safety Lighting | 40,000 |
| 816 | Hamill Dehumidification - Desiccant Wheel | 30,000 |
| 822 | Park Equipment | 68,000 |
| 822 | Organic Turf Program | 300,000 |
| 822 | Park Restoration | 50,000 |
| 822 | Playground Inspection & Upgrade Program | 310,000 |
| 822 | Tennis & Basketball Maintenance Program | 127,000 |
| 829 | Tow Behind Wood Chipper | 60,000 |
| 832 | New Outboards, rigging and outfitting | 50,000 |
| 833 | Ferry Drydock Inspection & Maintenance | 280,000 |
| 833 | Greenwich Point Master Plan | 100,000 |
| 833 | Indian Harbor Deck Replacement | 270,000 |
| 833 | Island Pier Maintenance | 100,000 |
| 833 | Repair Greenwich Pt Causeway | 850,000 |
| 834 | Greenwich Harbor Dredging FNC | 2,000,000 |
| 834 | Byram Dock Expansion | 125,000 |
| | Total | <u>4,760,000</u> |

Dept of Public Works:

| | | |
|-----|---------------------------------------|---------|
| 345 | Hamill Rink Facility Improvements | 250,000 |
| 345 | Eastern Greenwich Civic Center Design | 300,000 |

**Parks and Recreation Department
2019 - 2020 Budget Summary**

Revolving Fund

| Budget | | Griffith E Harris Golf Course | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|--|--|
| | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | |
| Revenue Sources | | | |
| Operations | 1,972,591 | 1,926,352 | |
| Interest | 1,000 | 1,000 | |
| Gift | | | |
| Loan | | | |
| Total Revenue | 1,973,591 | 1,927,352 | |
| % inc (dec) | | (2.3%) | |
| Operating Cost | | | |
| Salary & Wages (100) | 1,076,966 | 1,049,346 | |
| Services Other (200) | 129,800 | 129,200 | |
| Supplies & Materials (300) | 208,200 | 208,500 | |
| Maintenance (400) | 49,000 | 46,300 | |
| Fixed Charges (700) | 335,717 | 316,213 | |
| Capital - Equipment (900) | 67,000 | 43,000 | |
| Capital - Improvement (900) | 75,000 | 100,000 | |
| Total Operating Cost | 1,941,683 | 1,892,559 | |
| % inc (dec) | | (2.5%) | |
| Net Cost of Operation | | | |
| Total Operating Cost - Revenue | (31,908) | (34,793) | |
| % inc (dec) | | (9.0%) | |