



Board of Parks & Recreation

Meeting Minutes

February 28, 2018

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 28, 2018.

Board Attendees: Frank DiVincenzo, John Hartwell, Kirk Schubert, Tom McGarrity, Patrick Slyne, Rick Loh, Gary Dell'Abate, and Scott Johnson

Staff Attendees: Joe Siciliano, Susan Snyder, Brian Kerzner, Bruce Spaman and Tom Greco

Ex-Officio Attendees: Barbara O'neil

Guest Attendees: Leslie Yager, Dean Gamanos, Jill Oberlander, and Karen Fassuliotis

I. Mr. Dell'Abate called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. In the Keegan Conference Room.

A motion made by Mr. Hartwell seconded by Mr. DiVincenzo to approve the Board Minutes from the January 24, 2018 meeting. 8-0-0

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

Mr. Siciliano reported that the department is working on the planning for the spring and summer. Beach card renewals were emailed this year. The call center is operational. Online renewals are going well; the goal is to encourage residents to renew online. The online system will be upgraded by the fall; this will allow for other functions such as chip technology among others.

Mr. Siciliano advised that the Town is working on developing a new website. Members of the Parks and Recreation, P&R administrative staff have been working with the IT Department on developing a new website for the Department. This is a rather large project, essentially re-building the Department's site. The goal is to make the website more attractive and easier to navigate. The new website is slated to go live in the fall.

Mr. Siciliano stated that he has been doing a lot of background work on fields. He has put together an outline that will be the template for all major capital projects on fields not just for P&R, but he is hopeful it will also be adopted by the Board of Education, BOE. This process will be uniform and satisfy the questions that will be generated. The information includes; artificial surfacing with lighting, natural surface with lighting, parking/traffic information, phase I environmental, Phase II (as needed) environmental.

Mr. Siciliano conveyed he is currently having the outline reviewed/critiqued by some engineers that he knows. Once the comments are back from the engineers, Mr. Siciliano stated he will share the outline with the BOE. If there is a major field improvement, the department will use this format in order to get through the funding /administrative applications. The goal is to work the outline for information for a 30% site plan.

Mr. Schubert inquired how this template will dovetail in with the preliminary funding on the study for the Central Middle School Field.

Mr. Siciliano replied that he shared his preliminary draft template with the BOE. The P&R team met with the BOE facilities folks and wrote a memo to the Education Board in support of turf consideration of the Central Middle School Field. Western Middle School field was the number one choice, however, because of the remediation, it is now on the shelf. The recommendation was made by memo to the Education Board, they discussed and voted to advance it to the BET.

In addition to those noted, there are several other projects taking place including dock replacement at Greenwich Point, and the Byram Pool. The Department is working on prioritizing and keep things moving in the right direction.

Mr. Dell'Abate stated he's seen some great press on the Byram Pool.

Mr. Siciliano reported that he visited the Byram Pool site and stood on the deck of the pool and was amazed, the view is spectacular! The pool is on schedule. Members of the team meet with the Project Manager, Alan Monelli regularly to discuss progress. The tentative date for an opening ceremony will be June 2. Memorial Day weekend is just too busy. Once the construction is complete, and a Certificate of Occupancy, CO is obtained, and a final State of CT Health Department Inspection is required. Alan Monelli has spoken to the State Health Department and has cued them into the targeted opening date, however they will not commit to a final inspection until the CO is in-hand. Alan will regularly contact the State Health Department to keep them up-to-date on progress.

Mr. Dell'Abate inquired if the May Board Meeting can be held at the Byram Pool site. Mr. Siciliano replied that it is a possibility.

Mr. Siciliano reported that the general contractor installed security cameras at the pool location. The cameras offer the opportunity to see progression of the construction. Photos have been supplied to the Junior League to aid in their efforts to raise \$2.5M. People can see it is real rather than just a concept.

Mr. Johnson notified that the Junior League sent out a mailing for fundraising efforts, and people thought the fundraising was already complete, but it is not.

Mr. Siciliano explained that the Junior League has made some deposits to the Town, as of the BET Budget Committee Meeting, they had deposited \$1.7M of the \$2.5M. The fundraising efforts have been in phases; targeting donors in the beginning, then corporations, then a public appeal. Anyone interested can purchase a brick for \$500.

III. Greenwich Point Master Plan, Tom Greco

Mr. Greco reported that the department has contracted with Stantech Consulting. The consultant worked to obtain ideas of what people would like to be considered for improving Greenwich Point Park. There has been concerns that the title "Master Plan" indicates that a plan has been developed. Only phase I, data collection has been completed. The data collection came from various agencies throughout Town, and a public forum. A public meeting was held on February 26, where the totality (82) of all the ideas collected were presented to those in attendance. A number of items are operational, and will be included in the operation plan for next year. The other items will be evaluated going forward from a capital point of view.

Mr. Siciliano suggested the list of considerations be shared with the Board at the next meeting.

Mr. Dell'Abate applauded Mr. Johnson for his efforts over the last couple of months working behind the scenes to figure out what is going on with the Parks and Recreation Foundation.

IV. Parks and Recreation Foundation, Scott Johnson

Mr. Johnson informed that it had been 20 years since he's had involvement with the Foundation. The Parks and Recreation Foundation is not a Town Agency; it is a separate agency. It is important that transactions funnel through the Department. Money comes in from various sources including Paypal and is earmarked for particular funds/projects. Checks are only allowed to be issued by the accountants and can only be signed by Mr. Johnson or Mr. Loh, who are the signatories on the account. Financial statements are prepared by the accountants. Portion of the Foundation's funds were invested by a professional firm, the interest earned on this investment goes towards ice skating awards annually. Mr. Johnson further reviewed the Foundation fund accounts.

Mr. Siciliano described how the Department has spearheaded a couple of campaigns to raise money to increase the fireworks displays and for recreational youth scholarships. Utilizing the Department's database of approximately 20,000, the Department has raised funds towards these efforts. In addition to these contacts, the department has another database of over 40,000 contacts. The Department minimally advertises through media outlets because the internal resources are more of a direct contact with customers to advertise programs, solicit for contributions, and provide information.

Mr. Siciliano thanked Leslie Yager of Greenwich Free Press for promoting the Department's camp programs at no cost.

Mr. Johnson added it is important that the members be aware that the Parks and Recreation Foundation is a charitable receptacle and that they be advocates and try to raise money for park projects.

Mr. Dell'Abate suggested that it may be a good idea to talk with media outlets towards the holidays to get the word out about the Foundation.

V. Lia Fail Way, Frank DiVincenzo

Mr. DiVincenzo notified that the project is in Phase II, to move the monoliths and set them at the Pinetum. Mr. DiVincenzo reported that he contacted Aubrey Mead of Redniss and Mead, who has been generous with his time and volunteered to complete the work for free. However, some additional work is necessary. The next step is to have an engineering plan prepared in order to obtain contractor pricing. Approximately 1/3 has already been raised in funds and pledges.

Mr. Siciliano added that the Department can send an email blast to solicit for funds for this project. Mr. DiVincenzo stated that Bea Crumbine has contacts who will donate, but is waiting for the drawings. If necessary, he would consider the email blast.

VI. Field Sub Committee, Gary Dell'Abate

Mr. Hartwell reported that the committee met three weeks ago, at the meeting he agreed to prepare a comparison on the three middle schools to identify which ones should be turfed, the purpose was to have a working document to see if all agree. Mr. Hartwell feels that Central Middle School was the best of the three and that was what was identified in the meeting between BOE facilities had with P&R.

Mr. Dell'Abate advised that the Committee receives several requests for organizations that want to expand their programs. Ms. Snyder added that there were three requests at the last meeting, one was approved and two were not. One group wanted to add a youth baseball program with the Babe Ruth Organization and they do not allow two programs in Town. The other group was an adult soccer team that was also turned down last because there are already 7 other soccer teams from the same league and one team owes money and is currently in collections.

Mr. Siciliano conveyed that this process is very important, with the shortage of fields, it is difficult to allocate field time to additional teams/organizations.

Mr. Hartwell stated that this is an example of why there is a quest for turf fields, the demand is not being met.

Mr. Dell'Abate acknowledged that the Committee has eased the angst by creating an established protocol.

Mr. Johnson added that the written policy has an allocation of priority.

VII. Eastern Greenwich Civic Center, EGCC, Gary Dell'Abate

Mr. Dell'Abate advised that there is a meeting scheduled for Friday. Mr. Dell'Abate inquired about the status of the Request for Proposal, RFP.

Mr. Siciliano replied that the award letter has been sent to the company, but they've been nonresponsive with the insurance requirements. Often times the stumbling block of contracts is if the agent/agency is authorized to write insurance in the State of Connecticut. The contract has not yet been signed, it has been outstanding for the last month. Mr. Siciliano further added that he will have a better understanding of what is going by the Friday meeting.

VII. Dorothy Hamill Rink Sub-Committee, Rick Loh

Mr. Loh reported that the committee met earlier in the day. They are working on building a wish list for what they would like to see in a new facility. Ms. Snyder's proposal for the \$30,000 to evaluate the existing building passed through the BET Committee and is moving on to the full BET.

Mr. Johnson stated that the Rink is an embarrassment compared to any other hockey rink throughout Fairfield County. Mr. Johnson informed that he and Mr. Schubert met with the Greenwich Athletic Foundation, there is a lot of great energy there. One of the challenges is setting priorities. There are a ton of ideas to relocate the Rink to high school, civic center, at current site and even possibly the parking lots at the train station.

Mr. Johnson's advice is to focus on location and priorities. A new Rink at the existing site seems to be prudent. Pretty soon the sensitivity will be the fear of the ice slab failing and which facility, the Rink or the EGCC will become the priority? Mr. Johnson stated his focus is shifting towards the Rink, there seems to be private money behind it that has not been seen for the EGCC.

Mr. Siciliano added that a lack of focus will sideline the project for another 20 years, a bit of confusion will stall the project. Mr. Siciliano cautioned that the Department cannot afford to stall with a 48-year-old ice slab.

Mr. DiVincenzo questioned about the temporary rink that will be needed during construction. Mr. Loh stated that there is money in the budget to fund a temporary rink on the baseball field during the construction of current facility.

Mr. Loh notified that the renovation of Cardinal Stadium is in the plan, The Greenwich Athletic Foundation is behind it. In expressing their desire for the renovation, they had the idea that when they rebuild the tennis courts, a few of the courts could be constructed in a manner that would allow them to be covered up and have a rink there in the winter. This will help with demand for ice time, the boys and girl's teams can practice at the school.

Mr. Siciliano added that there is \$2M in the budget for a temporary surface during the construction phase, Mr. Siciliano estimates that for that amount, a temporary rink at the high school could endure for a long time. Sounds like a practical way to do it. This will alleviate some ice time at Dorothy Hamill for other user groups.

VIII. Unfinished Business

None

IX. New Business

None

X. Public Comment

XI. Meeting adjourned 7:40 p.m.