



Board of Parks & Recreation  
Meeting Minutes

March 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 April 24, 2019.***

**Board Attendees:** Scott Johnson, Tom McGarrity, Nancy Chapin, Frank DiVincenzo, John Hartwell, Kirk Schubert and Gary Dell'Abate

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

**Guest Attendees:** Dean Gamanos, Leslie Yager and Barbra O'Neill

I. Mr. Dell'Abate called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Keegan Conference Room.

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

Mr. Siciliano reported that the new Superintendent of Parks and Trees, Gregory Kramer started his employment with the Town. Unfortunately, he is unable to attend this evening. He will be in attendance at next month's meeting. Mr. Siciliano stated Mr. Kramer is a good addition to the team. While he is licensed in other states, he must test in CT to become the Tree Warden.

Mr. Siciliano indicated he distributed via email the BET's proposal for a reduction to the 2019-2020 P&R budget in the amount of \$99K in the parks account (**ATTACHMENT A**). If passed, there will be a negative impact on services provided. Included in the email was a historical full time headcount reduction timeline and the reduction in service deliverables that will take place if passed. The proposal was voted on at the Budget Committee; the vote was 2:2, the full BET will vote tomorrow. Mr. Siciliano asked for the Board's support to avert this budget cut. There has been a reduction in staffing by 26 people since 2005. During that time, the department negotiated use of overtime and temporary services to get through the peak season.

Mr. Dell'Abate inquired how it is decided where the reduction is taken. Mr. Siciliano responded that the request explains where the money is to come from, but it also says at the discretion of the department head. It was placed in the largest account and then the Director has to figure it out.

Mr. Dell'Abate asked if the entire budget is being cut or if only certain areas were being cut to be spent elsewhere. Mr. Siciliano responded that there was a conscious effort by the Budget Committee to curtail the budget requests. The proposed budget cuts mainly impact departments that serve the public rather than back office departments.

Ms. Chapin recalled at the last meeting, the department's budget was within the guidelines. Mr. Siciliano replied the department was slightly over the guidelines.

Mr. Loh advised that a similar request has been made of the Police Department's Marine Division. It was suggested that they reduce their coverage on the water to 7 pm rather than 11 pm. The suggestion was made to help reduce the budget but the actual cuts made would be at the discretion of the Police Chief.

Mr. Siciliano reported that he was asked by the BET Budget Committee to look into how much it would cost to obtain a consultant's comprehensive field report. The report would include playability and usability. Mr. Siciliano talked to the consultant, the total cost to review every playing surface in Town would be \$150K. The Budget Committee added \$75K to the department's budget to complete the study, however it was only 50% of the cost. It was suggested that the department could complete the usability portion of the study. Mr. Siciliano expressed his feeling that this is the wrong approach; both should be done at the same time by the same consultants. There isn't anyone on staff to do this. The bid package will go out; however, the whole study will not be done at the same time. The BOE received \$300K to study the middle schools, with \$150k released for CMS alone and the remaining \$150k with a subject to release. Mr. Siciliano suggested perhaps \$75K of it can be redirected to complete the comprehensive study of all of the fields.

Mr. Johnson added that the most common complaint with the EGCC study and review is that fields are closed 40% of the time because of weather conditions.

### **III. Binney Park Advisory Committee, Nancy Chapin**

Ms. Chapin advised that the committee has been busy. They meet every couple of weeks. Greg Kramer was in attendance for the last meeting, he was great. The next meeting will be a site walk on April 2. The committee reached out to a landscape architect to inquire about plans for the island, it seemed to be too expensive. The committee will try to accomplish a plan in-house. The site visit will help identify what can be done. The committee has been focused on trying to work with Inland/Wetlands and fix some of the work that was done as a result of the requirements during the dredge such as misplaced trees, and plantings around the pond.

Ms. Chapin reported that there is a plant and replace program taking place as a result of the tree hearing, not all 20 trees will go at once. The committee is also looking at a simple stone dust loop trail.

The Department of Public Works has been great with communication to make sure there is not a conflict of work. Ms. Chapin stated she had a conversation with Alan Monelli regarding Town buildings, there is a process to follow should there need to be a work order entered for the buildings.

Mr. Dell'Abate asked how much work there is to do. Ms. Chapin replied that there is a way to go, nothing as far as the master plan has been done because of the dredge project. The committee is working hard to march the project along. Nancy Caplan identified the island as the ideal place to make a showcase. Ms. Chapin invited any interested members for a walk to share some ideas.

Mr. Johnson advised that Nancy Caplan had a Friends of group, and inquired if the group still exists. Ms. Chapin replied that the group was no longer in existence and shared a copy of the timeline of the history of Binney Park (1927-2019) with the board.

Mr. Johnson questioned if the committee was doing any fundraising for the park. Ms. Chapin responded that the charge of the committee is to execute the master plan. Ms. Chapin stated she will share with the committee that there is a mechanism in place through the Foundation to accept donations for the work to be done. The committee is hopeful that they can identify some areas that some of the garden clubs may adopt or help fund.

Mr. Siciliano added there are some Town funds appropriated that need to be spent on the project.

Ms. Chapin suggested that the grading issues can be addressed relatively easily.

#### **IV. Dorothy Hamill Rink Sub-Committee, Rick Loh**

Mr. Loh stated that the committee is making progress. There is a \$250K request that will be used for the first draft design. In addition, there is \$30K for a facility study.

Ms. Snyder reported a company was selected for the facility study. The Town selected KG&D out of Mt. Kisco. They are also working on projects with the BOE. Purchasing is working on some of the insurance requirements, and then they will work on putting together a contract.

#### **V. Eastern Greenwich Civic Center, Gary Dell'Abate**

Mr. Siciliano reported that there is a pre-qualifier out for architects who have done this type of work before. The interested architects will be interviewed and selected. In preparation for the first design phase, the building initiatives will be sent to them.

Mr. Dell'Abate advised that he, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Schubert met with district 6, to discuss what has been going on with the project and answered questions. There will be another meeting with districts 5 and 12. It is a good approach to talk to people in smaller groups.

Mr. Johnson added that the goal is to identify the questions asked and comments received and get their feedback. Despite all of the public meetings, there is a perception that no one has any idea of what's going on and that there has been a lack of transparency---this is an excuse for not getting involved. Thanks to Mike Mason, Karen Fassuliotis and Katie Deluca; they have taken time out of their busy schedules to advise of the process. The feedback from the BET has been that the committee is on the right track, but shouldn't get crazy. While there will be a difference of opinion, the committee needs to think realistically as to what will be approved.

Mr. Johnson added that he Mr. Dell'Abate and Mr. Schubert have spent hours and hours reaching out to people to solicit feedback.

Ms. Chapin inquired about status of the plan. Mr. Siciliano stated that the committee must first agree on initiatives for the building.

Mr. Johnson added that there was a historic preservation letter that the EGCC is a notable building and this should be given consideration. The one thing that everyone agrees on is the building should be torn down versus renovated.

**VI. Field Sub Committee, Sue Snyder**

Ms. Snyder shared that Mr. McGarrity joined the committee; he's been doing some research on turf fields, safety issues, etc. Mr. McGarrity stated he contacted the NCAA and as an entity, their scientific lab has done any testing on turf fields.

Ms. Snyder reported that the committee will send out letters to the user groups highlighting that synthetic turf fields are an important way to go for the future of playability of Town fields. The letter will include the meetings that they can come to show support.

Ms. Snyder reported that synthetic fields 6,7 at the high school will take longer to be replaced. They are being pushed off until 2020, and now must go to Inlands/Wetlands for approval. Turf Operations Manager, Tim Coughlin will have the fields evaluated by a professional for G-max testing to make sure they are safe for play. Central Middles School field will be tested the week of April 15-19, there are drainage issues.

**VII. Lia Fail Way, Frank DiVincenzo**

Mr. DiVincenzo stated he's been working with Darrin Wigglesworth. The pads are poured for the benches which will be installed by weeks' end. Ordered the lectern info board. The information insert was generated by a professional. The lectern installation has yet to be determined, hopefully prior to the dedication ceremony. Darrin proposed sod installation, there is money in the Foundation to cover it.

**VIII. Unfinished Business**

None

**IX. New Business**

None

**X. Public Comment**

None

**XI. Meeting adjourned 7:28 p.m.**

**BOARD OF ESTIMATE & TAXATION  
2019/2020 BUDGET  
BUDGET AMENDMENT FORM**

**Department Name:** 822 Parks & Recreation; Parks and Trees (Operating p. 131)  
**Account Code:** 51010 Regular Salaries; 51100 Overtime; 5130 Temp Salaries  
**Amount:** Reduce each by \$33,000, for a total reduction of \$99,000

**Reason:** Reduction of Operating Budget.

There is no intent here to direct that the reduction actually be taken in the Parks and Trees division or that it actually be taken in regular salaries, overtime, and/or temporary salaries. The Department has the prerogative to find the savings in any of its divisions and in any of its 100's lines, and moreover has the ability to take the reductions in other major object codes upon application to the BET. The intent is to require the savings but allow the Department full discretion as to where.

**CONDITION and or SUBJECT TO RELEASE:**

**MOTION:** Jeff Ramer

**SECOND:**

**VOTE:**

**IN FAVOR:**

**OPPOSED:**

The Board of Estimate & Taxation is considering a motion to reduce the 2019-2020 Department of Parks and Recreation Parks and Trees Department requested budget for (822 – Parks, School Grounds, Fields) by a total of \$99,000. This reduction is comprised of a reduction of \$33,000 in each of the following accounts: 51010 Regular Salaries; 51100 Overtime; and 51300 Temp Salaries.

We strongly believe that not only that this motion in and of itself will have a strong negative and detrimental impact in the deliverables to the users of our services, but when coupled with the positive actions taken in past will severely degrade the value of our return on taxes paid by our residents.

We feel there is significant importance to the diligence in our approach to the management of our operation. Providing consistent high quality programs and services while identifying and reducing cost is paramount. Since 2005 we have reduced our headcount by 26 full time employees (see attached). While this results in reductions in the Parks and Recreation operating budget and costs, it does not account for the corresponding reductions in fixed charges which are not part of our budget. In fact, during this timeframe our operational span of responsibility has expanded in many directions including additional recreation programs, new modern and expansive swimming pool, and the addition of the new Cos Cob park and field with no additional full time headcount. To counter these reductions, we have engaged the limited use of outside vendors to provide key services that cannot otherwise be delivered. In addition, we have included a modest increase in seasonal workers and scheduled overtime. Customer feedback clearly indicate positive responses to our periodic surveys.

A composite list of the services that are identified for elimination are contained in the attached document. These services are limited to those whose charges would ordinarily be charged to the three accounts considered under the BET motion. A review should clearly generate a clear understanding of the severe impact to our constituents should they be eliminated.

**Department of Parks and Recreation**  
**Historical Full Time Headcount Reductions**  
**General Fund**

<b>FY</b>	<b>From Headcount</b>	<b>To Headcount</b>	<b>Position Eliminated</b>
2004-2005	126	126	No Change
2005-2006	126	123	1 – Custodian 1 – Equipment Mechanic 1 – Tree Climber
2006-2007	123	122	1 – Park Gardener
2007-2008	122	114	1 – Senior Center Administrator 1 – Custodian 1 – Cook 1 – Tree Foreman 3 – Tree Climbers 1 – Admin Assistant
			} Senior Center
2008-2009	114	111	1 – Park Gardener Foreman 1 – Equipment Operator 1 – Park Gardener
2009-2010 Selectman's Budget Book	111	108	3 – Park Gardeners
Further Reductions	108	102	1 – Horticulturalist 1 – Recreation Coordinator 1 – Maintenance Mechanic 1 – Equipment Mechanic 1 – Park Gardner Foreman 1 – Park Gardener
2011-2012	102	101	1 - Park Gardner
2017-2018	101	100	1 - Park Gardner

# Reduction in Service Deliverables

## BET Budget Reductions

<b>Job Title</b>	<b>PGII Reg</b>	<b>PGII 1.50</b>	<b>PGII 2.0</b>	<b>Opns Mgr Reg</b>	<b>PK For Reg</b>	<b>PK For 1.50</b>	<b>Camp Supv</b>	<b>Field Mon Composit</b>
<b>Pay Rate</b>	<b>32.83</b>	<b>49.25</b>	<b>65.66</b>	<b>58.77</b>	<b>42.68</b>	<b>64.02</b>	<b>22.00</b>	<b>22.26</b>

Hours	Amount								Totals
	PGII Reg	PGII 1.50	PGII 2.0	Opns Mgr Reg	PK For Reg	PK For 1.50	Camp Supv	Field Mon Composit	
116			7,616.56						
36		1,773.00							
152	0.00	1,773.00	7,616.56	0.00	0.00		0.00		9,389.56
480	15,758.40								
480	15,758.40	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00		15,758.40
208		10,244.00							
72			4,727.52						
280	0.00	10,244.00	4,727.52	0.00	0.00		0.00		14,971.52
32				1,880.64					
80					3,414.40				
160	5,252.80								
200							4,400.00		
472	5,252.80	0.00	0.00	1,880.64	3,414.40		4,400.00		14,947.84
36									
630	20,682.90				1,536.48				
666	20,682.90	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,536.48		0.00		22,219.38
56									
168	5,515.44				2,390.08				
224	5,515.44	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,390.08		0.00		7,905.52

**Bathrooms**

April 15 - Nov 1st every Sunday  
 1 PG II - 4 hrs each 29 weeks  
 Events / Holiday weekend - Saturdays  
 1 PG II - 4 hrs each of 9 Saturdays

**Bowling Green / Croquet Court**

April 1 - Nov 15th.  
 1 PGII - 5 hrs each, 3 days / wk, 32 wks

**Garbage Removal**

April 15 - Nov 15 Saturdays  
 2 PG II - 4 hrs each, 26 weeks  
 Events & Holiday weekends - Sundays  
 2 PG II - 4 hrs each, 9 weeks

**Greenwich Youth Conservation Program**

8 week summer program - outdoor park projects  
 1 Opns Mgr - 4 hrs/wk, 8 weeks  
 1 PK For - 2 hrs / day, 40 days  
 2 PG II - 2 hrs each / day, 40 days  
 1 CYCP Site Supv

**Special Events, School PTA, Garden Club Partnerships**

Cleanup after 6 Special Events  
 1 PK For, 2 hrs ea, 3 days ea, 6 events  
 5 PG II - 7 hrs ea, 3 days ea, 6 events

**School PTA Planting Events**

1 PK For, 7 hrs ea, 8 days  
 3 PG II - 7 hrs ea, 8 days

Reduction in Service Deliverables

BET Budget Reductions

Job Title	PGII Reg	PGII 1.50	PGII 2.0	Opns Migr Reg	PK For Reg	PK For 1.50	Camp Supv	Field Mon Composit
Pay Rate	32.83	49.25	65.66	58.77	42.68	64.02	22.00	22.26

Garden Club Partnership  
 1 PK For, 7 hrs ea, 5 days  
 3 PG II - 7 hrs ea, 5 days

35					1,493.80			
105	3,447.15							
140	3,447.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,493.80		0.00	4,940.95
<b>Sub Total</b>	50,657	12,017	12,344	1,881	8,835		4,400	90,133.17

Field Monitor

BDE Worker

Garbage Pickup - Weekend Sports (GHS etc)

1 PK For, 20 hours  
 2 PG II - 85 hours total

231								5,142
20						1,280		1,280
85		4,186						4,186
105	0	4,186	0	0	0	1,280	0	5,467

Grand Totals

2,750	50,657	16,203	12,344	1,881	8,835	1,280	4,400	100,742
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